

SHERR

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

**HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
& REFUGEE  
RESETTLEMENT:  
PARTNERS  
IN ACTION**

NOVEMBER 8-9, 2023  
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND



**World Learning**  
EDUCATION | DEVELOPMENT | EXCHANGE

**PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE** | ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND IMMIGRATION



Empowering refugees  
and immigrants  
since 1983



**Welcome.US**

*SHERR is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of  
Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM).*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**MARYLAND**



# Welcome to the SHERR 2023 National Workshop

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT: PARTNERS IN ACTION

### **Workshop Purpose**

To deepen and advance the engagement of colleges and universities in refugee resettlement.

### **Objective 1**

Increase coordination and information sharing among diverse leaders, experts, practitioners, and people with lived experience at the intersection of higher education and refugee resettlement (including promotion of the Welcome Campus Network and other resource channels).

### **Objective 2**

Actively develop strategies to begin, improve, strengthen and/or expand the engagement of colleges and universities in refugee resettlement, for student and non-student refugees, independently and in collaboration with resettlement agency networks and other resettlement and community actors, as related to the SHERR Engagement Pathways.

## Welcome from SHERR Consortium Leaders

Dear Friends and Colleagues, on behalf of World Learning, I'm pleased to welcome you to this national workshop, "Higher Education and Refugee Resettlement: Partners in Action." World Learning is proud to be leading the SHERR project with our partners at ECDC, Welcome.US, and the Presidents' Alliance to help build greater capacity in the refugee resettlement ecosystem by growing the number and scope of partnerships with colleges and universities in this space. I hope this event proves to be particularly fruitful as you explore ways to deepen the engagement of your own institutions and organizations in refugee resettlement, while paving the way for others to gain knowledge and inspiration from your strategies and commitment. I would also like to express our gratitude to the University of Maryland, College Park, for taking on the role of campus host for this important event. - **Carol Jenkins, CEO, World Learning**

On behalf of the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, we are honored and thrilled to welcome you to this first SHERR National Workshop. We are excited to work together to jumpstart the communities of practice, enhance higher education engagement in refugee resettlement, support efforts with resettlement agencies, and exchange promising ideas. With nearly 3,700 not-for-profit two- and four-year colleges and universities across the United States, there are many exciting opportunities to pilot various forms of campus engagement, which then can be adapted and scaled to ultimately benefit refugees, institutions, and the broader communities alike. We are eager to collaborate with you over the course of these two days to develop practical tools and identify next steps. Thank you for your time, expertise, and generosity of spirit. Thank you for joining! - **Dr. Miriam Feldblum, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration**

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2023 SHERR National Workshop, "Higher Education & Refugee Resettlement: Partners in Action." The Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) is proud to serve as a member of the SHERR consortium through our capacity as a national refugee resettlement agency. The continued advancement of colleges and universities' engagement in refugee resettlement helps build the diversity, capacity, and resiliency of the resettlement network and more welcoming communities across the United States. During these two days, Workshop participants will learn from examples that offer practical ideas, build awareness of resources, and develop and share innovative strategies for deepening colleges and universities' role in resettling and welcoming refugees. To Workshop participants, planners, and all who have contributed to making this event possible, I extend a warm thank you! - **Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D. President and CEO, ECDC**

On behalf of Welcome.US, a national initiative built to inspire, mobilize, and empower Americans from all corners of the country to welcome and support those seeking refuge here, I am thrilled to welcome you to the SHERR National Workshop, Higher Education & Refugee Resettlement: Partners in Action. Through the next two days, we'll be in conversation with practitioners, experts, and newcomers about the great work to welcome refugee newcomers already happening on campuses, and the opportunities and resources to further deepen that engagement. We invite you to participate in these conversations - we want to hear your experiences and ideas! Together, we are demonstrating the capacity and willingness of Americans to welcome. We look forward to collaborating with you to expand our joint efforts so that more newcomers can be welcomed and supported across the country. - **Anya McMurray, President, Welcome.US**

# SHERR: Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

**SHERR** is a three-year capacity building project funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, led by World Learning in collaboration with the Ethiopian Community Development Council, the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, and Welcome.US. SHERR builds the capacity of U.S. higher education institutions to support refugee resettlement with the aim to improve newcomers' experiences and outcomes upon their arrival. SHERR identifies and strengthens "pathways of engagement" for colleges and universities to participate in refugee resettlement; develops resources, tools, and trainings to support the work of the institutions; and creates networks for institutions to share best practices.

