



## Coming Together for a Community Mural



Earlier this month, community members gathered for a joyful paint day to help bring to life a new mural celebrating refugees and immigrants in Tompkins County. See the teamwork in action and read all about it in our latest [blog post](#). The mural, now in the final stages of completion, is the culmination of IWR's [collaboration](#) with Bolivian artist [Hugo Medina](#) to create a public artwork dedicated to refugees and immigrants. You will find it on the side of the Southern Tier Aids Program building, facing the courtyard opposite the Department of Social Services. All are welcome to join us as we launch the mural at a **ribbon cutting ceremony** in front of the mural on **June 3, 2026 at 1pm!** Please note that this event will be public and photographs may be published by local media.

Our thanks go out to Hugo, to Caleb Thomas of Ithaca Murals, to photographer Sara Tro, and to all participants for making the paint day a success, as well

as to [Wide Awake Bakery](#) and [Gimme Coffee!](#) for treats and beverages that enhanced the occasion. We are also grateful to the grant-makers backing this effort: 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.

Photo credit: [Sara Tro Photography](#).

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## Spring Appeal Update

Our Spring Appeal is well under way! We continue to invite you, our friends and supporters, to give what you can and help us raise **\$80,000 by June 15th** so that we can meet our refugee and immigrant partners' resettlement needs through 2026. As we reported in our [April blog post](#), this year we are seeing higher levels of precarity among the people we work with than previously, and we have provided emergency aid to multiple families who found themselves unable to afford basic needs due to highly challenging situations, including sudden and enduring loss of employment income as a result of new federal immigration policies. With your help we can replenish our depleted Crisis Fund and make sure we are there for IWR partners come what may in the months ahead.

A huge thank you to those of you who have already donated to the appeal! So far, we have raised a total of \$28,311 from 59 donors. If you have not yet donated and are able to do so, you now have the opportunity to **have your donation doubled!** The next \$6,000 donated from today will be matched dollar for dollar, thanks to generous pledges by Tim and Susan Larkin (\$3,000) and Doug Stayman (\$3,000). To contribute, click on the "Make a Gift" button below or mail a check to Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, 315 N Cayuga St, Ithaca, NY 14850.

[Make a Gift](#)

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## Current Needs



## Kids' Stuff Spring Clean!

Sorting outgrown items? Donating kids' clothing and baby gear to Jillian's Drawers & Mama Goose can directly support IWR families.

Ask to add store credit for your donations to IWR's account. We then turn credit into vouchers for families in need.



IWR partner Jillian's Drawers and Mama Goose is currently taking in gently loved spring & summer clothes, shoes, books & toys. You can help IWR families by donating your donations credit to IWR's account. Walk-ins of up to two grocery bags worth of items are welcome Tuesday-Saturday at 609 Clinton St, Ithaca. See the store [drop-off schedule](#).

We are seeking **two toddler carriers** (Ergobaby or a similar style) for our Global Roots Play School. If you are able to help, please reach out to Play School Director Bronwyn Losey at [director@globalrootsplayschool.org](mailto:director@globalrootsplayschool.org).

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## Craft and Parade with the Immigrant Solidarity Group



The Immigrant Solidarity Group is participating in the Ithaca Parade on Thursday May 28th and is looking for volunteers to join in and spread a message of welcome and community! Sign up [here](#) to carry a banner at the parade itself or join an art party in the coming days to craft signs and butterflies. No art skills needed, everyone is welcome! Details provided following sign up.

Image by Freepik

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## **IWR Outreach**

This month, IWR's community partner, Cornell's Translator Interpreter Program (TIP) highlighted our work in context with a [blog post](#) on resettling in Ithaca, featuring insights from IWR Programs Coordinator Leigh Bacher. Thank you TIP for helping us provide vital translation services for newcomers in need in our community!

If you are interested in having an IWR representative table at your event or business, or give a talk or interview in your school, community group or workplace, get in touch at: [ithacawelcomesrefugees@gmail.com](mailto:ithacawelcomesrefugees@gmail.com).

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## **Refugee Scholars Program Co-founder Graduates with Award**

As Cornell gears up for commencement weekend, we share special congratulations to IWR partner and graduating Cornellian Ariela Asllani, who has been selected for the [Class of 1964 John F. Kennedy Memorial Award](#), which honors a graduating senior preparing to launch a career in public service, in recognition of her service to the community. In partnership with IWR, Ariela founded the Refugee Scholars Program, which has helped local refugee and immigrant high school students prepare for college. A heartfelt thank you to Ariela from IWR staff. We wish her all the best in her next steps, pursuing an M.Sc. in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies at the University of Oxford.

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## Gratitude

Our thanks go out this month to Floyd's Fund of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County for a grant awarded to support our programs, and to members of the Monday Thing Homeschool Co-op, who collected donations to IWR after hosting a talk by our Programs Coordinator.



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