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July 7th, 2023

18th of Tammuz 5783

Dear Congregations, Clergy, and Organizations,

On One Foot:

For the first time in nearly 40 years, there is a U.S. government program supporting private refugee sponsorship led by civilians just like you. Here's what to know and how the Jewish community can help:

Welcome Corps: A New Track for Refugee Resettlement:

Welcome Corps builds upon the experimental resettlement program used for Afghans and Ukrainians over the past two years. Private civilians created "welcome circles" of 5-8 individuals often connected with a congregation to welcome a family and helped them during their first six months in the U.S. Now, the model is being embraced to help address the years-long backlog of those waiting in line in the U.S. Refugee Assistance Program.

Regardless of whether you have a resettlement agency in your area, you and your community now have a way to directly welcome and aid refugees in restarting their lives. As a certified Private Sponsorship Organization, HIAS can help guide you through building a welcome circle and receiving certification to participate in Welcome Corps. We will also provide you with expertise, resources and coaching in the actual work of resettlement.

Take Action:

circles here. If these requirements sound plausible, reach out to schedule an initial consult with **Meredith Levy**, our Jewish Community Outreach Coordinator for Private Sponsorship.

What Else To Know Beyond Welcome Corps:

- Tell Congress to support the life-changing "Asylum Seeker Work Authorization" Act. **Call or email** your representative using the HIAS easy take-action tools!
- HIAS' virtual programming continues this summer. Consider joining the July 11th webinar about the current situation for Afghans or the July 18th webinar about family reunification for refugees and asylees. **Details for all of HIAS' public programming can be found here.**
- Know Jewish clergy who care about refugees? Let them know that they should be part of our **HIAS Clergy Council**.

In Solidarity,
Rabbi Sarah Bassin
HIAS Director of Clergy and Congregations

HIAS, the world's oldest and only Jewish, refugee organization, works in more than 20 countries across five continents to ensure that refugees and displaced persons can live in safety and with dignity. Once, we helped refugees because they were Jewish. Today we help refugees because we are Jewish.

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