WORKFORCE SERVICES
REFUGEE SERVICES

BOARD OF ADVISORS FOR THE

UTAH REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE

REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR • DECEMBER 1, 2022

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WORKFORCE SERVICES
REFUGEE SERVICES

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DEAR GOVERNOR COX,

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Refugee Services Office (RSO) annual report from your Board of Advisors for state fiscal year 2022 (SFY22). This report chronicles the work of more than 30 public employees assisting refugees in the state.

This has been an unprecedented year for resettlement in Utah following the emergency evacuations in Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine. Both tragedies remind us of the opportunity we have to help refugees in our communities and neighborhoods build a new life. We are grateful for your support and the generous outpouring we have received from community members, which has made the resettlement of both groups possible.

Between October 2021 and February 2022, we resettled just over 900 Afghan arrivals. This group is composed mostly of humanitarian parolees who were allowed to enter the country because of their vulnerabilities. We also began to receive Ukrainian humanitarian parolees. The pace, scale and logistics of Ukrainian arrivals will differ from Afghan arrivals; they will qualify for most traditional refugee benefits but will need to apply for work authorization.

Uniting for Ukraine was launched by the U.S. government to provide a way for displaced Ukrainians to come to the U.S. through a sponsor for up to two years. This model will allow Ukrainian humanitarian parolees to resettle in the U.S. with the help of individual sponsors while the established humanitarian parolee pathway will continue to support Afghan arrivals.

Federal Fiscal Year	Refugee Arrivals in Utah
2017	799
2018	421
2019	472
2020	238
2021	208
2022	1,570

We look forward to helping new arrivals and refugees throughout the state thrive and build a productive life for themselves and their families.

Casey Cameron
Executive Director, Department of Workforce Services

Refugee Services Office

OVERVIEW

We believe **ALL REFUGEES** should have access to family-sustaining employment opportunities.

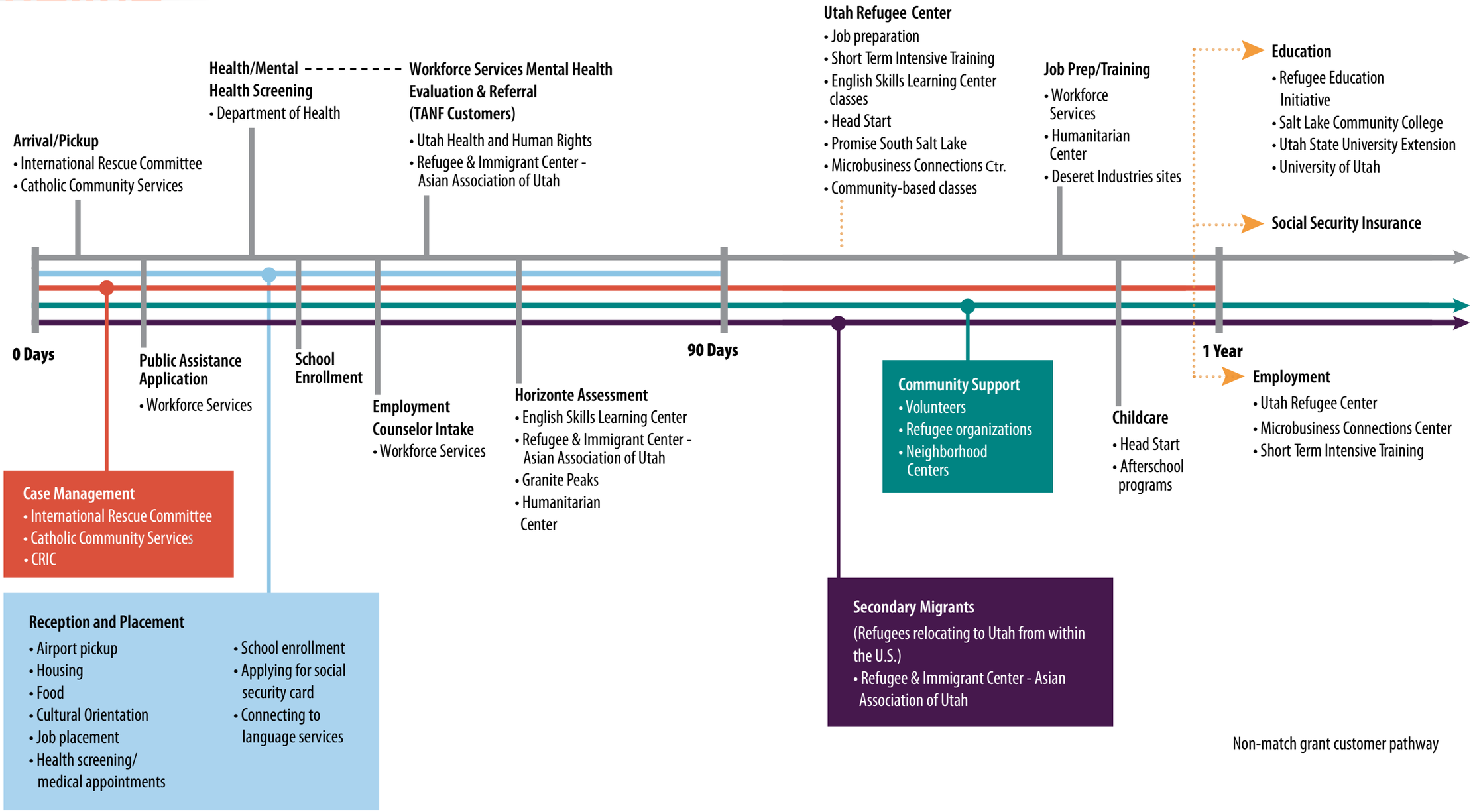
THE REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE (RSO) works in collaboration with the Refugee Services Board of Advisors, who meet on a quarterly basis to support and advise RSO. The Board of Advisors provides a forum for identifying, addressing and recommending solutions to encourage the successful integration of refugees in the state of Utah.

