



**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**
REFUGEE SERVICES

BOARD OF ADVISORS FOR THE UTAH REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE



REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR • 2024



Cover photos courtesy of VentureOut and Salt Lake City Mayor's Office

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2024 Naturalization Ceremony (photo courtesy of Salt Lake City Mayor's Office)



LETTER from Chair of the Board of Advisors

Dear Governor Cox,

On behalf of the Board of Advisors, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to share the Refugee Services Office annual report for state fiscal year 2024. We are honored to work with refugees and help them build successful lives in Utah. Through our innovative, collaborative and common-sense approach to resettlement, we continue to set an example nationwide of what well-organized, community-driven and integration-focused resettlement looks like. This report provides an overview of resettlement in our state and how our team coordinates services on behalf of refugees.

Over the past year, new resettlement pathways have been implemented on a national level to compliment existing pathways. Traditionally, refugees are resettled through one of three resettlement agencies in Utah – Catholic Community Services, International Rescue Committee and Cache Valley Refugee and Immigrant Connection. They receive case management and connection to services for their first 90 days, with additional support provided through extended case management funded by the Refugee Services Office. Additional resettlement pathways, including Welcome Corps, have expanded the ways we receive refugees in Utah. These new pathways have also increased the need to provide support for individuals and groups who are assisting refugees. Our team includes a sponsorship coordinator and specialized staff to help new individuals and groups navigate the resettlement process.

This year marked our first Welcome Corps arrival in Morgan, Utah. MorganCountyCares resettled a family from South America. The sponsor group and a welcoming local community have been critical in ensuring the successful resettlement and integration of this new refugee family. At this time, about 10 additional groups around the state are preparing to resettle refugees through Welcome Corps.

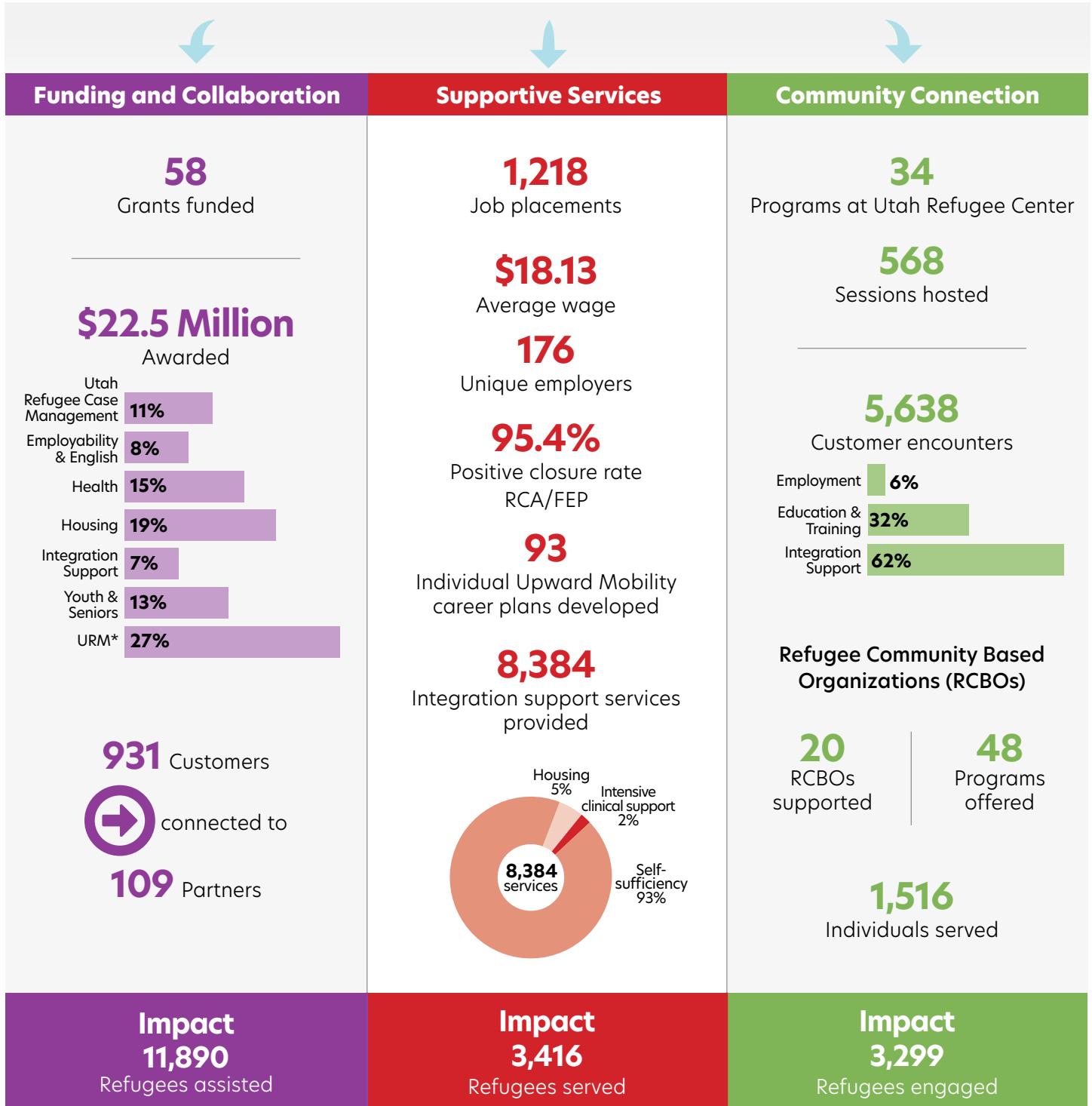
During summer 2023 we also hosted a legislative committee meeting at the Utah Refugee Center. We toured the Center, provided an overview of refugee work in Utah and introduced several members of our dedicated staff. Additionally, in June 2024 we celebrated our 20th annual World Refugee Day in Utah. This annual event brings together refugee providers throughout Utah as well as refugees and members of the community to connect, share and celebrate.

