



IWR Newsletter | June 2026

From Ithaca Welcomes Refugees <admin@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org>

Date Fri 6/26/2026 10:12 AM

To Zoë Van Nostrand <zoevn@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org>



Sharing the IWR 2025 Annual Report



PEOPLE SERVED

164 people served (43 families and 22 individuals)

Countries of Origin



Languages spoken:

- Arabic
- Bengali
- Burmese
- Dari
- English
- French
- Haitian Creole
- Indonesian
- Karen
- Kazakh
- Korean
- Pashto
- Persian
- Russian
- Spanish
- Ukrainian

[IWR's 2025 Annual Report](#) is now available on our website. Paper copies are available by request; please email Zoë Van Nostrand at zoevn@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org.

In 2025 IWR supported 33 families arriving in Tompkins County, an increase in individual support requests from 2024. We also expanded and solidified our community networks - as increasingly unfriendly federal immigration policies

impacted our new community members access to support systems and severely limited their access to work permits. As our recently arrived community members navigated through increasingly complex immigration systems, IWR provided necessary crisis funding, keeping these neighbors housed and with access to groceries and transportation. The increased draw from crisis funds did lead to a budget deficit for IWR in 2025, and we remain grateful to the IWR community for continuing to support the organization, as need for support services remains high in 2026.

[Read the Full Report](#)

IWR 2026 Summer Picnic Recap



"It's a way to build community and see how people from different backgrounds and cultures share with each other." Volunteering with IWR in her free time, Nathaly is from Ecuador and works as an immigration paralegal in Ithaca. "I'm trying to avoid them having to go through what I did when I first got here," she explained.

Chatter was constant during the event as guests caught up with one another. One volunteer was brimming with excitement as she mentioned four bags of newborn clothes she'd washed in preparation for a newborn in the community. Attendees enjoyed a view of Cayuga Lake as they mingled and savored the food, which included hot catering from Lev Kitchen and cultural dishes brought by community members. These dishes ranged from Ukrainian pierogies and phyllo pie, to lentil salad and deviled eggs. Desserts were also varied, with Mandarin Pineapple Summer Cake, traditional Nicaraguan *Cocos de Picos*, and chocolate banana bread just to name a few."

[Read the Full Post](#)

IWR welcomes new Development Director



We're very happy to welcome our newest addition to the IWR team, [Zoë Van Nostrand](#) as our new Development Director, taking over for Leila

Wilmers who is departing after two wonderful years with IWR.

Zoë is a life-long Ithacan, with an undergraduate degree in 'Social Justice: Rights of Indigenous Peoples' from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and a Masters in Sociology from Trinity College Dublin with a focus on Comparative Social Change. Since completing her Masters in 2017, Zoë has built an expansive network within the local non-profit and community arts scene. You might recognize her as the former coordinator for child sexual abuse prevention programs with the [Advocacy Center](#), from her years as the Marketing & Outreach Coordinator for [The History Center in Tompkins County](#), or as the owner and property manager for the [ARQ Barn](#) in Mecklenburg. She joins IWR with over 15 years experience in marketing, event and volunteer coordination, and public engagement. Zoë is an avid volunteer, and has served on the boards of [Ithaca Murals](#) and [IPEI](#). She also was on the early communications team at IWR, managing our social media feeds in 2016 and 2017 while she was completing her Masters degree in Ireland!

Zoë has been organizing fundraising events and writing grants for multiple local organizations for the past six years, and is excited for her new role at IWR to merge her passions for global justice, local community, and financial stability in support of IWR's mission. Send Zoë a welcome note at zoevn@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org.

FIFA World Cup Watch Parties Fundraise in Support of IWR Across Ithaca

Your favorite local bars and breweries are fundraising in support of IWR June 11th-July 19th through a series of coordinated watch parties across Ithaca. Head over to [Personal Best Brewing](#), [Bike Bar](#), [State Eatery](#), and [Bookies Sports Bar & Lounge](#) and look for the laminated QR codes at each participating location to donate - be sure to name the bar where you watched the game with your donation! In the first week of games we've already received over \$1,500 in donations!

