



## A story of human connection: The muralist bringing celebration of immigrants to Ithaca



Earlier this year, IWR began an exciting collaboration to create a mural dedicated to refugees and immigrants in Tompkins County. The aim is to bring out the stories, thoughts and feelings of local community members who have experienced displacement, and the positive role they play in shaping our community. [Read](#) about Hugo Medina, the muralist behind this project, and the people and ideas inspiring it. Then, join us on **September 13th** any time from **10-1** at **314 W State St**, Ithaca for a family-friendly community paint day to bring the mural to life! No painting is experience required. We will have music and refreshments on hand, including coffee generously donated by [Gimme Coffee!](#) In Hugo's words, "It's a unique, special experience because you don't know who you're going to meet". All are welcome to paint, chat or simply watch and enjoy the vibe! Please [RSVP here](#).

This project was made possible in part with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, administered by the Community Arts Partnership, and in part by a grant from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

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## A warm welcome to new arrivals



This month our housing and Welcome Home volunteers have been hard at work helping two new families to move into stable accommodation, and looking for a longer-term solution for a third family currently in emergency housing. In consultation with the families, volunteers identify suitable options, help to arrange rental agreements, coordinate donations of furniture and household donations and carry out moves. IWR also provides new arrivals with a starting supply of basic consumables and a gift of welcome cash. All of this eases the process of finding and settling into a safe home in a new place for people arriving without resources or local know-how. Thank you to everyone involved!

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## Current needs

We are collecting **furniture and household items** for newly arrived families. Please click on the links below to see the list for each family and sign up to donate specific items.

Items to donate for a [mother and school-aged son](#)

Items to donate for a [family of four](#) by August 25th

We have the rare opportunity to support a family expecting a baby in early September. Please see this [Amazon wish list](#) for gifts to purchase. In order to protect the family's anonymity, the list is under Linda Glabach (IWR volunteer), and the delivery address is also for a volunteer supporting the family. We are further seeking items community members already have and could donate. Please get in touch if you can give any of the following items in August:

- baby monitor
- rocking chair
- diapers: newborn and size 1

Additional **household items** we are seeking for IWR families:

- box and table top fans
- dehumidifier

To donate, please contact our Welcome Home team at [welcome.home@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org](mailto:welcome.home@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org).

For up to date needs information, check the [Current Needs for Families](#) page on our website, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Bluesky](#).

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## Use your voice

Last month we reported that Temporary Protected Status for Afghanistan has been [terminated](#), putting thousands of Afghans in the US at risk of losing the right to work and deportation. The latest development on this subject is that a bipartisan coalition of House members has reintroduced the Afghan Adjustment Act and a Senate companion bill, the Fulfilling Promises to Afghan Allies Act, is also now under consideration with bipartisan support. Details are summarized [here](#) by the National Immigration Forum. Now is the time to contact your member of Congress and urge them to **pass the Afghan Adjustment Act**. When calling, we also encourage you, as previously, to state your opposition the [planned](#) systematic dismissal of asylum claims and deportation of claimants at the federal level.

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## Share your view... Enter IWR photo competition



Don't forget you can still submit your photo entry on the theme of Ithaca's inclusive spirit to IWR's 10th anniversary photo competition! Your entry may be included in a 2026 IWR calendar celebrating and promoting local inclusivity. The top four entries will receive prizes donated by [Discover Cayuga Lake](#), [Hazelnut Kitchen](#), [Sunbeam Candles](#) and [Odyssey Bookstore](#)! Details of rules and prizes can be found [here](#). Submit entries to IWR Development Director Leila Wilmers at [leilaw@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org](mailto:leilaw@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org). The deadline for entries is **September 22, 2025**.

Image designed by Freepik.

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## ***All Are Welcome* fiber art sale to benefit IWR**



A colorful fiber art fundraiser will begin next month thanks to artist [Barbara Behrmann](#), who has created a series of mini quilts on the theme *All Are Welcome* for sale to the public, with 25% of proceeds to IWR. The artworks each measure 4" x 6" and are mounted on heavy watercolor paper, to fit a standard frame. Each piece is unique and suggests, with different degrees of abstraction, a home, doorway or window, with the idea that everyone deserves a safe, beautiful place to live and call home. A single piece is perfect for a small wall, but they also work well as a group, suggesting a colorful, welcoming village. The quilts are priced individually at \$75.00 and will be available at the State of the Art Gallery on 120 West State Street/Martin Luther King Jr. Street, from Sept. 4 through Sept 28th. An opening reception will be held on Friday, September 5, 5-8pm. The quilts will also be available during the first weekend of the Greater Ithaca Art Trail at: 862 Steam Mill Road on October 11 and 12, from 11am to 6pm. For inquiries, contact Barbara at [blbehrmann@gmail.com](mailto:blbehrmann@gmail.com).

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## Gratitude

Our special thank you this month goes to Patrick Lynch and Ronke Ilegbusi, who invited guests attending their engagement party to donate to IWR instead of making gifts to the couple. Altogether they raised \$724 for programs

supporting refugees and immigrants making a home in our community! We are also very grateful to the owner of [Bike Bar](#), Steve Gelb, who donated space for the event, and to John Whitmore ([DJ Dijon](#)) who spun the records.



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