Thank you for your continued support of these efforts. We look forward to another successful year of serving Utah's refugee community and ensuring successful employment, family stability and economic success for these newly arrived refugees to Utah.

Casey R. Cameron
Executive Director, Department of Workforce Services

DATA UPDATE July 2023 - June 2024

Refugee Services at a Glance



Overall Impact: **18,605** individuals supported towards integration and self-sufficiency

*Unaccompanied Refugee Minors







Utah Arrivals



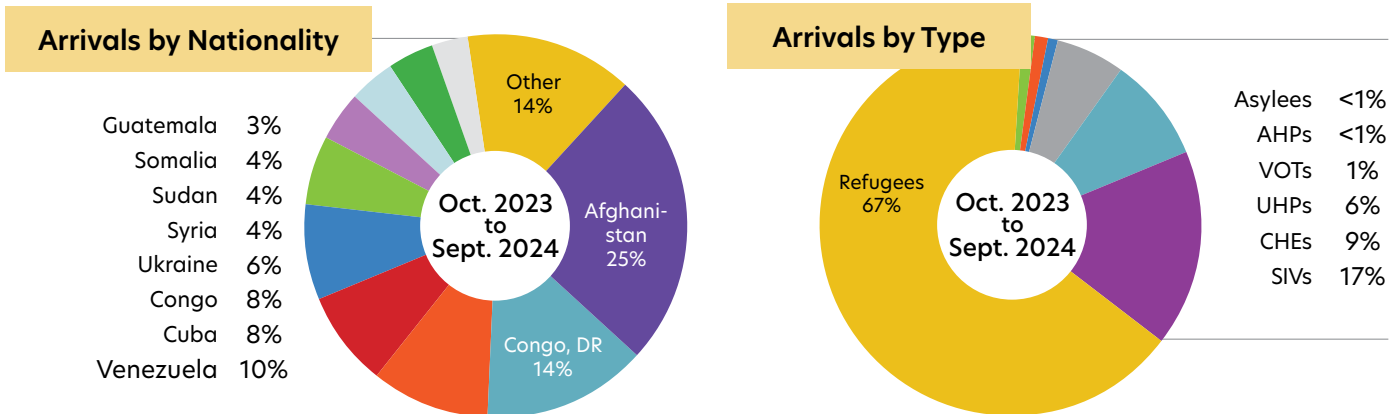
1,871 Arrivals

Oct. 1, 2023 - Sept. 30, 2024



	 CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES	 INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE	 CRIC	 ASIAN ASSOCIATION OF UTAH	 utah valley refugees	URM Program (CCS)	Virtual R&P	 WELCOME CORPS
Refugees, SIVs, AHPs	666	556	129	90	56	13	82	17
Asylees and VOTs	0	0	0	25	NA	4	NA	NA
UHPs	96	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
CHEs	NA	NA	NA	137	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	762	556	129	252	56	17	82	17

