



IWR Spring Appeal



Dear Friends and Supporters,

You likely don't need us to tell you this is a tumultuous time for refugees and immigrants. Still, the realities faced by IWR's refugee partners this spring mean they are especially in need of your help. Although all our partners relocated to Tompkins County because of crises in their home countries, IWR maintains a Crisis Fund for emergencies which occur here in their new community. **At this moment, we have already spent our budgeted Crisis Funds for the year and urgently need an influx of cash for this purpose.**

Make a Gift

So far this year we have used the fund to support people in two groups: 1) those whose work permits related to temporary programs were prematurely

revoked by the Trump administration and whose rent, utilities, and other basic expenses IWR paid until they could receive their asylum-based permits and 2) single-mother immigrant families who either were experiencing homelessness or have recently given birth and have no maternity leave or familial support systems locally. Without a replenishment of Crisis Funds, we will need to tell families in desperate situations that we can no longer keep them afloat at a time when they have no other resources.

Making matters worse, the Trump administration has now ended the automatic extension of work permits. Because manual extension is, by the administration's design, causing tremendous backlogs, there is a very good chance even more families will be affected by gaps in permit validity. But there are things we can do to help. We can apply our collective resources to push back against the harmful impacts of federal actions.

Please help us meet our **target of raising \$80,000** this spring to ensure assistance is at the ready when it's needed most. Thank you, as always, for everything you do to support refugees in Ithaca.

Sincerely,

Casey Verderosa, Executive Director
Douglas Stayman, Board Chair

Donate Today

See our [Spring Appeal blog post](#) for examples of the services your gift could support and notes IWR has received from refugee partners about the impact of our programs.

Take Part in IWR's Community Paint Day!



We are ready to welcome you to IWR's community paint day on **May 9th, 10am to 1pm at 314 W State St!** Come along and help us create a mural celebrating refugees and immigrants in Tompkins County in collaboration with local artist Hugo Medina. All ages are welcome to take part, no experience needed! Music and refreshments provided, including coffee and pastries generously donated by [Gimme Coffee!](#) and [Wide Awake Bakery.](#)

To help us get a sense of numbers, please [RSVP here](#) if you plan to come.

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. Learn about Hugo, the project, and the people and ideas inspiring it in this earlier [blog post](#).

Use Your Voice

We are excited to share two new positive developments for the safety of our immigrant and refugee neighbors that have resulted from bottom-up action from concerned citizens like you. At the federal level, ICE agents are [now being instructed](#) not to enter people's homes without a warrant and not to arrest people at courthouses, after widespread protest against these practices. Meanwhile, following local organizing against police use of Flock Safety surveillance cameras, on April 14th Tompkins County followed Ithaca City in [voting to terminate its contract](#) with Flock Safety and remove existing cameras.

Your voice counts! This month we ask you to please consider **signing [this petition](#)** and **calling Governor Hochul's office** (518-474-8390) to help pass the New York Dignity Not Detention Act (S316 Salazar/A4181) to prohibit New York from entering into or renewing contracts with ICE to detain immigrants in local jails and facilities AND the New York for All Act (S2235/A3506) to prohibit state and local resources from being used for federal immigration enforcement. [Latest reports](#) suggest Governor Hochul is proposing more limited measures banning police from sharing information with ICE in civil cases but not when criminal activity is suspected. This is an important moment to raise public pressure in support of these acts!

IWR Outreach

IWR's community outreach activities bring facts and conversation about experiences and challenges faced by refugees in our community to a range of local audiences. Highlights from this month include tabling at [Ithaca College's Sustainability Fair](#) and talking with a boy scouts troop and customers at [Wide Awake Bakery](#). If you are interested in having an IWR representative table at your event or business, or give a talk in your school, community group or workplace, please reach out at: ithacawelcomesrefugees@gmail.com.

Cornell Event Highlighting Ukrainian Voices



On Saturday, May 2, 2026, come along to [Voices of Resilience](#), a lecture-recital that brings together music and reflection on themes of culture, migration, and peace, with a particular focus on Ukrainian voices and experiences. Hosted by Cornell's Ukrainian Classical Voice Project and Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, the event will take place in the Statler Auditorium, East Avenue, from 3pm to 5pm.

Busking for Justice Concert



On May 1st you can see Lavine and the Flying Machine perform live at Café Dewitt from 5.30-7pm, with a vibrant blend of klezmer and Yiddish swing—rich with storytelling and irresistible rhythms! The concert is part of Busking for Justice, a series of fundraiser concerts on the first Friday of each month to support immigrants and their families facing the impacts of detention and deportation. Admission is free. Donations are encouraged and food is available for purchase.

Gratitude

A shout out to the members of Cornell student organization Assisting People Across Nations, who organized a fundraiser dinner on campus last week and donated proceeds to IWR. We appreciate you!



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