Follow the [IWR Instagram](#) for weekly posts of game schedules, and tag us in pictures of you and your friends enjoying the World Cup! Our thanks to Patrick Lynch for coordinating the watch party fundraisers.



ITHACA WORLD CUP

WATCH PARTIES

SUPPORTING

ITHACA WELCOMES REFUGEES



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHO ARE WE SUPPORTING?

FROM JUNE 11 TO JULY 19, YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL BARS AND BREWERIES ARE THE BEST PLACES TO WATCH THE WORLD CUP AND SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY.

ALL DONATIONS BENEFIT **ITHACA WELCOMES REFUGEES**, A COMMUNITY NON-PROFIT DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS. THEY PROVIDE CRITICAL SUPPORT TO FAMILIES AS THEY RESETTLE IN TOMPKINS COUNTY, INCLUDING HOUSING AND FOOD SECURITY, AS WELL AS CHILDCARE THROUGH THE GLOBAL ROOTS PLAY SCHOOL.

[LEARN MORE AT: ITHACAWELCOMESREFUGEES.ORG](https://ITHACAWELCOMESREFUGEES.ORG)

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

FOLLOW

GATHER

DONATE





FOLLOW [@ITHACA_WELCOMES_REFUGEES](#) AND PARTICIPATING VENUES ON INSTAGRAM FOR A WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF WHO IS SHOWING WHICH GAMES.

SPREAD THE WORD! BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY OUT TO WATCH THE GAMES, SHARE SOME FOOD AND DRINKS, AND ENJOY THE TOURNAMENT TOGETHER.

LOOK FOR THE DONATION INFORMATION AT ANY OFFICIAL VIEWING LOCATION WHILE YOU WATCH THE MATCH OR VISIT:
ITHACAWELCOMESREFUGEES.ORG/MAKE-A-GIFT

PARTICIPATING VENUES:






[@PERSONALBESTBREWING](#)

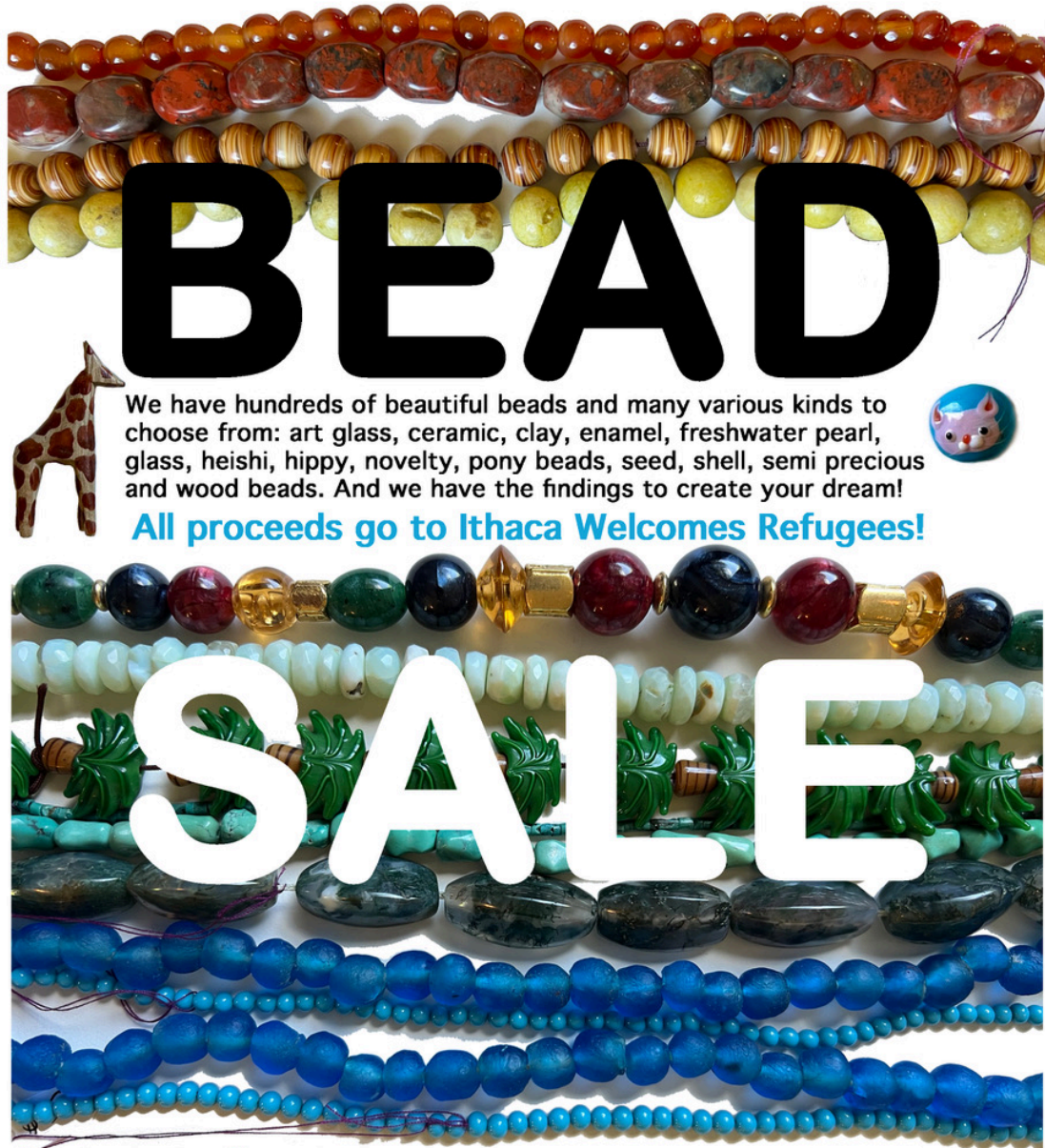
[@BIKE_BAR_ITHACA](#)

[@STATEEATERY](#)

[@BOOKIESSPORTSBARANDLOUNGE](#)

SUPPORT YOUR TEAM | SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES | SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

Upcoming - Bead Sale Fundraiser on July 11th



We have hundreds of beautiful beads and many various kinds to choose from: art glass, ceramic, clay, enamel, freshwater pearl, glass, heishi, hippy, novelty, pony beads, seed, shell, semi precious and wood beads. And we have the findings to create your dream!



All proceeds go to Ithaca Welcomes Refugees!

SALE



Saturday, July 11th, 9:00-3:00
714 Cayuga St
Rain or Shine



ithacawelcomesrefugees@gmail.com



We are also now accepting donations of gently used jewelry for the fall jewelry sale fundraiser to benefit IWR programs! Contact Debbie at 607-279-7174 (dpbenzer@twny.rr.com) or Yvonne 607-592-2799 for details.

IWR Outreach & Connections

It's been a busy few weeks for IWR staff. Leigh tabled at a faith group event in late May, and volunteer Jessie shared information at Cornell. Bronwyn presented on the mission of IWR to [St. Paul's United Methodist Church](#).

The [IWR Crisis Fund Fundraiser was featured in 14850 Magazine](#), and the Community Arts Partnership monthly newsletter highlighted the [new mural painted on the STAP building across from DSS](#), a collaborative partnership with IWR, [artist Hugo Medina](#), and [Ithaca Murals](#). The project received grant support from the Community Arts Partnership and the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

Gratitude to Our Community

Our thanks go out this month to [St. Paul's United Methodist Church](#) for selecting IWR as their mission of the month, and to [Cantrip Cards & Games](#) for donating the proceeds of their June 6th fundraising event to IWR.



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