Total Arrivals 1,871



Refugee Designations

Refugee: Persecution or credible fear of such, as based on a number of internationally recognized criteria.

Asylee: A person granted asylum.

Victim of Trafficking (VOT): Force or coercion based on a number of internationally recognized criteria.

C/H Entrants (CHE): Cuban or Haitian nationals with granted parole or pending asylum status.

Humanitarian Parole: Temporary status due to an emergency and urgent humanitarian reason or significant public benefit.

Special Immigrant Visa (SIV): Provision of aid to the U.S. government abroad.

SUCCESS STORIES



Gachi Guet awarded Utah Philanthropy Day Governor's Career Humanitarian Leadership Award

Customer Success

A refugee customer from Afghanistan who recently arrived in Utah, met with an upward mobility navigator in the Refugee Services Office. At the time he was unemployed and interested in working in his field as an electrical engineer. The navigator scheduled an upward mobility assessment to identify his goals and develop a plan for achieving his long-term employment objectives.

After understanding his objectives, the navigator reviewed his resume and helped him update it to make it more concise and effective. The navigator also shared some job listings with him, and encouraged him to pursue professional engineering certifications while he was applying. Once the customer received an interview offer, the navigator conducted a mock interview with him and provided additional interview resources to help him practice and prepare. The customer successfully secured full-time employment as an electrical engineer with an annual salary of \$80,000.

Employee Success

While it's not uncommon for Refugee Service Office staff members to go above and beyond for their customers, this past year Gachi Guet's hard work and dedication proved invaluable. Gachi has worked for the Department of Workforce Services for over 20 years. Currently, she is the contracts and policy manager at the Refugee Services Office. In 2024, Gachi was honored with two separate awards recognizing her outstanding work for the Department and her contributions as a community member and a public servant: she received the Workforce Services Cornerstone Award for Operational Excellence and the Utah Philanthropy Day Governor's Career Humanitarian Leadership Award.

Gachi received these awards in part because her passion for service extends beyond the bounds of work and predates her time at the Refugee Services Office. She has long been known in the refugee community as a reliable advocate, always willing to assist those in need. Her success has been earned by the many hours she's participated in community events. Her dedication is often unseen and unrecognized, but its fruits are visible in her work and the success of both refugee community organizations and the many individuals that she has supported. Gachi has consistently worked to better the lives of others and has greatly contributed to the success of refugee communities in Utah through education, community building and technical assistance.

Division Success

The Refugee Services Office hosted our 20th annual World Refugee Day celebration on June 21 and 22 at Big Cottonwood Regional Park. Over the years it has become a highlight of the summer for refugees and community members.

This year 4,000 people attended celebrations, which were coordinated by more than 40 partner agencies. Activities included performances by 14 refugee community groups, food prepared by refugee-owned food trucks and vendors, and a Global Market featuring 15 refugee entrepreneurs who sold hand-made or culturally relevant items.

RESETTLEMENT IN UTAH

Utah is proud to be recognized as one of the best refugee resettlement services systems in the country. The Refugee Services Office coordinates resettlement in our state, managing the majority of federal funding to support refugees, as well as ensuring ongoing services to refugees for up to five years after arrival. Three local resettlement offices, Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC), Catholic Community Services (CCS) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), provide initial resettlement services for newly arrived refugees coming to Utah. Services include airport pickup, housing, food, clothing and referrals for ongoing support. These initial services last up to 90 days, after which services funded and managed by the Refugee Services Office support refugees with employment, temporary short-term cash and medical assistance, language training, life skills training and connection to the greater community.



More than 65,000 refugees, former refugees and their children live in Utah, the majority of whom are in the Salt Lake Valley.



