

# LSI'S [EMPOWER] LUNCHEON

## WHAT DOES "REFUGEE" MEAN?

As defined by international law, a refugee is a person forced to leave his or her home country because of persecution based on race, ethnicity, religion, social group or political opinion. They seek refuge in neighboring countries, with many living in camps under difficult conditions without access to schools, employment or citizenship. When refugees cannot return safely home, they may be resettled to a third country. They do not have a choice in where they are resettled. According to the United Nations, as of 2013, there were 10.4 million refugees in the world.

## FAQ

### WHO ARE REFUGEES IN IOWA?

For decades, Iowa has helped thousands of people escape violence or persecution from countries such as Vietnam, Bosnia, Sudan, Iraq, Burundi, Bhutan and Burma (Myanmar). People of refugee status have seen war, brutal violence and have often lost friends and family members. They are also people of courage, strength and hope. They are farmers, teachers, artists and people of many other backgrounds eager to contribute their valuable skills to their new communities!

### WHAT'S THE NEED?

Imagine arriving in a new country where you don't know the language, the culture or how to find a job. Now imagine you only have 90 days to figure it all out! People of refugee status enter the United States facing long-term challenges, but are only guaranteed 90 days of support. LSI's programs provide extended support for the long haul, helping people acclimate to life in the U.S. and use the talents they brought with them to our country.

### WHAT DOES LSI DO?

Since 1947, LSI has been serving refugees in Iowa. We empower people of refugee status to pursue the quality of life they desire through connection to resources, education, training and community integration. Our programs include Global Greens agriculture initiatives, community-based English as a Second Language classes (ESL), intensive work readiness classes, child care business development, services for older refugees and many activities at our Refugee Connection Center.

### WHY DO WE FUNDRAISE?

Refugee services are perpetually underfunded, and the funding we do receive is often precarious. We are so thankful for the public and private grants we receive, as well as the generous support of corporations and individual donors. Because of caring, compassionate friends like you, people of refugee status in Des Moines have opportunities to live without fear and to contribute their valuable skills to our communities!



For more information, visit  
[www.LSIowa.org/refugee](http://www.LSIowa.org/refugee)