

SUPPORT FOR SERVICES THAT EMPOWER REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS



The Iowa Legislature must continue to support the Community-Based English-as-a-Second-Language program and restore funding levels to the RefugeeRISE Americorps program. The return on investment for these initiatives is massive, as former refugees gain employment and contribute to our community. When refugees arrive in Iowa, they have an extremely limited window of support from the federal government. That's why services that connect them with skills, education, and training are critical in moving them to self-sufficiency and building Iowa's workforce.

WHAT WE DO:

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

ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE SERVICES

CAREER TRAINING AND WORKFORCE READINESS

FAMILY WELLNESS

CITIZENSHIP SERVICES

FINANCIAL LITERACY

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

OUR IMPACT:

Community-Based ESL from July 2018 to December 2018

329 participants attended an LSI-sponsored English class

7 community-based sites that are accessible and provide on-site childcare

52% of students had no schooling prior to LSI classes

CHANDRA'S STORY:

When Chandra resettled in Iowa from a refugee camp in Nepal, everything was new and she struggled to adjust. Chandra wanted to go to college to pursue her medical career, but it seemed impossible. LSI was there to provide English-as-a-Second-Language classes for Chandra and her family, and her LSI team helped her enroll in college classes. She now works as a lab assistant in a metro area pediatric clinic.

Iowa has a long and proud legacy of welcoming refugees and immigrants to our state. Please continue to make Iowa a place of opportunity and hope by supporting these crucial programs. In 2017, funding for RefugeeRISE was cut to \$200,000. Previously, it received \$300,000 in state funding, which also drew down an additional \$600,000 in federal dollars.

Iowa must also maintain its \$210,000 support level for Polk County Community-Based English-as-a-Second-Language services. Unlike other ESL programming, this curriculum is tailored especially for refugees, and classes are scheduled with their transportation and childcare needs in mind.



Photos courtesy of Adam Albrighi Photography



Lutheran Services in Iowa

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