World Refugee Day 2024 (photo courtesy of VentureOut)



UTAH REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE OVERVIEW

Refugee Services Office

The Refugee Services Office works in collaboration with the Refugee Services Board of Advisors who meet on a quarterly basis to support and advise the office. The Board provides a forum for identifying, addressing and recommending solutions to encourage the successful integration of refugees in Utah. The office houses the State Refugee Coordinator and serves as the designated state agency to receive and direct money from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.



Our mission is to coordinate services on behalf of refugees in Utah in a collaborative way through:

1. Funding and collaboration
2. Employment and supportive services
3. Community connection

Funding and Collaboration

Utah Refugee Case Management

Since 2009, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Social Services have funded case management for all newly arrived refugees in Utah. Refugee coordinated case management is the foundation of refugee services in Utah, an outcomes-based model resulting in coordinated service delivery to provide refugees with tools and resources to become more economically and financially stable.

The Refugee Services Office funds four agencies to provide case management for refugees in Utah:

- Asian Association of Utah
- Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection
- Catholic Community Services
- International Rescue Committee

Humanitarian Center Project

In 2009, the Humanitarian Center Project was created as a partnership between Workforce Services, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and various local refugee service providers. As the only program of its kind in the U.S., the Humanitarian Center is used to teach English and provide job training to 150 newly arrived refugees each year. This program ensures that students are receiving contextualized English instruction with workforce preparation skills infused in the curriculum for three specific occupational clusters including transportation, health and food service.

Funding and Collaboration

Utah Refugee Health Program

Newly arriving refugees often have complex medical conditions that require more intensive and frequent medical treatments. By coordinating activities between local providers, resettlement agencies, local health departments, Workforce Services, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the Utah Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee Health Program facilitates and promotes programs and services for successful resettlement and integration in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner.

The program focuses on five priority areas:

- Health Screening
- Health Promotion
- Care Coordination
- Mental Health
- Tuberculosis (TB) Control

Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing and Bud Bailey

Workforce Services, in partnership with Housing Connect, administers the Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing (RESH) program for single-parent households who are enrolled in the Family Employment Program (FEP) and are employment-ready. Housing Connect provides temporary monthly rental assistance, connects refugees to services, and provides education and advocacy to help refugees maintain stable housing.

- Bud Bailey Case Management: The Bud Bailey Apartment Community has 136 units, with 45 units reserved for housing vouchers assigned to refugee families. The Refugee Services Office funds case management services in collaboration with Housing Connect for refugees living at the Bud Bailey Apartment complex to ensure that refugees have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to maintain stable housing and move toward self-sufficiency.



Funding and Collaboration

Afghan Housing Assistance

As part of the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act 2022 and Operation Allies Welcome, a sizable number of Afghan arrivals and humanitarian parolees were resettled in a short period of time. To help meet the housing needs of newly arrived Afghans, the Refugee Services Office funds limited emergency rental assistance for Afghan arrivals participating in employment and training programs.

Legal

As part of the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act 2022 and Operation Allies Welcome, the Refugee Services Office funds organizations that provide eligible Afghan populations with immigration-related legal assistance, including but not limited to immigration education, adjustment of status, family reunification and navigating the asylum process, including application, interview, interpretation and transportation as needed.

Refugee School Impact Grant and Support to Schools

The Refugee School Impact Grant and Support to School programs offer resources to new arrivals and refugee students who have been in the U.S. for under five years. The purpose of the program is to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment of school-aged refugees. The Refugee Services Office focuses these efforts on college and career readiness, English language acquisition, newcomer support and school support services coordination. The programs are run in collaboration with the Utah State Board of Education to provide funding and technical support to multiple refugee-serving school districts across the state of Utah.



Graduates of Phlebotomy Training with Salt Lake Community College

Youth Mentoring

The Youth Mentoring Program was established to promote positive civic and social engagement and support individual educational and vocational advancement. To accomplish these goals, eligible youth are matched with positive adult mentors who provide the youth with personal interaction, as well as facilitate programming to help cultivate youth-initiated mentorships. Case management is also provided to youth to support educational and career development.

Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

In an effort to assist refugee youth and families in better understanding local laws and the judicial process, the Refugee Services Office and Juvenile Justice and Youth Services (JJYS) began increased coordination in 2022. These efforts led to the creation of a new position within JJYS for a Refugee Youth Coordinator. This position is focused on building relationships and providing education for the refugee community as well as providing individual targeted support to youth and families navigating the juvenile detention system.



Adult Leadership class graduation



Phlebotomy students tour ARUP

Funding and Collaboration

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

The Refugee Services Office receives funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement to implement the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program. The state contracts with Catholic Community Services, which resettles and supports unaccompanied refugee minors brought to the U.S. by the Department of State. Other populations of unaccompanied minors are eligible for this program including victims of trafficking, asylees and special immigrant juveniles, among others.

Services provided through the program include case management, interpretation, cultural education, school coordination, mental health counseling, transportation coordination, vocational assistance, medical services coordination, legal services coordination, family preservation assistance, behavioral needs support, life skills and independent living support, mentoring, and foster parent recruitment, licensing, training and support.

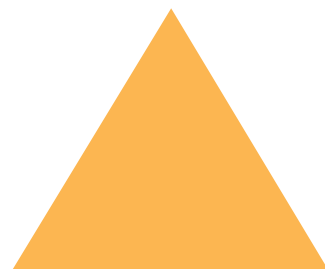
Afghan Early Childhood

As part of the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act 2022 and Operation Allies Welcome, the Refugee Services Office contracts with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services to provide an early childhood care coordination program for eligible Afghan families with children. The integrated services program focuses on children ages 5 and under. Care coordinators provide care

plans, assess family needs and connect families to services. The program focuses on early childhood development, including physical health outcomes, developmental milestones, preschool and childcare.

Services for Older Refugees

The Refugee Services Office funds Salt Lake County Adult and Aging Services to develop and administer programs for senior refugees. The purpose of this program is to assist refugee seniors in accessing existing mainstream services in the community including supportive services, citizenship resources, connection and referral to benefits resources, interpretation and translation services, and training and workshops to address their needs. The goal is to reduce social isolation of senior refugees, integrate them into the community, enhance community connections, and promote health and wellness.





Ukrainian community event held at the Utah Refugee Center

Supportive Services

Employment Services

The Refugee Services Office employment counselors serve customers participating in the Family Employment Program (FEP) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program. RSO's team of employment specialists help ensure refugees are successful in their employment search, job placement and retention. Refugee-focused employment specialists screen and assess applicants, provide workshops and services, and support employers in hiring refugees.

Upward Mobility

The upward mobility specialist works with refugees to assess and identify a long-term career pathway to gain the skills needed to achieve upward mobility and a family-sustaining wage. The career pathway can include occupational training programs, relicensing opportunities and English language learning.

Employer Services

The workforce development specialist in the Refugee Services Office supports both employers and refugees by connecting qualified candidates with employers through recruitment events, employment workshops and training opportunities.

Occupational Training

The Refugee Services Office works with employers and partners to offer targeted occupational trainings and career pathways to help refugees gain the skills needed to achieve upward mobility and a family-sustaining wage.

Connections Team

The Refugee Services Office Connections Team serves as the initial point of contact for refugees arriving at the Utah Refugee Center. In addition to providing direct employment support, the Connections Team also provides service navigation and referrals for all customers.

Refugee Integration Support Team

The Refugee Integration Support Team supports successful integration through:

- Capacity building – Building refugee community resilience to strengthen self-reliance and facilitate integration
- Crisis intervention – Providing a safety net to assist refugees in crisis resolution
- Education – Increasing knowledge for refugees to remove barriers towards integration
- Community connection – Links refugees to resources to move them toward self-sufficiency

Supportive Services

A variety of support services help refugees gain skills, choose a career, participate in workshops and more.

Housing Coordinator

The Refugee Services Office housing coordinator connects refugee customers with available housing resources and assistance. The coordinator collaborates with resettlement agencies, landlords, housing agencies and community partners to facilitate housing assistance for refugee customers.

