

## INTERFAITH REFUGEE MINISTRY (IRM)

As we continue to adapt our work to the current pandemic, our mission remains the same: to help legal refugees rebuild their lives in eastern North Carolina through assistance with initial housing, transportation, employment, school enrollment, cultural orientation and English language instruction. IRM remains committed to helping refugees reach and sustain financial, emotional and social self-sufficiency, and to achieving successful integration into our community.

A new part of our mission is to help the refugee community stay informed on the latest COVID information. We are collaborating with the school system, employers and healthcare providers, to ensure that accurate information about resources reaches those affected by this crisis. We distribute donated food, masks and other supplies and continue to call our clients to check on their well-being.

Our **Wilmington** sub office closed as of October 1, 2020. Falling numbers of arrivals since 2017 meant that we could no longer sustain two offices. We will continue to assist those remaining in the area, as needed. We are very grateful to St. James for their donation of office space to us for the past several years.

**What's new:** we are teaching English, Cultural Orientation, and Civics classes remotely through Zoom. It's become a blessing because people who don't live in the New Bern area, but who would like to volunteer to teach, are now able to do so remotely. Our Volunteer Coordinator provides training and materials. With several grants, we have purchased laptops for clients so that they can learn remotely. We are also able to tap into UNCW for interns and we will have one each semester in 2021.

**Employment:** For this year's arrivals, employers include Sanderson Farms, Moen and BSH. We have a staff employment specialist who helps new arrivals and others understand work culture and who helps find a good fitting job for each person. Employment services may include job readiness classes, job counseling, and job follow up with both employer and employee.

### Update on Refugee Resettlement

**What nationalities are coming to eastern North Carolina through Interfaith Refugee Ministry?** Our current case load includes refugees from Afghanistan, Burma, Colombia and The Democratic Republic of Congo

**How many arrived in 2020 through IRM?** Our total for 2020 was 33 individuals (17 family units ranging in size from 1 to 5).

**Who determines the number of refugees who might be allowed into the U.S. each year?** The President of the United States in consultation with Congress and federal agencies sets a ceiling for arrivals, but there is no guarantee that those numbers will arrive.

**What was the national ceiling for arrivals for 2020?** That number was 18,000. Only about 11,814 arrived partly because of COVID travel restrictions. North Carolina received 469 or 3.9% of the total.

**What is the national ceiling for 2021?** The number has been set at the historic low of 15,000. IRM's number is projected at 68.

Thank you and God bless the Diocese, parishes and individuals who have supported us during this most difficult year.

*Hebrews 13:1-3 Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Husson, Executive Director