

**Keeping Our
Promise Rochester**

Keeping Our Promise Rochester

An affiliate of Refugees Helping Refugees
888 Pittsford Mendon Center Rd.
Pittsford • NY • 14534
EIN 47-0848029



2019 Annual Report



Keeping Our Promise Rochester assists in resettling Afghan, Iraqi and Kurdish wartime allies who risked their lives working as interpreters and support personnel. It is an independent program of Refugees Helping Refugees.

www.KeepingOurPromise.org

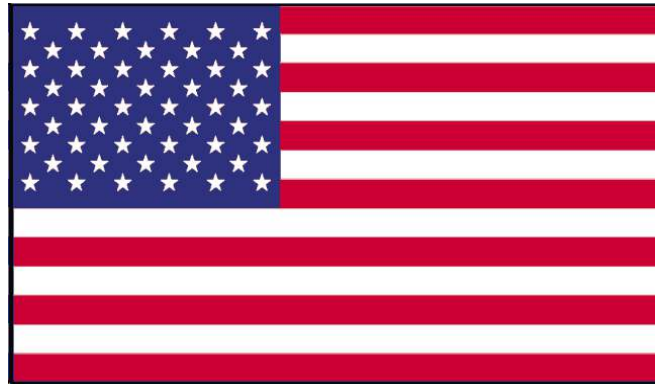
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MISSION

Keeping Our Promise Rochester

assists in the resettlement of Afghan, Iraqi and Kurdish wartime allies who worked for the U.S. military, defense contractors, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and USAID as interpreters and support personnel. In doing so, they risked their lives serving U.S. interests, and are targeted by the Taliban and ISIL for death.



Keeping Our Promise Rochester



**Refugees
Helping
Refugees**

Keeping Our Promise Rochester is a separate and distinct program of **Refugees Helping Refugees**, which is our fiscal sponsor. We have a memorandum of understanding and partnership with Catholic Family Center to resettle these wartime allies and their families. While we focus on initial resettlement needs, RHR offers each family longer-term case assistance when needed.

WHAT WE DO

Keeping Our Promise Rochester is currently the only program in the entire United States to help a wartime ally, or help a soldier help their interpreter, from the start of their application for a special immigrant visa (SIV), to getting to Rochester to begin their new lives. Each family is assigned a caring circle of volunteers. We find an apartment and a co-signer for each family, and provide first month's rent and security. We help each SIV budget a small "welcome grant" from Catholic Family Center to survive their first six months to a year. We guide them to skilled trades programs or employment, help them with get their driver's license, and get them a modest vehicle to get to work. Our goal is to help them establish a career, and build a solid foundation on which they can start their new lives in Rochester, NY.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



In March 2014, I started down a path that I thought was a short walk. It was a request from an Army Captain asking if anyone could help him resettle his Afghan interpreter and his family in Syracuse, NY. Little did I know how life-changing this one event would be for me, and the 300+ registered volunteers who make up **Keeping Our Promise Rochester**.

We started out this year as a program of No One Left Behind, and celebrated five years of a successful resettlement program. But changes occurred, and with those changes came a decision in late August that NOLB would no longer have chapter resettlement programs. All eight chapters were closed, and staff was laid off.

Within hours of our chapter being closed, our local advisory board and long-serving volunteers made the decision that we would continue to help our wartime allies, as **Keeping Our Promise Rochester**. We had to make quick decisions because of known arrivals whom we had promised to help.

After several meetings, **Refugees Helping Refugees** agreed in late September to be our fiscal sponsor so we could continue our mission of resettling wartime allies.

A private donor graciously gave us \$5,000 to get us started. Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church raised enough money to help two large families of 6 each to secure housing before we had an agreement with RHR. Once our agreement was in place, the Church of Latter Day Saints gave us a grant for furniture, beds, food, hygiene and cleaning supplies, and a cash grant for gas for our moving van.

In addition to resettling our wartime allies, we are committed to visa advocacy – to help those who may have been wrongly denied their life saving visa, or stuck in administrative processing. We are committed to helping soldiers help their interpreters.

As noble as this endeavor is, we are not “out of the woods.” We do not have enough funds for a paid director for this all-encompassing program. With help from RHR we will search for grant opportunities. For now I am a volunteer director as we attempt to secure funding for a paid position. We are currently setting aside 15% of donations towards a future salary, with 85% of the donations going towards support of our families and program.

Will this succeed? We have learned so much over the last five years, with always more to learn. We are a community who builds bridges, and pulls together. We have made new friends with those who fought for American ideals. With the renewed support from the community in just the past four months, including our SIV community, we are seeing rays of sunshine filtering through the trees. Many people are helping us do tremendous good through **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** and helping our war-time allies when they arrive at our doorstep with nothing but their dreams of being an American.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ellen Smith".

– Ellen Smith

2019 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

From Jan. 1, 2019 - Dec. 30, 2019, we resettled **24 families** comprising **79 individuals** in Rochester. Three to four families are expected to arrive in January 2020. In addition, we referred two families for resettlement in Portland, Ore., and San Diego, Calif.

We paid **\$27,676.70** in resettlement expenses that include first month's rent, a security deposit, apartment essentials (items that we did not have and needed to purchase), a phone, and first food. We also paid utility deposits. Included is the cost of gas for the moving van.



We provided fully-furnished apartments for 22 families this year for free, which allows a family to budget their “welcome grant” over their first 6-12 months for utilities and non-food items. Individuals arriving without family are moved into shared apartments, and we have provided needed furniture, cookware and bedding for those cases. Apartments are furnished through community donations, a grant from the LDS Church, and we purchase some items new - like pressure cookers. Afghan and Iraqi SIV volunteers do most of the furniture pickups and apartment setups to earn their hours for our Wheels for Work program.

We have given out 15 car grants in our **Wheels for Work** program. Ten cars were given out under NOLB for a total expenditure of \$19,138, and five car grants under **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** with a total expenditure of \$5,583. Each family must have 50 hours volunteer time to qualify, and they must be ready for a job or have the promise of a job. Eight of the 15 cars were donated with seven needing repairs to pass inspection.



2019 NOLB-ROC Income & Expenses for SIV support

(as of 8/30/2019)

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Funds Raised for NOLB Rochester Chapter (includes grants) | \$61,527.61 |
| SUBTRACT 2019 DESIGNATED WHEELS FOR WORK DONATIONS | -\$17,519.74 |
| (Wheels for Work is a separate program - see below) | |
| *Add funds carried over from 2018 to 2019 | \$9,305.92 |
| (This includes cash, checks, not including Wheels for Work. -----) | |
| General funds available for 2019 | \$53,313.79 |

Expenses for NOLB-ROC (1/1/2019 - 8/30/2019)

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Direct family support | \$22,589.17 |
| (rents, security, food, utilities, misc. items) | |
| Indirect expenses | \$10,553.01 |
| Office exp., fund-raising, annual dinner, postage, marketing, moving van costs) | |
| Total 2019 Chapter Expenses for NOLB-ROC as of closing | \$33,122.18 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Funds available for 2019 | \$53,313.79 |
| Subtract expenses | -\$33,122.18 |
| | ----- |
| Amount remaining with NOLB-National after Chapter closing. | \$20,191.61 |



Beautiful quilts were made for each family by Susan Jay.



Children learned wood-burning at camp as part of their art program.

NOLB -ROC - Wheels for Work (this is a separate grant program)

Monetary car donations Jan. 1, 2019 - May 31, 2019 \$17,519.74
 Carry over car grant and donations from 2018 (see 2018 financial report) \$18,213.00

\$35,732.74
\$19,138.83

Subtract car grant expenses under NOLB-ROC

Expenses include: cars for 10 SIV families, registration, first insurance.

Remaining car grant funds with NOLB National at chapter closing \$16,593.91



Our Coins For Cars Jars allowed full community participation with the message that “every penny counts!”

In kind donations helped our families tremendously! We had a total of 15 fans donated through the National Council of Jewish Women and other donors who sent fans through Amazon. Donors also sent pressure cookers, tea pots, thermoses, cooking pots, utensils, and vacuum cleaners.

A special thanks to
NCJW[®]
 National Council of Jewish Women
 for joining the
 NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

FAN CLUB



2019 Keeping Our Promise Rochester

Income & Expenses for SIV Support (as of 12/31/2019)

Funds are held by our Fiscal Sponsor: **Refugees Helping Refugees**
Expenditures are approved by Ellen Smith and Irwin Solomon,
and overseen by the KOP advisory board and Refugees Helping Refugees.

KOP Income:

Money raised since Oct. 1, 2019. \$43,329.11
(*This includes a \$10,000 donation for housing assistance. The donor wishes to remain anonymous).

Expenses:

Direct family support \$6,683.85
(rents, security, food, utilities, phones, misc. items)
Indirect expenses \$1,442.67
Office exp., fund-raising, annual dinner, postage, marketing, moving van costs)
Staff Salary \$6,021.71
(at this time we are setting aside 15% of donations
for a future program director salary)
Car Grants (Wheels for Work) \$5,583.12
Total Expenses **\$19,711.35**

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| KOP Income | \$43,329.11 |
| Subtract expenses | - \$19,711.35 |
| Cash balance Jan. 1, 2020 | \$23,617.76 |

Incoming families and estimated initial expenses for January and February 2020: \$17,620

We had several SIVs arrive in December but did not have benefits or DSS as of Jan. 1, 2020. SIVs who do not come in through IOM do not have immediate access to a “welcome grant” through Catholic Family Center, and cannot access DSS benefits right away. We are projecting 25-30 families in 2020 with total resettlement program costs of \$150,000 - \$200,000 including the value of donated goods, and a staff director.

IN-KIND GRANTS THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

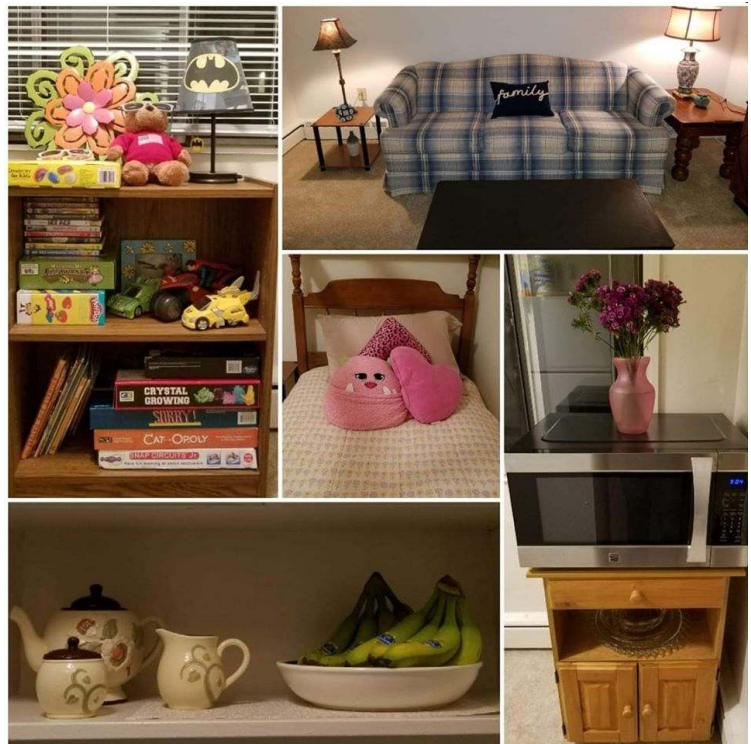
**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in-kind grant
includes twin and full sized beds, dining tables, pillows, food, gas for van . . . \$44,600**

**LDS grant is overseen by Chandee Searcy, Bentley Hutchings
Keeping Our Promise Rochester received this grant in late 2019, and it will be used in 2020.*

Value* of apartment furnishings given to SIVs since Oct. 1, 2019

(*Using the *Goodwill Valuation Guide* or actual cost - these include LDS furnishings & Bishop's Storehouse, bikes from R-Community Bikes and computers from Gordon Metz)

Total Value: \$21,954

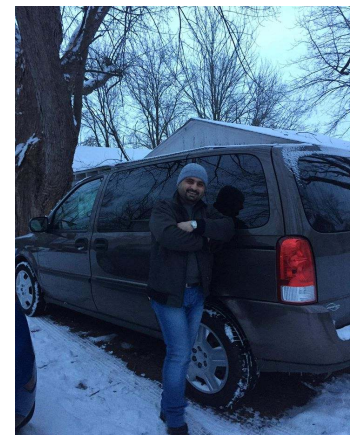
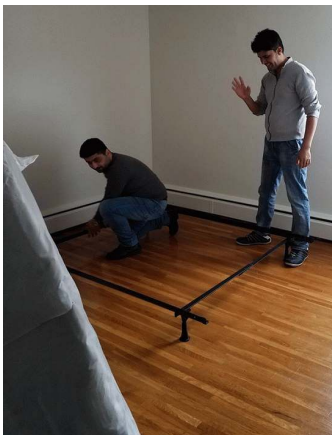


Our families received 52 bikes in 2019

R-Community Bikes is a partner organization that offers each family bicycles. The KOP bike program is managed by advisory board member Kim Schmidt.



SIVs volunteered over 750 hours to help with apartment setups and collecting donations to earn their Wheels for Work!



Defense Base Act Claims Referrals: 4



A humvee hit by an improvised explosive device or IED.

This year **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** referred three local SIVs, and one out-of-state SIV, for compensation under the **US DOL Defense Base Act**. This law covers SIVs who were injured while working for private employers on U.S. military bases or on any lands used by the U.S. for military purposes outside of the United States. It also covers SIVs who were injured working on public work contracts with any U.S. government agency. SIVs who were wounded are not eligible for veterans (VA) benefits, but they are eligible for some compensation under this program. We will continue to offer referrals to any SIV who contacts **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** regardless of where they are located or living in the U.S. Referrals are managed by Ellen Smith.

Emergency Immigration: 10 families

SIVs do not have to wait for the International Office of Migration (IOM) to leave their countries or refugee camps. But even if these families apply to IOM for tickets, there are frequent problems, and families need emergency immigration help from **Keeping Our Promise Rochester**.

The Hossiny family pictured to the right were granted their visas, and applied to IOM to get out of Afghanistan. IOM failed to issue tickets before their visas were set to expire. They contacted **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** Program Director Ellen Smith, who made arrangements with **Miles4Migrants** to get tickets to Boston. KOP volunteers drove to Boston in a van loaned by another volunteer to pick up the family. Another volunteer paid for two hotel rooms for the night so everyone could travel safely back to Rochester the next day. Another volunteer co-signed for their apartment, and we paid the first month's rent and security, but will also need to pay their second month of rent.

Keeping Our Promise Rochester assisted a total of 10 families this year who needed to leave Afghanistan on an emergency

basis. Of those families, eight families consisting of 20 individuals resettled in Rochester, and we directed one family to Portland, Ore., and another family to San Diego, Calif.

These "non-IOM" cases require extra financial support from **Keeping Our Promise Rochester**. Families cannot receive their small "welcome grant" from Catholic Family Center upon arrival. These cases take longer to process for their initial 180 days of DSS benefits. These families need at least two, and sometimes three months of rental assistance, and at least one month of food assistance.

Emergency requests for help to get to the U.S. are managed by Ellen Smith.





Founded in 1848

Temple B'rith Kodesh is a community partner who has sponsored our last two annual Spring Banquet dinners – our main fund raising event for the year – and is sponsoring our first Spring Banquet dinner as **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** on March 18, 2020. This last Thanksgiving, members of Temple B'rith Kodesh contributed 165 Thanksgiving Baskets of food, halal turkeys and household items to distribute to the community, of which 40 were designated for Keeping Our Promise, thanks to Liza Theuman and Herb Skerker who made this possible (photo above).



Asbury First United Methodist Church is a community partner who donates 20 food baskets each month to families who have been here less than a year, and have food insecurity. This effort is coordinated by Cindy Malone, who put together **240 food baskets** in 2019. Asbury also offers our families clothing, and additional household items, and has been a supporter of our SIV children's horseback riding program for the last three years at Lear Stables LLC in Mendon, NY.

20 Afghan and Iraqi children participated in our one week "Camp Shenanigans" at Lear Stables in Mendon, NY



Saint's Place is a community partner offering clothing for each family, which is coordinated by advisory board member Theresa Eckert. **23 SIV families totaling 70 individuals received clothing.**



The First Presbyterian Church of Honeoye Falls is a community partner that runs our ‘Linen Brigade’ coordinated by Barbara Mueller and Jane Mortoly. They provide each individual with two sets of sheets, pillows, a summer and winter blanket, as well as dish towels.

Messian Evangelical

Lutheran Church is a community partner that helps with cleaning and personal hygiene supplies. This project is coordinated by member Vicki Robinson with long-time volunteer Dulcy Lecour who gathers together all of the welcome baskets for each new family.



Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

Called into community, gifted to serve: Glorifying God through love in action.



Catholic Family Center is the lead intake agency for refugees, and coordinates the SIV paperwork for a welcome grant of \$975 per person, DSS forms, and social security paperwork for each family.

The Strong National Museum of Play offers each family free passes, as well as a pass for the caring circle volunteer who brings the family to this Rochester gem!



The Rochester Museum and Science Center offers a free pass to our families to explore our world and beyond.

A \$17,000 grant from the **Farash Foundation** to No One Left Behind made it possible for nine of our SIV families to get cars to get to work as soon as they had their license and fulfilled their 50 hours of volunteer time back to our community.



2019 - WHEELS FOR WORK: 15 Grants

We believe that our **Wheels for Work** program is one of the primary reasons why our SIV refugee families are so successful. Each family must volunteer 50 hours back to our community, and help in-coming SIV families. They must be working, or have the promise of employment. Those in school with cars are also working night and weekend jobs.



Mujtaba Haidar



Sami Akbari



John Kamin (John's face has been blocked at his request)



Belal Ahmadi



Mahdi Karim



Nasir Aqa Jan



Shaker Quasmi



Mir Enayat Mosawi



Anas Al-Haifda



Wali Akrami



Father Wilhelm Klaver

Shir Ahmad Noori



Faazel Kohistani



Jamsheed Haidari



Bashir Qaayum



Raziq Noori

Why cars? According to an Urban Institute study, families with cars are more likely to find a job and four times as likely to stay employed. Unreliable transportation is one of the primary reasons why low income people and refugees lose their jobs, or have trouble finding employment. A nation-wide survey of people on DSS who received cars from a non-profit group called *Ways to Work* found that 72% reported an increase in income. Of those who were on public assistance when they received a car, 87% were no longer receiving it after two years. **In our own local study** we found that at the start of the Farash grant period, 15 of the 16 recipients in the original 2017 grant received \$36,270.55 in DSS benefits from Monroe County. This amount does not include staff time to administer the benefits. At the end of the grant period those costs for the families were down to \$12,517/month, saving the county \$23,753 for just one month of benefits (some larger families still needed assistance, even with full time employment).

See:

“For many low-income families, cars may be key to greater opportunity”

www.urban.org/urban-wire/many-low-income-families-cars-may-be-key-greater-opportunity

“Why the poor need better access to cars”

www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/04/01/why-the-poor-need-better-access-to-cars/

“A Hard Road for the poor in need of cars: Few programs are available to help low-income workers get behind the wheel.”

www.latimes.com/projects/la-fi-buyhere-payhere/

2020 - Wheels For Work Projections: 16 - 30 vehicles

Going into 2020, we have 16 families on our list for the Wheels for Work car grant program. Each family needs to complete 50 hours volunteer time, have their license, and have employment or the promise of employment. At this time, we are unable to purchase vehicles, and we are relying on donated vehicles that need minor repairs. We will submit grant proposals to restart this successful program so that families may get vehicles as soon as they are eligible.

\$48,000 is needed to completely fund all of these families currently on the list. Another \$45,000 would be needed for the projected newly-arriving families.

2019 Donors: 319

We would like to thank the following 319 donors for your support of our wartime allies resettlement program in Rochester!



Adele Abrams
Adrienne Ferguson
Alan Lamb
Alex Zazubec
Allendale Columbia School
Arline Seidman
Amy & Julie Herbert
Amy Lear
Amy Stein
Andrea Digiorgio
Andy Dutcher
Ann Diehl
Ann Marie Lipari
Ann Waterman
Anne Harrison
Anne Rodgers
April D'Amico
Arlene Reiser
Arline Seidman
Arthur & Trude Fittelson
Asbury First United
Methodist Church
Audra & Eric Schmitt

Ayala Emmett
Barbara & Richard Mueller
Barbara Baron
Barbara Orenstein
Barbara Quinn
Barry Silverstein
Baxter Planning
Bill Moehle
Bob & Donna West
Bonnie Kay
Brenda Comisar
Bruce March
Carlton Brock
Carol Peter Tabone
Catherine Feldman
Cathy Harris
Cecily Molak
Chantel Loeb
Charlene Lajewski
Charlotte Buehler
Chelsea Render
Cheryl & Don Varn
Cheryl & Joanna Frank

Chris & Barry Platt
Christina Bang
Christine Platt
Christopher Chauvin
Christopher Landon
Cindy Cioppa
Cindy Malone
Colleen Natarajan
Connor O'Brien
Dale Simmons
Dan Carr
Daniel Kinsky
David Bienetti
David Bovard
David Brickman
David & Dorie Jennings
David & Sandra Goldman
David Helmer
David Larson
David Leve & Robin
Buonomo-Leve
David Leven
David Mason



Dishes and furniture for the SIV families are stored at Ellen Smith's farm in Mendon. Beds are stored in a dry storage facility in Henrietta. Linens and towels are stored at the First Presbyterian Church in Honoye Falls. Children's furniture and toys are stores with Jessi Juarez and Shannon Cunniffe at their homes.

David Silver
 Deborah Abell
 Deborah Jones Bassegio
 Denise Forster
 Dennis Wake
 Diana Carter
 Diane Bielawa
 Diane Broberg
 Don & Cheri Varn
 Donald Strickland
 Donna & Bruce Cohen
 Donna Schumaci-Messmer
 & Fred Messmer
 Dorothy Drake
 Dr. Ayala Emmett
 Dr. Ruth Goldberg
 Dulcy Lecour
 East Ave Grocery Run
 Edmund Hunt Jr.
 Edward Clair & Gina Rabai
 Clair
 Edward Graham
 Edward Hicks & Carol
 McGhan-Hicks
 Elaine & Ian Ackroyd-Kelly
 Eleanor Lewin
 Eleanor Stauffer
 Elina Natarajan
 Elizabeth Crofton
 Elizabeth Kelly
 Elizabeth McDade
 Elizabeth Scott
 Ellen Nakhnikian

Ellen Smith
 Ellie Holtzman
 Eric Rogers
 Eugenia Steven
 Faith Casey
 First Presbyterian Church
 of Honeoye Falls
 Gail Richeson
 Garage Busters LLC
 Gary & Ruth Ellen Hoyle
 Gerry Cheplowitz
 Gerry Minerd
 Gordon Metz
 GSWNY OST #33 Order of
 the Silver Trefoil
 Gregg Dougherty-Herman
 Greg Weinrieb
 Gunhilde Buchsbaum
 Gunnar Johnson
 Gwyneth Church
 Harold Riley
 Harry Reis
 H. Robert Herman
 Helen & Dennis Lutz
 Helen Wiley
 Herb & Skerker
 Hermann Vogelstein
 Honeoye Falls Mendon
 Rotary
 Howard Berkes
 Howard Kirschenbaum
 Ilan Adar
 Irving & Sharon Piccard

Irwin & Ellen Solomon
 Jacque & James Kohler
 Jamie Rackl
 Jane Liedtke
 Janet Werther
 Janice Bent
 Jason Merriman
 Jawaid Samedy
 Jean Oswald
 Jennifer Loviglio
 Jill Baszczynski
 Jill Orbach
 Jim Carter
 Joan Rosenthal
 Joanna Dychton
 Joanne Faller
 John Benson
 John Santelli
 Jon Stewart
 Joseph Gersitz,
 Josh Herz
 Joyce & Bob Herman
 Judene Scheidt
 Judith Fay
 Judith Stewart Gohringer
 Judy Weiner
 Julie Cataldo
 Julie Plavcan
 Kareen Roberts
 Karen Morris
 Karen Saludo
 Kate Shand
 Kate Weintraub



SIVs volunteers help us in moving donations to furnish apartments, even after they have reached their community volunteer goals, embracing the American spirit of community.

Katherine Scerra
 Katherine Sussman
 Kathryn Blackwell
 Kathryn Wesley
 Kathy Simpson
 Kathleen Colliflower
 Kathleen Michael
 Kathleen Wilkinson
 Katrina Ehmann
 Kelly Lincoln
 Ken Nash
 Ken Nawrocki
 Ken Pitcher
 Kenneth Nash
 Kim Bednarczyk
 Kim Schmidt
 Kim Staffieri
 Laura Kelley
 Laura Morrissey
 Laura Preston
 Leah Granger
 Leah & Russ Petterson
 Lenora Petrarca
 Linda Celia Fedele
 Linda Reinfeld
 Lisa Taddeo
 Lisbeth & Ronald Rank
 Lois R. Tucker
 Lori M Sozio
 Lou Schneider

Lynda Bowen
 Lynn Hefferon
 Madeline Schmitt
 Maggie Kaiden-Weil
 Marcia Layton Turner
 Marilyn Katz
 Maram Masoud
 Marc & Deb Solomon
 Margaret Manning
 Maria Layton Turner
 Marilyn Feldman
 Marilyn Katz
 Marilyn Rosen
 Marjorie Barkin Searl
 Marjorie Bleeg
 Mark Spezzano
 Martha Memmott
 Mary Beth Knowles
 Mary Carson
 Mary Ellen Kesel
 Mary Teumer
 Maura Layton Turner
 Maureen Parker
 Maxine Rosen
 MCC Student Association
 Megan Clifford
 Meaghan Bailey
 Meaghan Sternowski
 Melissa McGrain
 Meredith Graham

Messiah Evangelical
 Lutheran Church
 Michael Brisson
 Michael Ross
 Missy Herrington
 Moira C. Prister
 Molly Dougherty
 Mona Kolko
 Monica Skerker
 Monroe County Dental
 Society
 Nancy Granger
 Nancy & Carl Mancuso
 Nancy Hammer
 Nancy Meiler
 Nancy Westendorf
 Nasifa Alam
 NCJW
 Nicole DeJeet Bartlett
 Nita Pryor
 Nola Pearce
 Noreen Selinger
 Pamela Burdick
 Pat & Latifa Cobb
 Patricia Gately
 Patricia Jones
 Patricia Lear
 Patricia Megerle
 Paula Hansen
 Paula Harris

Peace of Christ Parish
 Peter Owh
 Phil Chapados
 Phillip Hurwitz
 Phyllis Masters
 Quad Cities Rotary Dinner
 Rabbi Peter Stein,
 Rachael Eckerson
 Rachel Rudnick
 Ralph & Patricia Jones
 Rev. Hans Irmer
 Richard Reeves
 Rob Brado
 Robin Levitt
 Robert & Joyce Herman
 Roberta Zakalik
 Roger & Linda Weinstein
 Rona Wyner
 Rose Richter-Heppner
 Ruth Fogarty
 Ruth Goldberg
 Ruth Morton
 Ruthellen Hoyle
 Saifaddin Sultan
 Sally Nicolson

Sandra & David Goldman
 Sanford (Sandy) Donsky
 Senthil Natarajan
 Seth Stanton
 Settler's Club - Fairport
 Sharon Silvio
 Sheryl Silberman
 Shirley Peters
 Shonda Brock
 Spiritus Christi
 Stacy Gulick
 Stephen LaSalle
 Steve Barber
 Steven Blackwell
 Steven & Fraida Levinson
 Steven Searle
 Steven Solomon
 Susan Baruch
 Susan Church Jamesson
 Susan Fogel
 Susan Fox
 Susan Jay
 Susan Kramarsky
 Susan Tabrizi
 Suzanne Sawyer-Ratliff

Tammy Cohen
 Theresa Beldner
 Theresa Eckert
 Thomas Maier
 Thomas & May Thomson
 Timothy Malone
 Todd & Donna Moss
 Tom Brazda
 UCC NY Women Pennies
 for People
 Union Congregational ICC
 Vicki Robinson
 Victoria Peter
 Victoria Robinson
 Virginia Janas
 Walter Eckhardt
 Wayne Schultz
 Wegmans Food Markets
 Inc.
 Wendy & Dennis Moss
 Wendy Cohen
 Wendy Linville
 Wendy Willis
 Wilson P. Dizard III

Volunteers Making It Work!

The commitment of our volunteers in **Keeping Our Promise Rochester** is what makes our resettlement program so successful. We have an average of 56 active volunteers on any given day, with 300 registered volunteers who help from time-to-time. We have 199 volunteers registered on our **Caring Circle and Volunteer Face Book Page**, who may assist with rides, or finding items for apartments and families. What is very special is that parents are encouraging their children to participate, and share in this community endeavor. Irwin Solomon is our volunteer manager with Julie Cataldo tracking volunteer hours on a monthly basis.



| Month | Volunteer Hours Documented |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| September 2019: | 1,328 |
| October 2019: | 1,400 |
| November 2019: | 1,244.50 |
| December 2019: | 1,194.50 |
| <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> | |
| Total hours for KOP: | 5,167 |

Documented Hours for NOLB for Jan. 1 - Aug. 2019: 7,825.75

No One Left Behind KOP
Welcome basket of supplies

201

Welcome Baskets: 24

For: family of 4: Zakanya Hossli
son 4, daughter 6

| items checked are here: | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 2 composition books | | ✓ |
| bucket | | ✓ |
| mop | | ✓ |
| broom | | ✓ |
| dustpan and brush | | ✓ |
| kitchen trash basket (11 gal) | | ✓ |
| bathroom trash basket | | ✓ |
| trash bags for 13 gal. bags | 50 | ✓ |
| 2 laundry baskets | | ✓ |
| large container laundry soap | 101 loads | ✓ |
| dish soap | 30oz | ✓ |
| counter cleaner: kitchen | 32oz | ✓ |
| counter cleaner: bathroom | 20oz | ✓ |
| floor cleaner (all purpose) | 59oz | ✓ |
| toilet paper | 6 rolls | ✓ |
| paper towels | 6 | ✓ |
| shower curtain w/rings | | ✓ |
| toilet brush | | ✓ |
| multi pack sponges | 4 | ✓ |
| scrubbies | 4 | ✓ |
| dish pan | | ✓ |
| dish drainer | | ✓ |
| Ajox cleanser | 20oz | ✓ |
| Bleach | 2qt. | ✓ |
| 25 sq. ft. aluminum foil | | ✓ |
| 100 sq. ft. plastic wrap | | ✓ |
| 2 bags of samples | | ✓ |
| 18oz body wash | | ✓ |
| body soap | 5 bars | ✓ |
| shampoo | 2x12oz | ✓ |
| children's shampoo (when needed) | 2x7oz | ✓ |
| hand lotion | 16.9oz + 8oz | ✓ |
| 1 tube toothpaste per person | 4 | ✓ |
| dental floss or dental picks | 4 | ✓ |
| 2 toothbrushes per person | 8 | ✓ |
| razors | 5 pink / 5 blue | ✓ |
| 2 deodorant per adult | 4 | ✓ |
| feminine hygiene pads | 33 | ✓ |
| kleenex | 2 boxes | ✓ |
| party liners | 26 | ✓ |
| hand sanitizer | 7.5oz | ✓ |
| 80 band-aids | | ✓ |
| Antibiotic ointment | | ✓ |
| 4 combs/brush | | ✓ |

In addition to offering furniture, linens, a vacuum, toolkit, computer, phone and a new pressure cooker to each family, we also give each family these supplies to start their new lives. The list on the left shows what goes into a "welcome basket" for a family of four. Dulcy Lecour assembles each basket.



COMPUTERS: 33

Thanks to Gordon Metz, every family who needs a computer gets a refurbished computer so that adults can search for work, families can stay connected, and families can learn English, and kids can do school work. Gordon gave out 33 computers in 2019.

TOOL KITS: 30

Teachers from the Harley School - Lower School - in Rochester donated 30 tool kits in January 2019 – enough for each family. We offered kits to families who arrived in 2018, and did not have tools.

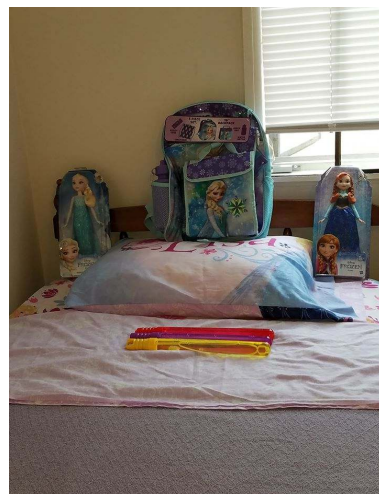


Kim Bednarczyk (right) organized the tool drive.

In-Kind Goods and Donations

Keeping Our Promise Rochester has been given \$3,875 in in-kind furniture and other donations since Oct. 1, 2019, allowing us to furnish each apartment for free! We recorded \$19,277 in in-kind donations as NOLB Rochester.

Toys for Children: 36 children served



Every child is given toys when they arrive, to help them transition into their new life. We gave out a full compliment of toys to 36 children in 2019. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the **Kade Project** of Honeoye Falls, in honor of Sgt. Kade O'Brien USMC, headed by Deb O'Brien, for including our families in their annual Toys for Tots Christmas toy project. In December, each SIV family, can pick out 2-3 new toys for each of their children.

Reporting For Duty



On June 22, 2015, Reza Rahimi arrived with \$30 in his pocket. He stayed with KOP Director Ellen Smith at her farm until shared housing was found. Donations from the community paid for food and his first rent and security when he first arrived. Reza worked on getting his GED while also working at Strong Hospital. In autumn 2019, Reza made the decision to join the U.S. Army. He just completed basic training, will continue with additional training, and go back to Afghanistan as a linguist for our military in 2020.



Visa Advocacy: 3,354 Applicant Participants

Keeping Our Promise Rochester Visa Advocacy Coordinator Kim Staffieri worked with other groups in creating a new Facebook group that went live in October called the **Association of Wartime Allies**.

This is an interactive FB environment with the mission of supporting, educating and advocating for wartime allies who have yet to receive their life-saving visas. All communication for visa assistance is now directed to this page, which is managed by five

volunteers, and overseen by Kim and Ellen Smith. Helping in this educational venture is the **International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)** and the **Interpreting Freedom Foundation**. We also have two translators that assist with posts in Pashto and Dari.

Members of this group can look up questions and answers before asking a question, empowering them to solve their case issues. This model assists SIV applicants so that they can submit cases that are complete and have correct documentation (the most common reason for delays in processing). This new program reaches the highest number of SIV applicants as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Occasional individual cases are accepted for one-on-one advocacy where there are complex issues that need to be resolved. The AWA team often calls on the resources / support of the National Visa Center and IRAP to assist with these more difficult cases.

We offer online support in "real time", responding to publicly posted questions within no more than 24 hours, typically within less than 4 hours.

The metrics from this group show we have 3,354 members with an average of 14 new posts per day that average 123 comments daily and 279 reactions daily. When we analyze the Active Members daily, we see an average of 1,999 Active Members daily, a full 60% of the total members in this group.

This signifies that the educational and supportive posts are reaching almost 2/3s of the members daily.

Keeping Our Promise Rochester - Advisory Board



Ellen Smith serves as the director for Keeping Our Promise. Through her role, and previous work, she has assisted over 100 refugee SIV families in Rochester totaling over 300 individuals since Oct. 2014. The National Council of Jewish Women – Greater Rochester Section selected Ellen as the winner of the 2019 Hannah G. Solomon Humanitarian Award. She was awarded the “Spirit of America” award by the Reserve Officers Assn. for starting the SIV resettlement program in Rochester, and creating a welcoming community. Ellen was a credentialed journalist for 29 years with 37 top journalism awards including awards from the National Press Club, Society of Professional Journalists, Investigative Reporters & Editors Inc., and the Edward R. Murrow Award.

Irwin Solomon is a retired Rochester native and has been a volunteer since Spring 2015. Irwin maintains our volunteer directory, coordinates e-mail and other communications to volunteers. He also oversees KOP finances with Ellen Smith. He was one of the first board members, and early volunteers. He is also on the Board of Temprow which provides temporary housing for the homeless, volunteers at Rochester Area Interfaith Housing Network and is a member of the social action committee at Temple B'rith Kodesh. Irwin is pictured with his wife, Ellen, who is also a volunteer, and helped to coordinate the Thanksgiving Baskets, and works on the annual Spring Dinner.



Theresa Eckert was one of our first Rochester chapter volunteers starting in February 2015, and was drawn to helping wartime allies because of her son's service to our country, and her understanding the importance of a role of an interpreter. She was one of the first “caring circle” members before we had a caring circle program, and was one of our first board members. Theresa serves as the liaison to Saint's Place. She also helps with holiday gift baskets. Because of her volunteer service with families, she brings a wealth of knowledge to our Caring Circle program offering training and guidance to new Caring Circle volunteers, and to the board.



