



Six Afghan women supported by IWR celebrate Cornell graduation

This week sees a fresh cohort of Cornell graduates receive their degrees. We are excited to share our special congratulations to [six women among them](#) who resettled in Ithaca with support from IWR and Cornell's 'Scholars Under Threat' program after fleeing Afghanistan four years ago. We hope they enjoy this well-earned milestone and many more successes to come!

IWR Spring Appeal

This month we launched IWR's [Spring Appeal](#) to raise funds for all our programs supporting refugees and immigrants in Tompkins County. In a hostile political climate for displaced people, we ask you to join us in being there for vulnerable members of our community. Help us reach our goal of \$50,000 by June 30. We are grateful to an anonymous supporter who has pledged to match all donations up to \$25,000. Every contribution counts!

[Make a gift](#)

Current needs

A recently arrived family is seeking a **push lawn mower** for their yard. If you have one to donate, please contact IWR Programs Coordinator Leigh Bacher at leighb@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org.

We welcome donations of **gift cards from grocery stores** in the area that we

can pass on to IWR families. Please note the amount on the face of the gift card and send it to us at 315 N. Cayuga Street, Ithaca, NY 14850.

As we (eventually!) approach warmer weather, please consider donating **gently used baby and children's items** your family has outgrown to the Mama Goose & Jillian's Drawers store on Clinton Street and asking them to add any store credit to IWR's account. We use this to give vouchers to IWR families with children. Check the [Mama Goose schedule](#) for drop-off dates.

For up to date information on items we are seeking, check the [Current Needs for Families](#) page on our website.

Advocacy ask

Earlier this month, the federal administration announced an end to **Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Afghanistan**, [effective July 14](#). This affects an estimated 9,000 Afghans in the US, at risk of deportation without this status. Please join us in calling your elected representatives today to express your objection to this decision, and advocate for TPS for Afghanistan to be extended.

Visit IWR exhibit at the Ithaca Festival!



IWR will be tabling at the Spring Craft Fair as part of the [Ithaca Festival](#) on Saturday May 31. You can find us on **N. Cayuga St at space 122**, next to Ithaca Murals. Meet local artist and IWR partner Hugo Medina who will be with

us to host a special interactive exhibit for kids and adults! Hugo is working with us to create a community mural celebrating refugees and immigrants in Ithaca, and festival goers will have the chance to share their ideas in creative form. Join in the fun or stop for a chat. We hope to see you there!

Photo credit: Prostooleh on Freepik

Reminder: IWR photo competition



IWR's 10th anniversary photo competition remains open until **June 14th!** Send us your best shots of scenes that represent Ithaca's spirit of welcome. Be as creative as you like! Competition rules and prizes detailed [here](#).

Photo credit: Emma Brown

From our supporters

Earlier this year we ran our first supporter survey to hear about your engagement with IWR. One question we asked was why you support the organization. The responses we received highlighted important values that underpin the culture of care in this community. In summary, the most popular reasons given were:

- I value welcoming and respecting others
- I value supporting refugees/immigrants
- I value helping those in need in my community

- Immigrants/refugees include my family members, friends, neighbors, ancestors
 - Refugees/immigrants need help
 - IWR provides an important service
-

IWR in the community

We have been continuing outreach activities to raise awareness of barriers and insecurities affecting the lives of refugees and immigrants currently and ways to help. On April 18, IWR board member Pedro Molina spoke about his journey as a refugee artist and the work of IWR at the Cornell symposium "[Archives in Transit: TodoSomos and the Venezuelan Migration Crisis](#)". The event marked the launch of a living archive of hand-written testimonies by Venezuelan migrants, collected by the organization TodoSomos in Colombia in 2019-2021, and now housed at Cornell University Library. Separately, on May 4, IWR contributed to a panel event on immigration and the impacts of executive orders under the present administration, hosted by [South Hill Cider](#) and the [Diversity Consortium of Tompkins County](#) as part of a series of social justice discussions titled "What's Next, Ithaca?".

Gratitude



This month we extend our deepest thanks to the volunteer organizing teams of two incredible fundraisers for IWR:

- The Spring Jewelry Sale, which took place at the First Baptist Church of Ithaca on April 26 thanks to Yvonne Fogarty, Debbie Benzer and their wonderful team
- Cornell Bhangra PAO XII, a spectacular show brought to life on May 3 at the State Theatre of Ithaca by this year's student leaders of Cornell Bhangra

Photo credit: Emma Brown



Copyright © 2025 Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, All rights reserved.

If you know someone who might be interested in this newsletter, please send it on to them. If you received this newsletter as a forward and would like to subscribe, please click here.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

