

# SUPPORT FOR SERVICES THAT EMPOWER REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS



As the number of refugees and immigrants around the world continues to rise, Iowa has the opportunity to carry on our long legacy of welcome. Our communities are equipped to wrap care around our newest neighbors as they build their lives in the U.S. But this important work requires attention and investment from our leaders. The Iowa Legislature must support new arrivals in Iowa and invest in services, like the RefugeeRISE Americorps program, that support new lowans with skills, education, and training to adapt to Iowa's workforce needs and become enrichers and contributors to their communities.

## What We Do:

In 2018, more than 1,100 refugees utilized the following programming:

**400+** students participated in English classes

**\$150,000**

was earned by farmers through LSI's Global Greens Program

**\$2.9 MILLION**

in assets (such as a vehicle, first home, or new business) were purchased by participants in the Match Savings Program

## How We're Helping:

In 2019, LSI's Refugee and Immigrant Services were selected to create and lead a first-of-its kind Welcome Center for refugees and immigrants in the Des Moines metro area.

Further development of this project will begin this year. The Welcome Center is a significant step toward creating access to centralized programming and development opportunities.

## Ramey's Story:

*Ramey had a lifetime of experience working as a carpenter in his home country of Iraq and when his family resettled in Des Moines, he found a job doing the work he loved. But he had bigger dreams. Ramey's entrepreneurial spirit led him to LSI's Match Savings Program, where he was connected with financial literacy classes and funds to match his savings toward the creation of his own construction business. Last year, he opened Customs by Ramey, LLC, and continues to grow his business across the Des Moines metro area.*

Iowa must remain a place of opportunity for refugees and immigrants. In 2018, funding for RefugeeRISE was cut. Previously, this program received \$300,000 in state funding and drew down an additional \$600,000 in federal dollars.

The idea of welcome is built into the very fabric of our community and we must support new arrivals of refugees who are forced to flee their home countries due to violence or persecution and are seeking a new life in the U.S. If we invest in programming across the state, Iowa will be ready to walk alongside families as they create their future in this country – and make our communities stronger.

“Because of LSI, I got the resources I needed to grow my business.”

– Ramey



Lutheran Services in Iowa

 [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org)

 [LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa)