



**WASHTENAW
REFUGEE
WELCOME**

WRWcommunications@gmail.com

WashtenawRefugeeWelcome.org

[Facebook.com/washtenawrefugeewelcome](https://www.facebook.com/washtenawrefugeewelcome)

Mailing Address:

1501 W Liberty St. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

2020 End of Year Report

Shared February 2021

Our Mission

Washtenaw Refugee Welcome is a volunteer organization designed to give long-term support to refugees building a new life in Washtenaw County, MI. WRW utilizes the talents and passions of ordinary people and partner organizations to help our newest neighbors build relationships and navigate their way around the community.



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Greetings WRW Supporters,

It has been a very different year for Washtenaw Refugee Welcome (WRW). At the beginning of 2020 we hosted our annual Valentine-making party and planned a year full of events and classes, only to be forced to shut everything down. But that didn't stop us from collectively caring for our refugee neighbors.

At the start of the lockdown, as everything began to go virtual, we purchased tablets for almost 20 families to allow them to access online events, assist their children with schooling, and crucially, give them an avenue to get accurate information on COVID and developments around the pandemic response locally and globally.

Thank you to the Arab American Pharmacist Association at UofM for hosting several informative webinars in English and Arabic about Covid and other health information, and for donating needed items to so many families!

As many refugee families lost income and struggled to navigate unemployment, WRW helped families to access public benefits. We have helped with financial assistance, particularly for one-parent households or those with one or both parents disabled. These included rent assistance, utility support, car insurance bills, and thousands of dollars in critical dental work, a common need across all our refugee families.

Thank you to everyone who made financial contributions in 2020, and to Zion Lutheran Church-Ann Arbor and Michigan Refugee Assistance Program at UofM for responding to emergency funding requests.





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On several occasions, WRW was able to visit the refugee families in our network with mass deliveries of laundry detergent, dish soap, toilet paper and feminine hygiene products, critical items that can't be purchased with SNAP. We delivered your donations of children's coats and boots to 45 families, as well as toys and games to keep kids occupied during the long quarantine. These touches were great opportunities to check in with growing families, and we also supplied several of the expecting refugee women with essentials they would need to welcome their new babies.

Thank you to King of Kings Lutheran Church for providing space and assistance with the toy and game project and to Muslim Community of Western Suburbs in Canton for space for the coat drive. Thank you also to the Palestinian Youth Movement for your donations and helping to deliver these items and to Fresh Start Ann Arbor for donating hats and gloves!

Despite the many barriers put in place by the last presidential administration, especially during the COVID lockdowns, there were dozens of arrivals of new refugees to our community this past year. WRW was able to provide many with basic household items upon their move-ins, such as kitchen supplies, lamps, vacuums and curtains, as well as large furniture like beds and couches.

Thank you to Jewish Family Services for welcoming and resettling these families and to the Muslim Community Association for weekly food deliveries!



It has been heartwarming to hear from so many refugees that they deeply missed our annual social events this past year under quarantine, and that their kids remembered and asked about when our next event would be. Although we couldn't address that critical need of social interaction for many of our families this year due to safety issues, we made efforts to help on many other fronts, until we can safely meet and enjoy each other's company again.



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Thank you to Corrigan Moving Systems for having donated free storage space to WRW these past few years and continuing to do so!

Thanks to the generous gifts of individuals and congregations, we currently have a balance of over \$3,500 in the bank. Our largest expenses this year were direct refugee support and liability insurance. We have incurred some legal expenses related to our non-profit status, but these expenses have been covered by a donor. As a 100% volunteer organization, our overhead is extremely low and we have not put any significant effort towards fundraising. We are appreciative of all gifts, which are tax deductible as we are a 501c3 organization.

You can donate at www.washtenawrefugeewelcome.org/donate

We will keep you updated as our services and opportunities develop, and we thank you for your ongoing support. If you'd like to get involved volunteering with WRW in 2021, please be on the lookout for an email from us soon outlining the best ways to support our families. The future is already looking bright, and we continue to advocate and hope for the opportunity to welcome more refugees to our community this year.

Thank you for making Washtenaw County a welcoming place for refugees!