Refugee Youth Coordinator

Supporting refugee youth arriving in Utah is a priority for the Refugee Services Office. Young refugees face a challenging transition both academically and socially. The refugee youth services coordinator provides collaboration, support and coordination to ensure that refugee youth feel supported and can access services equitably. Additionally, this position works to build relationships with refugee communities, address gaps and create new programming and opportunities.

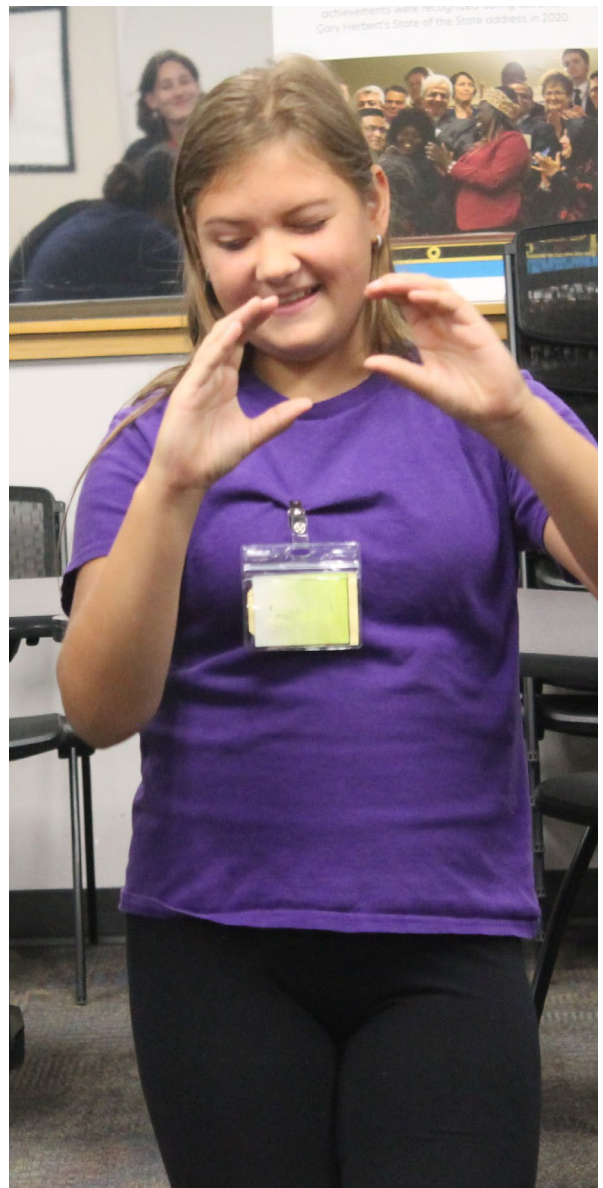
Private Sponsorship Coordinator

In 2024, Utah saw its first arrivals through the Welcome Corps private sponsorship program. As the program continues to expand, the Refugee Services Office sponsorship coordinator collaborates with private sponsorship organizations and private sponsorship groups to provide support and ensure successful resettlement, integration and self-sufficiency.

Licensed Clinical Therapist Team

The Licensed Clinical Therapist (LCT) Team offers mental health services, resources and general support to help refugees stabilize and rebuild their lives in Utah. LCTs work with refugees to overcome the many barriers they face so they can integrate smoothly into Utah's community. Using a strengths-based approach, LCTs identify barriers through

assessment and direct intervention. They then utilize resources and strategies to overcome obstacles the individual or family faces. Interventions may include direct intervention, advocacy, arbitration, training, psycho-education, mental health treatment, referral to external service providers and coordination with providers.



Youth art program held at the Utah Refugee Center



Sewing program at the Utah Refugee Center (photo courtesy of Salt Lake Mayor's Office)



The Utah Refugee Center houses the Utah Refugee Services Office team and serves as a hub for refugees.

Community Connection

Utah Refugee Center

The Utah Refugee Center houses the Utah Refugee Services Office team and serves as a hub for refugees, the local community and service providers to connect. In addition to providing walk-in support services, space is available for refugee communities and community partners to host events and programs serving refugees.