RSO houses the State Refugee Coordinator and serves as the designated state agency to receive and direct money from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). In 2022 the role of State Refugee Coordinator and Refugee Services Office Director were combined to allow for more seamless service delivery.

Most ORR funds are granted to community service providers and other agencies. RSO is also home to a dedicated refugee employment team, which administers the Family Employment Program and Refugee Cash Assistance program for Utah's newly arrived refugees. The team works in a collaborative environment to develop employment plans and offers job preparation services to refugee customers. Additionally, RSO assists in the support of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families-funded refugee programs, including case management, housing, ESL and other employment programs for Utah's refugees.

Refugee Services

Timeline



Non-match grant customer pathway

Resettlement in
UTAH

THERE ARE 27 MILLION REFUGEES worldwide and only about .05% will be resettled by a developed country like the U.S. Most will spend years in refugee camps disconnected from family, friends, home and life as they have known it because of threats to their safety.

Utah is proud to be recognized as one of the most welcoming states to refugees and as having one of the best refugee resettlement services systems in the country. RSO coordinates refugee resettlement in Utah, managing the majority of federal funding the state receives to support refugees, as well as ensuring ongoing services to refugees for up to five years after arrival. Two local resettlement offices, Catholic Community Services (CCS) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), provide initial resettlement services for newly arrived refugees coming to Utah. Services include airport pickup, housing, food, clothing and referral to ongoing services. These initial services last up to 90 days, after which services funded and managed by RSO support refugees including employment, temporary short-term cash and medical assistance, language training, lifeskills training, and connection to the greater community.

An estimated 65,000 refugees, former refugees and their children live in Utah, the majority of whom are in the Salt Lake Valley. In 2022, the largest groups of new arrivals included Afghans (more than 1,200), Congolese (178), Syrians (83) and Sudanese (79). We also began seeing a large number of Ukrainians.

Finding a good job is critical to a newly arrived refugee. They also need connections to the greater community and language learning.

Afghan Arrivals

As of August 31, 2021, the U.S. quickly evacuated more than 65,000 Afghans from Afghanistan. This group includes individuals who worked alongside the U.S. and our allies as translators and interpreters as well as their family members.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

2022 Arrivals

Afghans .... 1,200+
Congolese 178
Syrians..... 83
Sudanese 79

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox was one of the first to reach out to President Biden and offer support. As a result, between October 2021 and February 2022, we have resettled just over 900 Afghan arrivals. This group is composed mostly of humanitarian parolees who were allowed to enter the country because of their vulnerabilities. They will receive supportive services and access to mainstream refugee benefits for up to two years. They can apply for permanent asylee status during that time.

As we resettled Afghans in Utah we experienced a generous outpouring of support, donations and service from businesses, religious and civic institutions, and individuals. We opened our arms wide to welcome Afghan allies and their families to the safety of our state and ensure they had safe housing, food, baby formula and cleaning supplies, medical and mental health care, and support to enroll students in school. We are helping them find employment, receive English language support, match their skills and experience with employers, and have a safe haven to build a new life.

Afghan Community Fund

On October 19, 2021, Gov. Cox, along with officials from Zions Bank, World Trade Center Utah, Utah's refugee resettlement network and the Afghan community, announced the launch of the Afghan Community Fund. The Afghan Community Fund is a public-private partnership to support community needs, medical, food, household and other basic necessities for arrivals where public funding is inadequate. Following the #OneUtah approach, the Refugee Advisory Board created the fund to align the efforts of the state's two resettlement agencies, IRC and CCS, and other partners, such as the Asian Association of Utah (AAU), Cache Valley Refugee and Immigrant Connections (CRIC) and the Utah Muslim Civic League (UMCL).

In just five months, the fund surpassed its fundraising goal of $1 million. The funds have been used for immigration assistance, emergency needs, driver training, transportation assistance and other needs not covered by public funds.

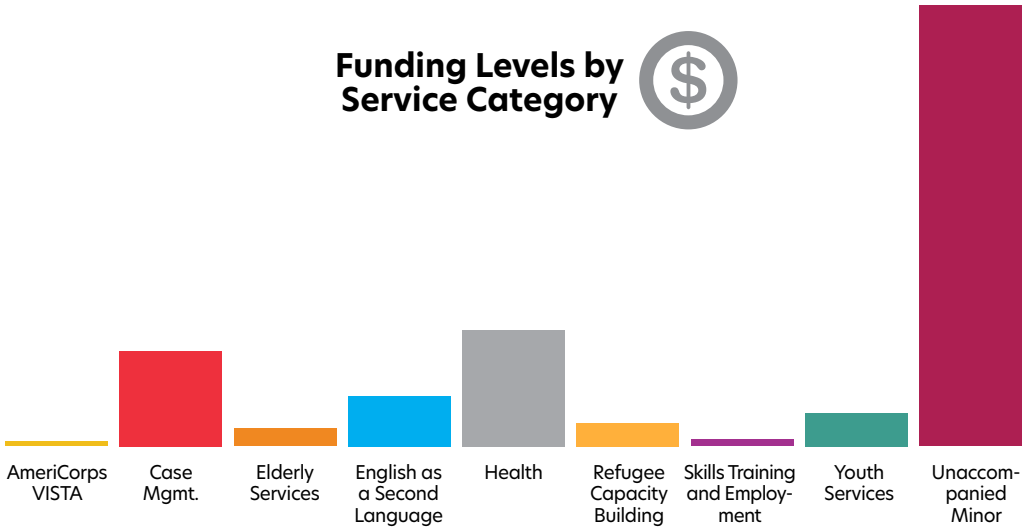
In Utah, we experienced a generous outpouring of support as we welcomed Afghan allies and their families.

Department of Workforce Services

FUNDED SERVICES

THE MAJORITY OF REFUGEE services are federally funded through the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (with the exception of $200,000 provided by the state of Utah). RSO administers approximately $500,000 from TANF and $6.7 million from ORR for refugee services in Utah. Overall funding levels are broken out by the level of service listed below.

Funding Levels by Service Category



AmeriCorps VISTA	$25,955
Case Management	$888,205
Elderly Services	$142,604
English as a Second Language (ESL)	$464,634
Health	$1,092,509
Refugee Capacity Building Organizations	$198,075
Skills Training and Employment	$44,364
Youth Services	$289,847
Unaccompanied Minors	$4,138,453

Utah

REFUGEE CENTER

THE UTAH REFUGEE CENTER serves as a hub for refugees, the local community and service providers to connect. Refugees can access employment, support and educational programming onsite. The Center serves two main purposes:

1. to foster opportunities for refugees to access family-sustaining employment, and
2. to support refugee communities' efforts to find appropriate solutions towards integration.

Programming Partners

- English Skills Learning Center
- Salt Lake Community College
- Utah State University 4-H
- Microbusiness Connection Center
  - International Rescue Committee
- Salt Lake City Mayor's Office — Know Your Neighbor

Core Partners

•Salt Lake Community College

•Utah Department of Workforce Services

•Utah State University

Since reopening for in-person programming last August, Center usage has gone up from 20% of capacity to 75%. Additionally, average quarterly visits have nearly doubled from federal fiscal year 2021 (FY21) to federal fiscal year 2022 (FY22) and community programming attendance is at its highest since 2019 (over 1,000 participants in the second quarter of 2022).

- Average quarterly number of refugee visits: 4,195
- Average quarterly number of activities held at the Utah Refugee Center: 212
  - 76% led by Workforce Services
  - 14% led by partners
  - 10% led by refugee communities

Refugee Services Office

ACTIVITIES

EMPLOYMENT Coordinated Case Management vs. Refugee Integration Pathway (IRC & CS) Refugee Coordinated Case Management

- Initial Intake
- Initial Assessment
- R& P Process

- 6-Month Assessm.
- MG Ends
- First Employment

- 12-month Assessment

- 18-month Assessment

- 24-month Assessment

Coordinated Refugee Integration Pathway

0 Months
Full Assessment Period

- Initial 3rd party intake
- Initial LCT assessment
- Action plan developed
- Appropriate referrals made
- Initial 3rd party ELL assessment
- Appropriate ELL referrals made
- Assistance with Transportation

6 Months
In-depth Assesment/ Progress

- 6-month assessment by LCT
- Follow-up ELL assessment
- Intentional job placement
- Upward Mobility Assessment
- Career Plan
- Referrals made based on self-reliance plan

12 Months
Remaining Needs Assessment/ Finalization?

- 12-month assessment
- Evaluate where customer is in comparison to established benchmarks
- Recommend to continue, end or alternative support
- Upward Mobility Assessment
- Career Plan follow up
- Connect to URETC
- Initiate Citizenship and Green Card Activities

18 Months
Finalization?

- 18-month assessment
- Evaluate where customer is in comparison to established benchmarks
- Recommend to continue, end or alternative support
- Upward Mobility Assessment
- Career Plan follow up
- Connect to URETC

24 Months
Finalization Review if Needed

- Final assessment
- Evaluate where customer is in comparison to established benchmarks
- Transition plan
- Connection to URETC

Case Management

Since 2009, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Social Services have funded case management for all newly arrived refugees. Refugee coordinated case management is the foundation of refugee services in Utah, connecting refugees to resources that will improve integration into the communities in which they live. Our case management model includes an initial assessment followed by an assessment every six months of each individual, 16 years of age and above, conducted in coordination with the RSO Licensed Clinical Therapist (LCT) and resettlement agency case manager (CM). The LCT team and the refugee case management agencies completed 636 assessments for the period of July 2021 through June 2022.

In 2017, RSO shifted to an outcomes-based case management assessment, resulting in coordinated service delivery to provide refugees with tools and resources to become more economically and financially stable. In FY22, RSO funded up to 24 months of case management for newly arrived refugees. Based on the reported data, at the end of 24 months of case management services, refugees who had an assessment show an overall increase in progress. Of assessed refugees who reached the end of their 24 month case management period in FY22:

- 99% can navigate community support services
- 78% are progressing towards sustainable employment
- 79% can successfully navigate educational and training opportunities
- 57% speak functional English
- 95% live in safe and affordable housing
- 99% are able to navigate the healthcare system to address their healthcare needs
- 96% are able to accomplish life skill tasks such as transportation, parenting, and US civic, legal and law enforcement systems

During FY22, 1,570 individuals were resettled through Catholic Community Services (CCS),the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC). There were 110 secondary resettlement refugees aided by the Refugee and Immigrant Center Asian Association of Utah (AAU).

- CCS resettled 163 cases including 469 individuals in FY22. Of those, 306 individuals were Afghan parolees. In addition, they

assisted 163 Ukrainian parolees and 26 asylees.

- IRC resettled 302 cases including 1,082 individuals in FY22. Of those, 584 individuals were Afghan parolees. They did not serve any asylees in FY22.
- CRIC resettled 15 Afghan parolee cases (19 individuals) through Operation Allies Welcome.
- AAU helped 7 cases including 17 individuals who were refugee secondary migrants. They also helped 10 cases including 13 individuals who were asylees or victims of trafficking; 61 cases including 80 individuals who were Cuban or Afghan parolees; and 3 individuals, 3 cases who were parolees.

Employment Services

RSO's team of employment specialists help ensure refugees are successful in their employment search, job placement and retention. Refugee-focused employment specialists screen and assess applicants, provide workshops and services, and support employers in hiring refugees. We continue to see a significant increase in the number of employers who are interested in learning about and hiring refugees.

RSO's Job Development Team has adapted to meet the needs of customers seeking employment in the post-pandemic job market. This data demonstrates the efforts the team has made in responding to the increase in newly arrived refugees:

Job placements:

306

Average hourly wage:

$16.11

During SFY22, RSO's employment team helped an average of 230 refugee customers per quarter, with an average of 100 quarterly job acquisitions and a 65% retention rate.

RSO served 392 customers as part of the Family Employment Program (FEP) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) programs. RSO successfully closed 156 cases and achieved a positive closure rate of 87% percent for employment or higher earnings. The current overall average hourly wage for RCA and FEP customers increased to $15.84 an hour.

Supportive services provided by RSO's employment team during SFY21 include (based on quarterly averages):

- 753 supportive services to job seekers, including job applications, resumes, mock interviews, translation and transportation
- More than 100 employment-related events, including job fairs, resume workshops, job connections, application labs, interview preparation, employer education, and networking and employer site tours
- 9,424 services provided to Utah employers
- 169 distinct employers engaged in hiring refugees

Humanitarian Center

In 2009, the Humanitarian Center Project was created as a partnership between Workforce Services, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and various local refugee service providers. As the only program of its kind in

the U.S., the Center is used to teach English and provide job training to 150 newly arrived refugees (75 referred by Workforce Services and 75 referred by Latter-day Saint bishops) for 12 months at a time. In SFY22, 96 refugees attended the program and 54 participants found jobs. Participants can spend eight months in the program, however a significant number of participants leave earlier than eight months for employment opportunities. In SFY21, 56% of refugees in the program were placed on the job with wages over $12 an hour. Due to low numbers of newly arrived refugees and closures due to COVID-19, the number of participants in this program dropped in SFY21. However, with the increase in new arrivals and COVID-19 restrictions being removed, participation is increasing significantly.

Refugee Supportive Housing Assistance (RESH)

Workforce Services, in partnership with Housing Connect, administers the Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing program for single-parent households who are prepared to work. For the period of July 2021 to June 2022, the program served eight households including three new refugee households with two exits from the program due to employment or an income increase. Participation in this program was impacted by both fewer refugee arrivals into the state during this period as well as COVID-19.

Bud Bailey Case Management

The Bud Bailey Apartment Community has 136 units, with 45 units reserved for housing vouchers assigned to refugee families. A contract agreement between RSO and Housing Connect supports two case managers who currently provide case management services to 40 refugee voucher households. The areas of focus for the refugee families are:

- housing stability
- financial capability/self-sufficiency
- family services for after-school programs

The case managers at the Bud Bailey Apartment Community are using a case management assessment tool that tracks progress in the

Workforce Services, in partnership with Housing Connect, administers the Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing program for single-parent households who are prepared to work.

seven integration outcome areas. The outcomes for the period of July 2021 to June 2022 demonstrate the following progress:

1. 70% of assessed refugees, 18 years of age and older, show improvement in employment outcomes
2. 100% live in safe and affordable housing
3. 70% can successfully navigate educational and training opportunities
4. 70% understand how to access health care systems
5. 90% navigate community support services
6. 70% speak functional English
7. 79% are able to accomplish life skills tasks such as transportation, parenting, and U.S. civic, legal and law enforcement systems
8. 50% of employed refugees are making $12 an hour or higher

Short-term Occupational Trainings

Short-term occupational training improves employment outcomes. RSO, in partnership with Salt Lake Community College, continues to expand short-term training offerings. RSO was able to offer a successful Warehousing and Distribution program, Phlebotomy program and IT Training program. In addition, RSO is in the process of developing several new trainings including Diesel Mechanic, Pharmacy Technician, Medical Assistant and Engineering recertification.

Warehousing and Distribution

One warehousing and distribution training was held in FY21, serving three students and resulting in a 100% graduation rate. All three students are currently employed in the industry with an average wage of $16.50 an hour.

Phlebotomy

Phlebotomy continues to be a very popular training with refugee communities. Four

phlebotomy trainings were held this year with an additional training scheduled to complete on Dec 16, 2022. Twenty-five students completed, or are on track to complete, phlebotomy training with a 99% graduation rate. Of the students that have completed the training, 16 are employed with an average rate of pay of $15.83 an hour. Seven students are scheduled to complete the training in Dec 2022.

Tech Training

Amazon Web Services (AWS) training was piloted at RSO this year. In addition, Java training for refugee youth was completed. These nine-month trainings are popular among refugee communities. The AWS training had 13 participants; 12 graduated and received their certification and four are currently employed in the industry making between $50,000 and $71,000 a year. The Java training for refugee youth had 10 students that participated. Four of those students graduated and obtained their certificate. These students are currently in high school. They aren't yet looking for work in the industry but already have their certification and will be able to look for work in the industry when they graduate.

Upward Mobility

In SFY22, RSO continued to conduct upward mobility assessments for newly arrived refugees and those interested in short-term training opportunities. The Upward Mobility Specialist meets with new arrivals at six months as part of their case management plan. The goal of this initial meeting is to map out a longer-term upward mobility strategy for each new arrival to help identify a pathway to a living wage that can support their family. During this performance year, the upward mobility planner met with 161 refugees to ensure they have the tools and support necessary to be successful.

A key strategy of upward mobility involves short-term training where refugees can learn English along with employment skills in trades that pay higher wages. Some short-term training offered

The goal of Upward Mobility is to help each new arrival find training opportunities and map out a long-term strategy plan to earn a supporting wage for their family.

in partnership with Salt Lake Community College include forklift and warehousing, phlebotomy and IT. English taught in the classes is specific to the training industry.

All refugees in short-term training meet with the Upward Mobility Coordinator to create a unique plan specific to them.

INTEGRATION

Community Team

The RSO Community Team supports successful integration for refugees through:

- **Capacity Building:** Building refugee community resilience that strengthens self-reliance and facilitates integration
- **Crisis Intervention:** Providing a safety net to assist refugees in crisis resolution
- **Education:** Increasing knowledge for refugees to remove barriers towards integration
- **Community Connection:** Linking refugees to resources to move them towards self-sufficiency

This year, in response to the influx of Afghan and Ukrainian refugees, we added specialists to work specifically with each of these communities. These specialists provide culturally appropriate support and resources to help build a solid foundation for Afghan and Ukrainian individuals in Utah.

On average, quarterly (SFY22), the Community Team:

493
Distinct refugee individuals per quarter served

535+
Unique services provided, such as interpretation, advocacy, applications, teaching and making appointments, and referrals to available mainstream community resources

190
Led and supported 190 events and workshops focused on economic stability, education, health and life skills

900+
Outreach to individuals for recruitment and connections to services per quarter

English as a Second Language

Since the beginning of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program in 1975, the abilities to speak, read and write English are the major indicators for a person to become self-sufficient and eventually integrate into the greater community. With the growing diversity of refugees resettled in Utah and the low literacy levels of some of these major groups, ensuring the literacy of all refugees has become an increasing challenge.

English language instruction funding provides English Language Learner (ELL) training for refugees enrolled in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Humanitarian Center skills training program, as well as classes in various locations and for different English language skills levels, including work readiness English language classes.

In the last six months of the training program 60% of students demonstrated excellent progress in gaining English proficiency competencies with 89% class attendance.

In 2018, in collaboration with ELL providers, RSO moved toward teaching functional English to support better employment placement, as well as competency-based metrics. RSO continues to collaborate with English as a Second Language (ESL) training providers in the community and contracts with them for services related to English testing and support for training programs and hosts classes onsite at the Refugee Center. Courses include Citizenship courses, Food Handlers permits, occupational training and others.

In FFY22, RSO purchased 500 licenses to an online ELL platform, Voxy EnGen. This program allows refugees to improve their English skills daily, without barriers such as transportation and childcare. RSO is partnering with other refugee-serving organizations including Horizonte and University Neighborhood Partners to enroll students in the program. In the past nine months, more than 70 refugees have used the program for a total of 785 hours of study time.

Health Department Support for Refugees

Newly arriving refugees often have complex medical conditions that require more intensive and frequent medical treatments. By coordinating activities between local

Photo credit: Venture Out!

Photo credit: Venture Out!

providers, resettlement agencies, local health departments, Workforce Services, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the Utah Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee Health Program facilitates and promotes programs and services for successful resettlement and integration in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner.

The program focuses on five priority areas:

- Health Screening
- Care Coordination
- Mental Health
- Tuberculosis (TB) Control
- Health Promotion

The Refugee Health Program has extensive experience working within refugee resettlement, particularly refugee health. Staff include a Program Manager (who is also the State Refugee Health Coordinator), Health Screening Coordinator and assistant, Refugee Wellness Specialist, Health Promotion Coordinator, Health Equity Specialist, and Billing Specialist. Areas of expertise include: epidemiology, data collection and analysis, program management, quality management, provision of clinical services, contract management and monitoring, budget management and fiscal oversight, and community collaboration.

A remarkable effort was made this last year to coordinate an enormous influx of refugee arrivals from Afghanistan and Ukraine, with total screenings surpassing the previous four years combined. The Refugee Health Program recruited and on-boarded new health screening providers, conducted trainings, coordinated with national partners, created database reports, hired new staff, and managed additional contracts with community partners to provide invaluable health services. The entire refugee health network showed incredible dedication, coordination, and flexibility.

During FFY22, the Refugee Health Program reported:

- 1,701 new refugee arrivals completed an initial health screening
- 6,333 individual services were provided to new arrivals including appointment coordination for health screening/specialty visits, transportation, interpretation and one-on-one health orientations

- 1,316 received mental health screening and 256 accepted a mental health referral for further mental health evaluation and counseling
- 85% completed domestic screening for Tuberculosis (TB)
- 536 received Health Promotion programming

Licensed Clinical Therapist Team

The RSO Licensed Clinical Therapist (LCT) Team offers mental health services, resources and general support to help refugees stabilize and rebuild their lives here in Utah. LCTs work with refugees to overcome the many barriers they face so they can integrate smoothly into Utah's community.

LCTs are actively involved in professional development to provide quality services with a greater range of experience and skills to offer effective, innovative solutions. Using a strengths-based approach, LCTs identify barriers through assessment and direct intervention. They then utilize resources and strategies to overcome obstacles the individual or family faces. Interventions may include direct intervention, advocacy, arbitration, training, psycho-education, mental health treatment, referral to external service providers, and coordination with providers. The LCTs collaborate with other teams and providers when necessary services are unavailable to seek out or create alternative solutions.

The LCT team conducts several hundred case management assessments annually to monitor progress towards integration in their new community.

The LCT team, in collaboration with the RSO Community Team, launched two action groups to address critical needs in the refugee community. The first is the High-Risk Youth Action Team targeting youth at risk of joining gangs or committing crimes. The team coordinates with other agencies and providers to identify at-risk youth, refer to existing services and develop a direct intervention program to build strong, resilient families. The second is the Frequent Utilizer Action Team. Their goal is to help individual refugees who use RSO services frequently to access critical resources needed to stabilize their lives in Utah. This team works to identify the gaps in services and address individuals' needs through referrals, programs and services.

From July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, the LCT team:

- Served 620 customers with over 1,000 referrals and direct services provided.
- Performed over 760 mental health and case management assessments.

Photo credit: Venture Out!

The capacity grant supports the development and overall integration of Utah's refugee population by building and facilitating sustainable programs.

Photo credit: Venture Out!

Refugee Capacity Building

The 2021-22 Refugee Community-Based Organization (RCBO) Capacity Building Grant, a collaboration between Workforce Services and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is a crucial tool supporting the development, organization and overall integration of Utah's refugee population.

Through this grant, RCBOs grow their ability to successfully build and facilitate sustainable programs around expected outcomes. Additionally, they broaden their organization's scope through Workforce Services' required grant trainings to address common gaps in organizational capacity, identified in a mediated assessment with each community organization at the beginning of the grant period.

During the last grant term between July 2021 and June 2022, 15 community-based organizations were funded to facilitate 26 unique programs. These programs focused on assisting refugee communities with integration, improving their well-being and teaching the basic skills crucial for success in the United States. During this period, 1,501 unique participants attended more than 982 program workshops. These organizations also partnered with 138 outside organizations with the support of more than 133 volunteers. Community leaders made 1,444 home visits which resulted in 428 individuals being referred to programs and resources.

Refugee Leadership Training

The Refugee Leadership Training is a partnership between Salt Lake Community College, RSO and American Express. The goal of the training is to provide refugees an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and connect to resources that will help benefit their communities. This year marked the eleventh year the training was offered to adult refugees and the fourth year for youth.

Adult Cohort

Upon finishing a 16-week training, participants received a certificate of completion from Salt Lake Community College. Participants included eight men and six women representing seven refugee communities. Leadership topics focused on public speaking, assessing community needs, civic responsibility and conflict resolution. Each year a highlight of this class is touring the state capitol and learning how government functions in Utah. Additionally, this year each student will be developing and implementing a community service project to employ the skills they are learning throughout the course.

Youth Cohort

For the fourth annual youth leadership class, RSO led a 12-week course focusing on personal, organizational and community leadership. The youth cohort consisted of seven boys and 14 girls from 11 different refugee communities, all of whom received a certificate of completion from Salt Lake Community College. Similar to the adult cohort, the youth class is also highlighted by a tour of the state capitol.

Refugee School Impact Grant

The Refugee School Impact (RSI) program offers resources to new arrivals and refugee students who have been in the U.S. under five years. The purpose of the program is to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment of school-aged refugees. RSO focuses these efforts on college and career readiness, English language acquisition, newcomer support and school support services coordination. The grant's primary objectives include:

- Broad partnerships focused on newly arriving refugee populations, such as cultural orientation, refugee parent-teacher meetings and school orientations
    - In 2022, Granite School District (GSD) used this funding to ensure refugee students attended school regularly and fulfilled graduation requirements. During this period, GSD provided service to 281 students, and Canyons School District (CSD) provided service to 177 students.
- Programming that supports integration of ORR-served youth into school systems such as English Language Learner, credit recovery and summer programming, afterschool programming, and limited case management services
    - In 2022, GSD transitioned the Tumaini program, which supports refugee and New American students, to operate as a district-wide network that supports youth and families in registration, onboarding, academic services, and case-specific resources. In addition to providing educational and family resources to refugee learners, CSD used this funding to develop and implement educator and staff training, classroom resources and district policies for providing refugee youth and families vital services throughout their educational path.

RSO monitors and tracks student progress, facilitates meetings between the school district and the refugee resettlement agencies, and is available as a resource for school districts.

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program

RSO receives funding from ORR to implement the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program. The state contracts with Catholic Community Services (CCS) to provide this program, which resettles and supports unaccompanied refugee minors brought to the U.S. by the Department of State. Other populations of unaccompanied minors are eligible for this program as well, including Victims of Trafficking, Asylees, and Special Immigrant Juveniles, among others.

Among the services provided by CCS are a foster parent program to furnish long-term foster care and a supported independent living housing program. DWS has a single contract with CCS, which is an affiliate of the national resettlement agency United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB is one of two National Voluntary Agencies authorized to provide relocation and resettlement assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors. CCS is licensed by the State of Utah to obtain legal custody of refugee minor children through the Utah justice system. Youth are eligible to enter the program as long as they are under 18 years of age. Utah is uniquely positioned to take youth who are close to aging out of eligibility for the program since the state can establish legal custody within a matter of days, whereas in many other states it can take weeks or more.

The URM program assists unaccompanied minor refugees and other entrants with developing appropriate skills to enter adulthood and to achieve economic and social self-sufficiency by the time they age out of the program when they turn 21. The program also works to reunify youth with parents or non-parental adult relatives when possible. The URM program ensures that unaccompanied minor refugees and entrants receive the full range of assistance, care and services to which all children in state foster care are entitled. A legal authority is designated to act in place of the child's unavailable parent(s).

Services provided through the program include case management, interpretation, cultural education, school coordination, mental health counseling, transportation coordination, vocational assistance, medical services coordination, legal services coordination, family preservation assistance, behavioral needs support, life skills and independent living support, mentoring, and foster parent recruitment, licensing, training, and support. Utah is one of the largest URM programs in the country, with capacity for 105 youth. Currently, 65 URM youth are in the program.

RSO provides leadership, ongoing oversight, planning, coordination, and annual monitoring of the program.

Services For Older Refugees

RSO has contracted with Salt Lake County Adult and Aging Services to develop programs for senior refugees. The purpose of this agreement is to create a Case Manager position to assist refugee seniors in accessing existing mainstream services in the community including supportive services, citizenship resources, connecting and referring senior refugees to the benefits resources, interpretation and translation services, and training and workshops to address their needs. The goal is to reduce social isolation of senior refugees, integrate them into the community, enhance community connections, and promote health and wellness.

Case Management

From July 2021 to June 2022, 12 seniors and refugee communities received services related to obtaining citizenship and referrals to community resources. The communities served this reporting period were from Liberia, South Sudan, Burundi, Congo, Somali, Rwanda, Bhutan, Burma, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Three older adult refugees received citizenship referral resources and one person was approved for SSI services. Salt Lake County hosted workshops for refugee seniors featuring various providers, partners and community leaders.

Intergenerational Activities

Intergenerational activities are being coordinated with the local refugee charter school students and the Bhutanese refugee participants at a nearby senior center. In recent months these activities were put on hold due to COVID-19. There were nine refugees elderly refugees who regularly attended 6 week classes and learned how to use an iPad and the internet.

Translation

Salt Lake County has developed and translated brochures and pamphlets of information relevant to seniors into five major refugee languages: Russian, Swahili, Spanish and Arabic. In addition, the training manual for the Foster Grandparent Program has been translated into Spanish. An aging resource book called the 60+ Book was translated into Spanish, Arabic, Swahili and Somali. Additional resources were translated into multiple languages such as information for the Ombudsman Program to support long-term care residents, and information for Adult Protective Services. These tools increase access to vital services for refugee seniors.

Community Outreach

Community training and meetings were held with representatives from over 20 agencies and community organizations. Food Baskets for the 12 elderly refugee clients were delivered in 2021.

Intergenerational activities are being coordinated with the local refugee charter school students and the Bhutanese refugee participants at a nearby senior center.

Photo credit: Venture Out!

Photo credit: Venture Out!

World Refugee Day

World Refugee Day (WRD) is a celebration of the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who fled their homes as a result of persecution in search of a better life and a future for their children. It is also an opportunity for the mainstream community to interact with and learn about the refugees who make Utah their home. WRD is celebrated during the third week of June.

In 2022, RSO and WRD partners eagerly returned to host an in-person event in celebration of Utah's vibrant refugee community. Utahns joined together in celebration of Utah's 18th Annual World Refugee Day on Friday, June 17, and Saturday, June 18, at Big Cottonwood Regional Park in Millcreek. The two-day celebration featured more than a dozen refugee performers, 20 refugee entrepreneurs and 12 refugee-owned food businesses. The event also provided a platform for refugee and mainstream engagement with refugee-led and refugee community-serving resource booths, all-ages educational programming, youth engagement activities, and a community health fair. The event was supported by 82 mainstream volunteers, with a total of 203.5 contributed volunteer service hours.

The WRD celebration was made possible by the support and collaboration of 52 partner organizations including those listed on page 24.

The third week of June was dubbed World Refugee Week this year as celebrations and online information was expanded.

Photo credit: Venture Out!

18th Annual WORLD REFUGEE WEEK 2022

World Refugee Day is a celebration of the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who fled their homes.

Photo credit: Venture Out!

World Refugee Day Partners

Asian Association of Utah
American Red Cross
Bhutanese Community of Utah
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah
Catholic Community Services
Cotopaxi
Create Better Health (Utah SNAP-ED)
Department of Workforce Services
English Skills Learning Center
Fathers and Families Coalition of Utah
Future Scholars of Africa
Greater Equatorial Region Association
Granite Peaks
Health Access Project
Health Choice Utah
International Rescue Committee
Know Your Neighbor
Kurdish Community of Utah
Mesopotamia
Millcreek City
Molina Health
PATH Behavioral Health
PreventHer
Promise Millcreek
Promise South Salt Lake
Rape Recovery Center
Refugee Soccer League
Refugee Services Office
Salt Lake County Aging & Adult Services
Salt Lake County Health Dept
Salt Lake County Mayor's Office
Somali Community Services of Utah
Spice Kitchen Incubator
Theirs Story is Our Story
Utah Health and Human Rights
Ukraine Association of Utah
University Neighborhood Partners
University of Utah Health Plans
Utah State University 4H Extension
Utah Department of Health & Human Services
Utah Film Center
Utah Health and Human Rights
Utah International Charter School
Utah Refugee Connection
Utah Refugee Goats
Utah State University: 4H Extension
Utah Valley Refugees
Venezuelan Alliance
Venture Out!
Women of the World
Youthlinc
AmeriCorps VISTA.

Know Your Neighbor Volunteer Program

The Know Your Neighbor Volunteer Program is a collaborative effort between the Salt Lake City Mayor's Office and RSO. Know Your Neighbor's goal is to integrate Utah's welcoming community and refugees resettled in the Salt Lake City area by developing friendships through volunteer opportunities. The program is based on the idea that every refugee in the Salt Lake Valley should have an American friend and that every American should have a refugee friend.

Refugees make requests to RSO for different kinds of volunteer support, often tutoring for school, citizenship, or language. Volunteers are recruited, provided orientation, interviewed and background checked. One-on-one matches between individual refugees or refugee families are made with individual volunteers or volunteer families. At least two hours of contact are required each week for a minimum of six months, assuring ongoing contact which promotes communication, trust and, hopefully, fosters friendship.

Volunteers are also invaluable in teaching classes at the Utah Refugee Center. Classes in tech skills, sewing and public speaking are among others taught by volunteers.

ADDITIONAL COORDINATION AND KEY ACTIVITIES

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps and one of several national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. VISTA members commit to:

- Living and serving in some of the nation's poorest urban and rural areas for a full year
- Subsisting on a living stipend comparable to the community's assessed poverty level
- Creating and expanding sustainable programs for local organizations and nonprofits

With passion, commitment and hard work, their programs are designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

In the past year, the Utah Refugee VISTA Project has housed 17 unique VISTA positions from eight organizations assisting the refugee communities in Utah to build their capacity to become self-sufficient. Many of RSO's VISTA members have completed their year of service and continue

to work with refugees in Utah, or are actively pursuing higher education with the goal of providing refugees crucial services through legal, nonprofit or other resettlement-related pathways. The VISTA Project strives to assist refugees in three ways:

1. **Integration:** Involving and incorporating resettled refugees as equals into the local community
2. **Education:** Bringing both refugees and the welcoming community members together to learn from each other and work together
3. **Programming:** Developing programs to assist refugees in the process of integrating into their new home

In 2022, AmeriCorps VISTA members raised around $22,310 in cash resources and $52,185 of in-kind donations, and coordinated 962 community volunteers to provide 9,349 hours of services through various events and refugee stakeholder organizations. VISTAs also succeeded in making more than 160 new community partner connections, supporting over 40 refugee entrepreneurs through industry-specific training, and supporting over 30 refugee community-based organizations in working toward 501(c)(3) status and sustainable community services.

Refugee Services Fund

At the end of SFY22, the Refugee Services Fund had a balance of $202,202.51. From July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, RSO received $17,610 in donations and sponsorships to the fund and spent $23,735 to support refugees.

Funds were used for:

- Funerals — $2,000
- Refugee Voices — $1,580
- Capacity Building — $10,133
- World Refugee Day — $10,022

Utah Department of Public Safety

In November 2015, in response to heightened security concerns surrounding terrorism worldwide, Gov. Gary Herbert directed the Utah Department of Public Safety to conduct a review of the federal screening process for

refugees and security procedures related to refugee resettlement in Utah. This process led to a partnership between RSO and Public Safety, with a Public Safety officer assigned as a refugee liaison to work with local law enforcement, resettlement agencies and other organizations as a resource for and to build relationships with Utah's refugee community. This is a unique partnership in Utah and nationally.