B. Andrew Dutcher, Esq., is our legal advisor and instrumental in overseeing the funding for the SIV children's riding program at Lear Stables. He also offers legal planning and advice for NOLB families, and assists in helping our families with simple wills and guardianship planning for those single parents without a spouse. He also helps with driving lessons if an SIV has failed his road test. Andy is a 1976 graduate of Boston University School of Law, and was admitted to the New York bar in 1976 and has been engaged in the practice of law in Rochester, New York since that date.

Dr. Kim Schmidt serves as the liaison with R Community Bikes and as a Caring Circle member to several families. Together with friends and family, she has co-hosted Henna Parties in support of our resettlement program. She is a Marriage & Family Therapist and works exclusively with people who have experienced war zone trauma and loss. She lives in Spencerport where she also serves as Admin for the Buy Nothing Group, a local gift economy, whose members are perpetually generous to SIVs and their families. She is pictured with her daughter Katrina Ehmann, also a volunteer and Caring Circle Member.



Dr. Deborah Abell is our Caring Circle liaison and organizes caring circles for incoming families. She helps with initial caring circle volunteer training, and answers caring circle questions when they arise. She has also become an expert in overcoming DSS problems that frequently come up with individual families. She first got involved as a Caring Circle member for a family of seven who moved to the US in May, 2017. She now organizes new Caring Circles for incoming families. She works as a primary care pediatrician. Her son, Matthew, helped SIV families by building coffee tables for his Eagle Scout project.

Dr. Dennis S. Moss, a retired VA Radiologist, heads the Employment Committee, helping to find jobs for the newly arrived and underemployed SIVs. A volunteer since February 2017, he and his wife Wendy have also been part of caring circles, fund-raising, DHS (DSS) problem solving and are both frequently seen at airport arrivals. Dennis oversees the entire employment process from an initial interview and resume writing or revision to job searches and final job acceptance. He lets us know when SIVs are job-ready and in need of a reliable car under our “Wheels for Work” program. Dennis is always ready to advise on initial and future employment issues.



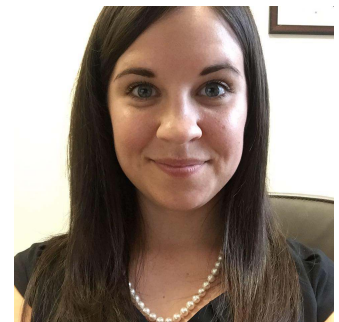
Jawaid Samadey was the second SIV ever assisted in Rochester, and now serves as our cultural advisor, and helps to formulate the best practices for taking care of newly-arrived refugee families. He is on-call any time we have questions, or need translation assistance. He has taken on the role of helping with insurance for our *Wheels for Work* program, and also offering job search training advice with Dennis. Jawaid served the U.S. mission in Afghanistan for six years. He has a degree in Business Administration and a Masters Degree in Governance and Public Policy from the University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK, and has done work for the United Nations. He currently has an interpreting service.

Noreen Selinger is the lead planner for our annual Spring Dinner and other fund-raising and community building efforts. She joined our advisory board in the summer of 2018. Noreen and her daughter Rory also meet with the wife of an SIV on a weekly basis to help with English language acquisition skills. Noreen started volunteering as a caring circle volunteer for a family of five. She has assisting in building our website, and maintains it with Ellen. When not volunteering for KOP, Noreen works as an IT Recruiter for ProActive Recruiters.



Kim Staffieri has taken the lead on wartime ally special immigrant visa advocacy. She is working on training volunteers to assist Afghans overseas who are stuck in administrative processing, or are in need of finding an American they worked with for much-needed HR letters or letters of recommendation. She has also developed a one-of-a-kind interactive, educational Facebook support group to assist SIV applicants offering frequent educational posts to help the SIVs understand the complex Special Immigrant Visa process.

Jill Baszczyński, LMSW, became involved as a volunteer for a Caring Circle in the summer of 2018, and is now our KOP advisory board secretary and KOP family advisor. Jill is a Licensed Master of Social Work and works for the Unified Court System, New York State Child Welfare Court Improvement Project. In her position she is involved with strategic planning to improve the foster care system. Prior to her current employment, Jill served as a caseworker in Buffalo, NY.



Keeping Our Promise Rochester
would like to take this opportunity in congratulating our
new American citizens and their families:

Jawaid Samedy
Amruddin Haidari
Aziz Sharifi
Hussain Afzali



Keeping Our Promise
**Fundraising
Dinner**

Temple B'rith Kodesh
2131 Elmwood Ave.
Rochester, NY 14618

March 18, 2020
6-9 pm

**TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2020
10:00AM**

Join us for our Annual Fundraising Dinner

This event is a night of dinner, music, engaging speakers, and silent auction to raise money for our Keeping Our Promise Rochester.

GENERAL ADMISSION - \$65/individual TABLE OF 8 - \$480

SEATING:

Preferred seating will be reserved for event sponsors, speakers and guests who purchase a full table. All other guests will have an assigned seat on a first-come first serve basis.

SPONSORSHIP:

Sponsorship opportunities can be found on our website:
<https://www.keepingourpromise.org/sponsorship.html>

QUESTIONS? Email us: kopfundraising@gmail.com

BANQUET PLANNERS: Noreen Selinger, Ellen Solomon, Irwin Solomon, Cindy Malone, Chandee Searcy, Wendy Moss, Paula Harris, Wendy Cohen, Kim Joyce