Provider Collaboration

The Refugee Services Office coordinates statewide resettlement efforts together with resettlement agencies and local providers. To ensure efficient and effective collaboration, the Refugee Services Office facilitates the following coordination:

- Providers meeting – a monthly platform for refugee-serving providers to connect and collaborate
- Quarterly consultations – consultations with providers in Salt Lake City and Logan
- Refugee Services Office e-Blast – a weekly email newsletter that contains fliers related to refugee programs and events in Utah

Refugee Services Fund

The Utah Refugee Services Fund directly supports refugees in Utah as they integrate and become contributing members of our local community. One hundred percent of donations directly support the refugee community.

Know Your Neighbor

The Know Your Neighbor Volunteer Program is a collaborative effort between the Salt Lake City Mayor's Office and the Refugee Services Office. Know Your Neighbor's goal is to integrate Utah's welcoming community and refugees resettled in the Salt Lake City area by developing friendships through volunteer opportunities. The program is based on the idea that every refugee in the Salt Lake Valley should have an American friend and that every American should have a refugee friend.

Refugee Leadership Training

The Refugee Leadership Training is an annual program for adults and youth offered in collaboration with Salt Lake Community College and American Express. The goal of the training is to provide refugees an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and connect to resources that will help benefit their communities.



Community Connection

Refugee Community Based Organizations

Refugee Community Based Organizations (RCBOs) are refugee-led nonprofits that serve the refugee population through a variety of programs, activities and other initiatives that support community growth. Examples of programs offered by organizations include English Language Learners (ELL) classes, assistance in locating suitable housing, employment skills training and job placement assistance, and programs focused on families.

The Refugee Services Office supports an average of 15 organizations per year through the RCBO Capacity Building Grant. The grant measures outcomes in three categories: (1) building organizational capacity, (2) providing educational programs, and (3) facilitating social integration. The objective of this structure is to better allow refugee communities to actively participate in their own integration.

World Refugee Day

Held internationally during the third week of June, World Refugee Day is a celebration of the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who fled their homes as a result of persecution in search of a better life and a future for their children. The Refugee Services Office, in collaboration with partner

organizations, has hosted a World Refugee Day celebration in Utah every June since 2004. It is an opportunity for the mainstream community to interact with and learn about the refugees who make Utah their home.

Sewing Program

The Utah Refugee Center houses a sewing program that is entirely run by Know Your Neighbor volunteers. The sewing program provides refugees with social support, life skills and English practice.

VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps and one of several national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The program is designed to increase the capacity of organizations to lift communities out of poverty.

The Utah VISTA Project strives to assist refugees in three ways:

1. Integration – involving and incorporating resettled refugees as equals into the local community
2. Education – bringing both refugees and the welcoming community members together to learn from each other and work together
3. Programming – developing programs to assist refugees in the process of integrating into their new home



Tech program graduation with Utah Refugee Center volunteers



Youth Leadership Program visit to the Utah State Capitol

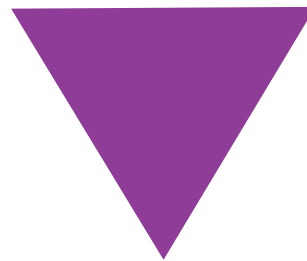
Community Connection



Public Safety

In November 2015, in response to heightened security concerns surrounding terrorism worldwide, Governor Gary Herbert directed the Utah Department of Public Safety to conduct a review of the federal screening process for refugees and security procedures related to refugee resettlement in Utah. This process led to a partnership between the Refugee Services Office and Public Safety, with a public safety officer assigned as a refugee liaison to work with local law enforcement, resettlement agencies and other organizations as a resource for and to build relationships with Utah's refugee community. This is a unique partnership in Utah and nationally, offering programs and services such as:

- U.S. law orientation classes
- Gang prevention workshops
- Law enforcement presentations
- Cultural awareness classes for law enforcement agencies



This unique partnership brings local agencies together to benefit the refugee community in Utah.



CONCLUSION

The Refugee Services Office remains committed to providing the highest quality services and best practices for refugees who now call Utah home. The work continues for both newly arrived refugees and individuals who have lived in Utah for five or more years. As part of Workforce Services, the Refugee Services Office will continue to develop, fund and support programs and services that allow refugees to become integrated members of the Utah community.





Visit refugee.utah.gov or facebook.com/UTRefugeeServices
to learn more about the Refugee Services Office.



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