



A Decade of Volunteering for IWR



Happy New Year to all our supporters! As we grapple with the weight of events in our country this month, it can help to remind ourselves of the ongoing positive action that keeps our community strong. At the heart of IWR's work are volunteers who provide direct assistance to refugee and immigrant families day to day. In our [blog post](#) this month we introduce Susan Tarrow, who has volunteered and donated to IWR since the very start. Learn about Susan's story, her experiences interpreting for families and supporting them through resettlement hurdles and life events, and why she continues to give her time.

End of Year Appeal Success!

We are delighted to announce a very positive conclusion to our 2025 End of Year Appeal, which raised a total of \$133,864 for IWR programs from individual supporters! This is an amazing result that testifies to the strength of grassroots support for our mission to partner with newly arrived refugees and immigrants as they rebuild their lives in Tompkins County. We are immensely grateful to every one of you who contributed. We hope you feel as uplifted as we do by this affirmation of solidarity with our displaced neighbors.

These are challenging times for non-profits, and it is thanks to IWR's enduring bottom-up support that we remain strong and flexible enough to weather policy shifts. We chose to end 2025 with a budget deficit in order to fulfil the basic needs of families we were serving. Now, thanks to your generosity, we are starting 2026 in a strong position to continue this important work. Thank you for being here with us!

Current Needs

We are seeking donations of **furniture and household items** by **January 31st** to help a woman resettling locally. Please check this [needs list](#) and use the form to get in touch if you can help with any of the items.

We are also requesting donations of **Walmart gift cards** by **January 31st**. Please note the amount on the face of the gift card and mail it to Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, 315 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY14850.

As always, a great way to support IWR families with children is to donate **gently used baby and children's items** to the Mama Goose & Jillian's Drawers store on Clinton Street and add the store credit received in exchange to IWR's account. We turn the credit you donate into store vouchers for IWR families with children. Check the [Mama Goose schedule](#) for drop-off dates.

For questions about donations, please contact Perdita Das from our Welcome Home team at 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](#).

Use Your Voice

Many of us have been reeling from the news of escalating ICE brutality across the US this month, including the tragic killings of Renée Good on January 7 and Alex Pretti on January 24. This is an important time for our elected officials to hear your rejection of this egregious violation of human rights by agents of the state. We encourage you to **contact your representatives** to voice your views. Meanwhile, as policy changes targetting immigrants continue to come in, check out this [Conversation Guide](#) from Welcome.US for suggestions on how to talk to family and friends about news on immigration.

IWR in the Community

Our community outreach work continues! This month, IWR's Programs Coordinator Leigh Bacher presented at a Civics in Action class for grades 10-12 at Trumansburg High School. Students learned about who benefits from IWR's work and what kind of support they receive, the impact of recent immigration policy changes, and what people can do to help. Thank you to Jaclyn Lavine for inviting us to talk to your class! If you are interested in having IWR present or do a Q&A in your school, community group or workplace, drop a line to: leilaw@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org.

Event: Supporting Immigrants in the Community



A public event titled Supporting Immigrants in Our Community will take place on **February 10 at 7:00 pm** at Fellowship Hall, 69 East Main St., Trumansburg. Mary Jo Dudley will lead a discussion, covering what motivates people to migrate, what roles they play in our communities, and how they contribute to the NYS and US economy. There will also be a discussion of the current immigration enforcement environment, how families can plan to prevent family separation and the support community members can provide.



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