The numbers of incoming refugees has dropped drastically over the past few years. With the COVID-19 pandemic interaction, events and gatherings have been difficult between refugees and law enforcement.

Between November 2021 and October 2022, the efforts of Public Safety have resulted in:

- 24 U.S. law orientation classes taught at IRC, CCS and CRIC
- 2 gang prevention classes taught for refugee youth
- 1 law enforcement presentation for refugee communities on their rights, traffic law and gang prevention
- 1 driver license class taught to Venezuelan community members
- 2 cases opened or referred to local law enforcement of potential refugee victimization
- 2 classes taught about refugees at the Metro Gang Conference
- 4 trainings about refugees provided to local police agencies including Clearfield, Woods Cross, and Kaysville
- Refugee Youth Gang Prevention Coalition created in partnership with DPS, Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office and Salt Lake County mayor's office and others to empower parents and provide ways for youth to choose more uplifting activities
- 9 events involving refugees were organized and/or attended by DPS

Youth Coordination

Supporting refugee youth arriving in Utah is a priority for RSO each year. Young refugees face a challenging transition both academically and socially. The Refugee Youth Services Coordinator provides collaboration, support and coordination to ensure that refugee youth feel supported and are able to access services equitably. Additionally, RSO's youth coordinator

Refugee youth in Utah are a priority for RSO as they transition both academically and socially.

works to build relationships with refugee communities, address gaps and create new programing and opportunities.

In 2022:

- 90 refugee youth participated in RSO-led programming
- 233 refugee youth participated in Refugee Community-led programming (supported by RSO)
- 30 refugee youth participated in RSO supported partner programming at the Utah Refugee Center

2022 highlights include:

- 59 youth connected to a tutor through the Know Your Neighbor Volunteer Program
- 737 volunteer tutoring hours contributed; tutors reported over 39 academic achievements, including improvements in schoolwork as well as successful scholarship and financial aid applications
    - Tutors often form long-lasting relationships with their matches, enriching both of their lives. Luis, a mentor who had been matched for two years with David, a high school student, reported that David invited him to his high school graduation. "For a long time he has been working on obtaining and fulfilling this goal. In his message he told me that he would be very happy if I could go to his graduation, so I did! It was important [to him] that I was at his graduation."
- 10 youth participated in JAVA Computer Programming Training
    - About 63% plan to continue their education in the tech field. After completing the class, one student said, "I am excited to see where this takes me. It actually feels like I am now building my future!"
- 29 youth participated in Youth Leadership in fall 2021
    - 13 youth gained a new mentor
    - 70% of participants reported that they were likely to pursue a leadership position in the future
    - After the program, youth were over 20% more likely to be aware of issues facing their youth community including drug abuse, gangs, racism, and mental health.

Other youth programs:

- 27 youth participated in Homework Help during the 2021-22 academic year; sessions were held at the Utah Refugee Center and offsite at a local mosque
- 20 youth representing eight refugee communities participated in a summer skill building program at the Utah Refugee Center. During the two-month program, students practiced teamwork and public speaking skills, while also learning about healthy relationships and mental health.

Youth Mentoring Program

The high numbers of refugee students and families who have resettled since 2011 into the Salt Lake area has affected the education system. Many refugee families choose to enroll their youth in the Utah International Charter School (UICS) due to their methods of specialized instruction, smaller class-size and focus on providing individualized student support. Many refugees have an interrupted formal education background, lack of supportive mentors in their lives, and limited opportunities for engagement and social integration with their American-born peers.

The Youth Mentoring program was established to promote positive civic and social engagement and support individual educational and vocational advancement. To accomplish these goals, the youth coordinator matches eligible youth with positive adult mentors who provide the youth with personalized interaction. Workshops and mentoring services were provided in partnership with Future Scholars of Africa, the Afghan Bright Association, Salt Lake Community College, and the Promise South Salt Lake network. The youth coordinator also provides case management to support educational and career development. The program administers a customized goal tracker with a pre- and post-assessment survey designed to track growth in self-esteem, trust in community, and connection to community.

The Youth Mentoring Program has served 51 refugee youth through workshops, targeted mentoring and a community-based peer-mentoring approach to service delivery. The aim of a group-based, peer mentor approach is to help students identify elements of effective mentorships and initiate their own. All program participants received consultations during this reporting period. Consultations are designed to support and promote positive advancement of participants in three categories: educational, vocational, and civic and social.

Refugee

SUCCESS STORIES

Abdul arrived in Utah from Afghanistan in 2021. Within the first two months of his arrival he lost two children due to biological issues. On top of this, he and his family were struggling to adjust to their new environment. They did not speak the language or know how to get from one location to another and were missing important medical appointments. Abdul lost two jobs while struggling to manage getting the kids to school and medical appointments. Abdul connected with a community specialist at RSO who was able to address many of his concerns including connecting him with a local volunteer who has been crucial in addressing the transportation issues for both school and medical appointments. Now that his transportation needs have been addressed he has been connected with a job paying $17 per hour and he hasn't missed any time in the last few months.

Maryamo is a refugee that has been in the United States for several years. She only had a high school diploma and wasn't working. She desperately wanted to work in the medical field but hadn't had an avenue to enter that industry. Maryamo worked hard to make herself available to attend the Phlebotomy training provided by RSO and Salt Lake Community Coillege. Maryamo successfully completed the training and was immediately hired into the industry making $15 during training. She then received an increase to $17 an hour. She is also being offered continued training in the medical industry by the employer. As a result, Maryamo can continue to advance within the medical industry with support from her employer.

CONCLUSION

THE REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE remains committed to providing the highest quality services and best practices for refugees who now call Utah home. The work continues for both newly arrived refugees and individuals who have lived in Utah for five, 10, 15 or more years. As part of Workforce Services, the Refugee Services Office will continue to develop, fund and support programs and services that allow refugees to become integrated members of the Utah community.

Visit

refugee.utah.gov

or facebook.com/UTRefugeeServices to learn more about the Refugee Services Office.

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