



# How Congregations Can Support Newly-Arrived Asylum Seekers in San Francisco

**Presented by:**

Kelly Younger, MSW

*Manager–Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Teams (NEAT) Program*

Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI)

# Our Mission & Work



Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity is a multifaith organization working for the dignity and full inclusion of immigrants and people impacted by incarceration.

As people of faith, we seek justice that upholds the sacred dignity and rights of every person through:

- Advocacy for Immigrant Justice & Decarceration
- Accompaniment/Welcome
- Leadership Development

# Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Teams (NEAT) Program



~Radical Welcome~

We accompany newly arrived immigrants in the beginning stages of resettling in the U.S. who have no other support system



# Meet Raquel and Her Family

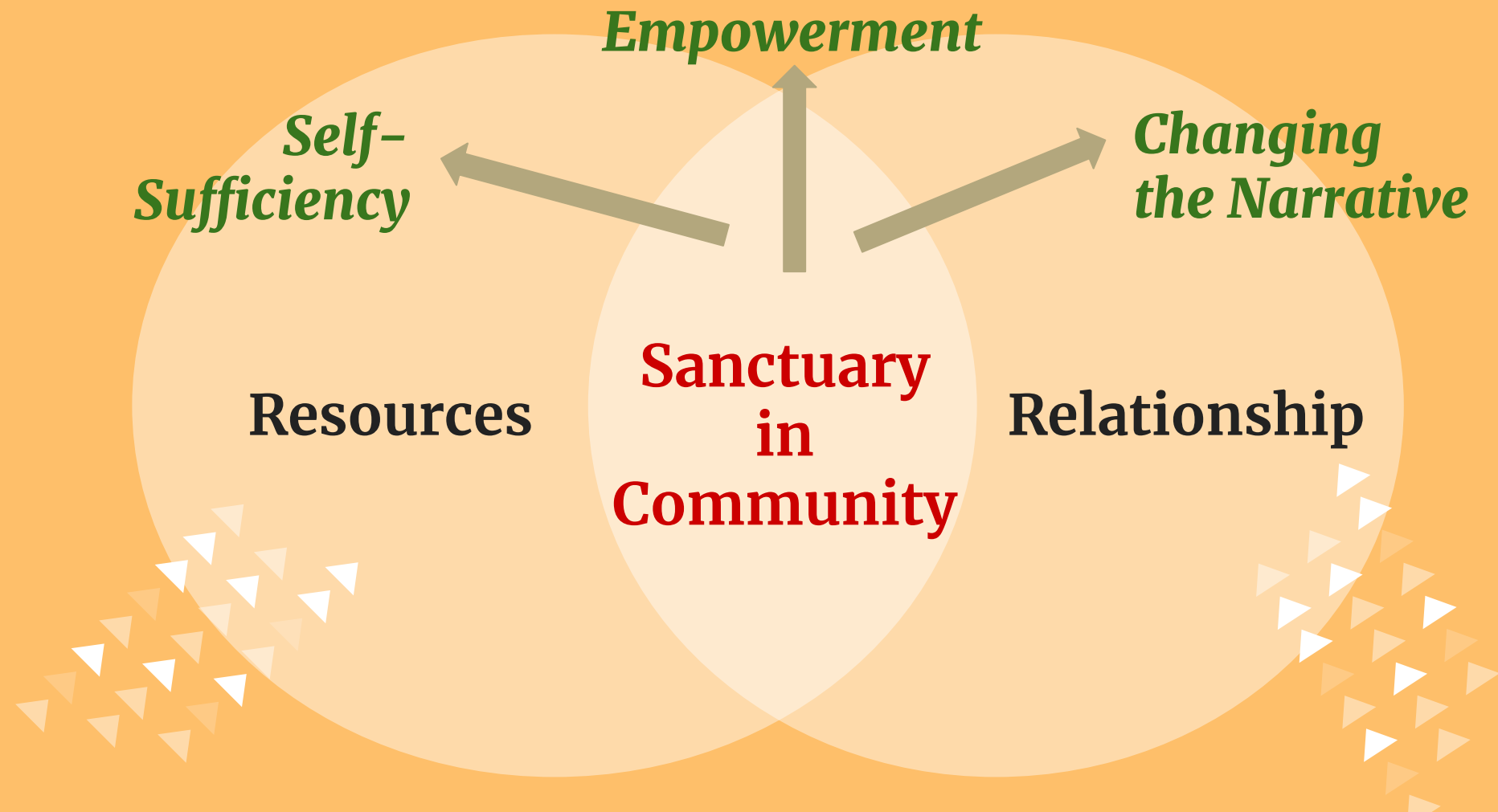
She arrived from El Salvador two months ago with her children, after traveling by foot and hopping the Beast train through Mexico.

She fled death threats from gang members who murdered her husband, destroyed her business, and kidnapped her son.

The police tried to bribe her when she went to them for help

Raquel is seeking asylum

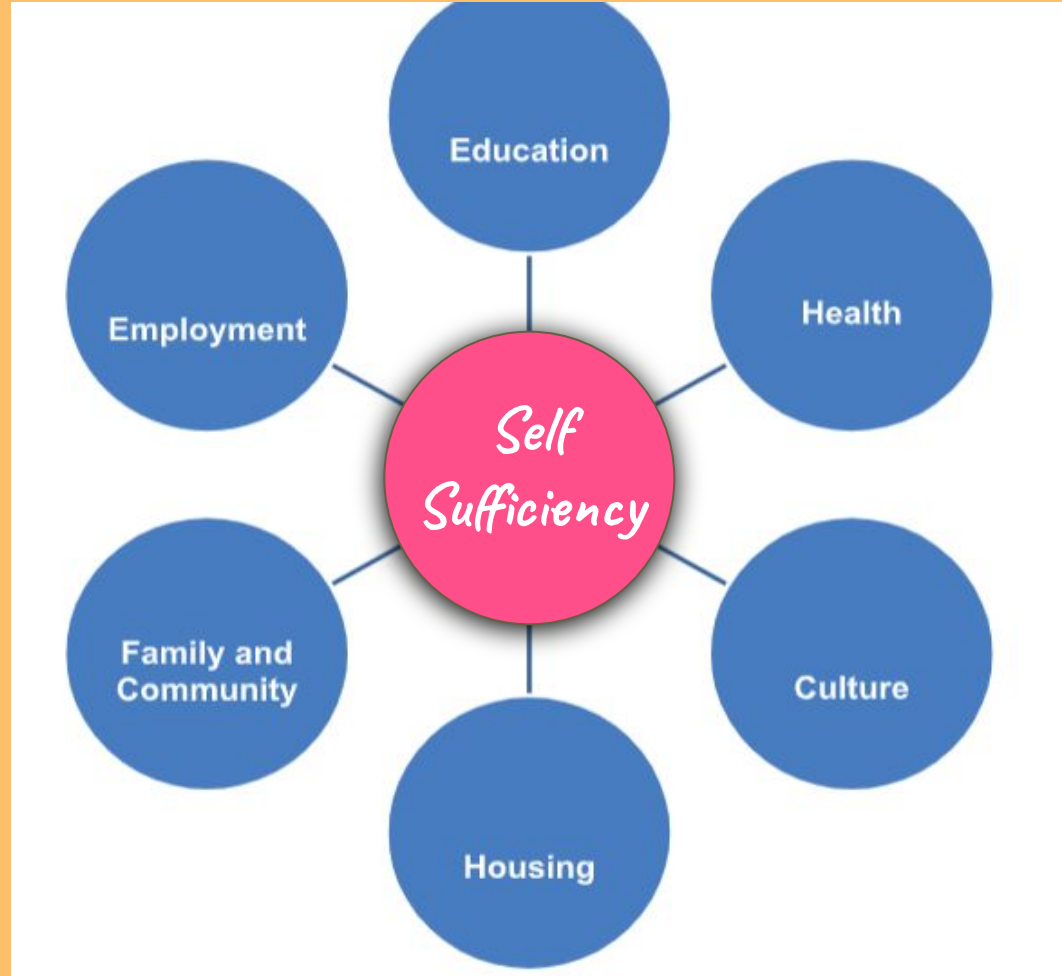




# Resources

Teams support immigrants' *Self-Sufficiency* as they establish their lives and access local resources according to their goals, such as:

- Food banks
- Health clinics
- Public transit
- Legal support
- Housing
- Education





# Relationships & Healing Justice

- Directly-impacted heal from oppression
- Hear messages that uplift their worth
- Offer opportunities to contribute their gifts
- Express their vision for the future
- Give space to express their cries of grief, rage, and indignation



# Asylum Seekers in SF Today

*Since 2015 in San Francisco:*

More than eight SF congregations have accompanied newcomers seeking safety through NEAT

30+ people accompanied from Honduras, Russia, Ukraine, Venezuela, Argentina, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ghana, Colombia





# SF Response Planning Efforts

- **Response Efforts** being led by Human Services Agency, Emergency Management, and Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA)
- **Respite Shelter Activation** – the City is prepared to activate a short term shelter in response to a mass arrival of migrants via bus or plane
- **SF Interfaith Council** may be called upon to continue longer-term support.



**Every day there are immigrants arriving – we need your help to create a long term solution!**

# How you can Help: Accompaniment



“We have to walk beside and be with people in order to really understand, we can’t really walk in other people's shoes, but we can walk next to them very closely to pay attention and offer our accompaniment unconditionally. To not expect gratitude or acknowledgement or a meaningful relationship. We grow together, that’s what it’s about.” *-NEAT Volunteer*

# How You Can Help: Hosted Housing



**NEW ANCHOR**

## **In private homes:**

- Host an individual or family in your home, in-law unit, or apartment building
- free or reduced cost for 3-6 months

## **In your congregation's space:**

- Convert your space: add a shower
- Legal and
- Berkeley Friends Meeting
- Buena Vista Methodist in Alameda
- University Lutheran in Berkeley



# How You Can Help: Sponsorship



“Paper” sponsors for people getting out of immigrant detention centers

“Paper” sponsors for people asking for sponsorship from abroad (ex: Ukraine, Afghanistan, Uganda, Kyrgyzstan, Venezuela, Nicaragua)

In-depth Sponsorship – Welcome Corps



# We're on a roll...Let's transform SF's Welcome!

SF Welcome Center – 48+ beds converted SRO

SF Ministry home – 8 or more rooms



# Next Steps

- 1) **SF's Sanctuary policy is currently under threat!** Please join us next *Wed. March 8th, 9-10:30am* to learn more at IM4HI monthly coalition call on immigration, advocacy, and accompaniment. Put email in chat if you'd like to attend or contact [gking@im4humanintegrity.org](mailto:gking@im4humanintegrity.org)
- 2) **What do we need from the City to get involved?** Write feedback in the chat.
- 3) **What support do you need from IM4HI to get involved?**
  - Tour of congregational housing?
  - Sponsorship webinar?
  - Partner with other SF congregations to create An accompaniment team?



# Contact Me!



Kelly Younger, NEAT Program Manager

[kyounger@im4humanintegrity.org](mailto:kyounger@im4humanintegrity.org)

(650) 464-7423