Key activities of SHERR include:

- A national needs assessment survey to better understand the status and the potential of higher education in supporting refugee resettlement
- This national workshop, "Higher Education & Refugee Resettlement: Partners in Action"
- Supporting the growth of the Welcome Campus Network
- Creating a resource hub focused on higher education and resettlement as a complement to the Higher Ed Immigration Portal
- Creating communities of practice, tools, and trainings to advance SHERR's Pathways of Engagement
- Innovation Incentive Grants

## SHERR CONSORTIUM PARTNERS

**World Learning**, a global non-profit, works through international education, exchange, and development to build a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world. Our three distinct branches include our flagship exchange program, The Experiment in International Living; an accredited higher education institution and study abroad provider, the School for International Training; and the nonprofit global development and exchange unit World Learning. Our history of educational programming for refugees goes back a long way, from teaching English to Hungarian refugees on our campus in Brattleboro, Vermont in the 1950s, to helping deliver a language, intercultural, and job skills program to 250,000 refugees across Southeast Asia during and after the Vietnam War. Since January 2022, World Learning and SIT have implemented a community-based refugee resettlement program in southern Vermont that has successfully welcomed more than 200 refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Yemen, Congo, and other countries.

**The Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration**, co-founded by sitting presidents and chancellors of universities, is the only national organization focused on coordinating leadership at the intersection of higher education and immigration. Comprising over 550 presidents and chancellors of U.S. public and private institutions who support immigrant, international, and refugee students, the Presidents' Alliance mobilizes its constituents to support just refugee policies and practices at the campus, state, and federal levels. The Presidents' Alliance seeks to strengthen the capacity of all colleges and universities to build immigrant-inclusive campuses. Through the **Higher Ed Immigration Portal**, Presidents' Alliance provides stakeholders with the information and tools

they need to fulfil their advocacy and policy efforts. In 2021, the Presidents' Alliance launched the Initiative on U.S. Education Pathways for Refugee Students with more than 100 individual participants from over 60 organizations, including 25 colleges and universities. It also mobilized rapid response networks, tools, and resources to support higher education in welcoming Afghans and Ukrainians.

**The Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)** was founded in 1983 and has been a national resettlement agency since 1991, having resettled more than 76,200 individuals. ECDC has a network of 24 sites for resettlement and placement and two community partners. These include ECDC's branch offices and independent, Community-Based Organization (CBO) affiliates. ECDC is the only national resettlement agency founded by an African and is committed to empowering a network of organizations that are founded and/or led by former refugees and immigrants. ECDC envisions a world where human rights are upheld, and people have an opportunity to live up to their full potential in safe and inclusive communities that respond effectively and fairly to the concerns and needs of their members. To work towards this vision, ECDC implements its mission of resettling and assisting refugees and immigrants to lead a life of dignity, attain self-sufficiency, and integrate successfully into their new communities in the U.S. while promoting education and equitable access to resources, opportunities, and services in Africa.

**Welcome.US** is the largest coalition in refugee resettlement. It encompasses civil society organizations, major political figures such as four former presidential families, and colleges and universities across the country. Founded in 2021 in response to the need to provide resources for incoming Afghan refugees, it has expanded to work with people fleeing the war in Ukraine. With a mission to empower every American community to have the resources to welcome newcomers, Welcome.US provides grant funding to initiatives that work with Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. In addition to the larger coalition it operates, Welcome.US also coordinates the **Welcome Campus Network**, which amplifies the work of colleges and universities in welcoming and supporting newly arrived refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine through scholarships, housing units, community sponsorship, and access to education.

## SHERR ENGAGEMENT PATHWAYS

Based largely on a needs assessment, completed in July 2023, SHERR has identified the following initial Pathways of Engagement as capacity-building focuses for the project (with others to follow):

- Developing Refugee Educational Opportunities: Reducing Barriers to Enrollment
- Campus Utilization: Housing
- English Language Learning and Career Support
- Service Learning and Volunteer Engagement

## SHERR NATIONAL WORKSHOP 2023 ORGANIZING TEAM

### World Learning

- Matt Brown, SHERR Program Manager, Director of Global Programs
- Klaudia Gates, SHERR Senior Program Officer
- Emmett Adair, SHERR Program Associate

*Special thanks to Tim Rivera, Senior Advisor, Innovations & Strategy, for all-around support.*

### ECDC

- Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager
- Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator

### Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration

- Dr. Miriam Feldblum, Co-Founder and Executive Director
- Laura Wagner, Director, Refugee Student Initiatives
- Axelle Nassirou, Program Associate, Refugee Student Initiatives

### Welcome.US

- Denise Bell, Co-Founder and Senior Advisor, Sponsorship Policy and Practice
- Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice

### University of Maryland College Park (Campus Host)

*Special thanks to the following for their organizational collaboration:*

- Office of President Darryll J. Pines
- Dr. Patricia Perillo, Vice President for Student Services
- Michael Glowacki, Chief of Staff and Assistant to the Vice President
- Dr. Robert Koulisch, Research Professor and Director, MLAW Programs
- STAMP Student Union
- Volunteers: Students and faculty who shared their talents, knowledge and experience

## Program Snapshot

Day 1 (November 8, 2023)				
8:00-9:00	Light Buffet Breakfast. Networking.			
9:00-9:30	Welcomes			
	Opening Remarks			
9:30-10:45	Connecting the Dots: Higher Education, Resettlement Organizations, Resettlement Outcomes for Student and Non-Student Refugees (panel)			
10:45-10:55	Spotlight: Western Kentucky University			
10:55-11:05	Transition/Breath-catching			
11:05-12:15	1st Community of Practice Breakouts [Discussion: Higher Ed Action: Unilateral and Collaborative]			
	Breakout #1A ELL/Career	Breakout #1B Housing and Campus Utilization	Breakout #1C Educational Opportunities	Breakout #1D Service Learning, Volunteer Engagement, Staffing
12:15-1:15	Buffet Lunch. Networking.			
1:15-2:20	Housing and Campus Utilization for Non-Student Refugees (panel)			
2:20-2:30	Transition/Breath-catching			
2:30-3:30	2nd Community of Practice Breakouts [Discussion: Barriers and Opportunities]			
	Breakout #2A ELL/Career	Breakout #2B Housing and Campus Utilization	Breakout #2C Educational Opportunities	Breakout #2D Service Learning, Volunteer Engagement, Staffing
3:30-3:45	Transition/Breath-catching			
3:40-3:50	A Reading			
3:50-4:05	Spotlight: Middlebury College - Jiran			
4:05-4:30	Breakout Reports. Reflections.			
4:30	Day ends			



## Day 2 (November 9, 2023)

8:00-9:00	Light Buffet Breakfast. Networking.			
9:00-9:10	Brief Opening and a Reading			
9:10-10:25	Funding and Resources (panel)			
10:25-11:00	Spotlight Suite: Partnership Innovations and Inspirations			
11:00-11:15	Transition/Breath-catching			
11:15-12:15	3rd Breakouts -- Funding and Resources (by Community of Practice Area)			
	Breakout #3A ELL/Career	Breakout #3B Housing and Campus Utilization	Breakout #3C Educational Opportunities	Breakout #3D Service Learning, Volunteer Engagement, Staffing
12:15-1:15	Buffet Lunch. Networking.			
1:15-2:15	Spotlight: Bunker Hill Community College Spotlight Suite: Community College Innovations and Inspirations			
2:15-2:30	Transition/Breath-catching			
2:30-3:30	4th Community of Practice Breakouts: Expectations and Deliverables			
	Breakout #4A ELL/Career	Breakout #4B Housing and Campus Utilization	Breakout #4C Educational Opportunities	Breakout #4D Service Learning, Volunteer Engagement, Staffing
3:30-3:45	Transition/Breath-catching			
3:45-4:30	Community of Practice Summaries. Reflections. Call to Action.			
4:30	Workshop ends			

## DAY 1 (Wednesday, November 8, 2023)

### 8:00-9:00

#### Buffet Breakfast and Networking (Atrium)

### 9:00-9:30

#### Welcomes and Opening Remarks (Atrium)

- Welcomes
  - » Carol Jenkins, CEO, World Learning
  - » Dr. Patricia Perillo, Vice President of Student Affairs, University of Maryland
- Opening Remarks
  - » The Resettlement Landscape, and the Imperative and Potential of Higher Education Engagement: Perspectives from Department of State
    - Holly Herrera, Section Chief, Domestic Resettlement, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
  - » This Workshop: Goals, Structure, Participants | SHERR Survey Data Highlights
    - Matt Brown, SHERR Program Manager; Director, Global Programs, World Learning

### 9:30-10:45

#### Panel: Connecting the Dots: Higher Education, Resettlement Organizations, Resettlement Outcomes for Student and Non-Student Refugees (Atrium)

- Moderator: Dr. Miriam Feldblum, Executive Director, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
- Panelists
  - » Dr. Kyle Farmbry, President, Guilford College
  - » Sandra Vines, Senior Director for Resettlement, IRC
  - » Megan Ritter, National Strategic Outreach Lead, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - » Jawad Hosseini, Executive Director, No Lost Generation @Mason, BA Candidate George Mason University

## 10:45-10:55

### Spotlight: Western Kentucky University – Seizing the Storm, HillToppers’ Lessons (Atrium)

- John Sunnygard, Associate Provost, Global Learning and International Affairs, Western Kentucky University
- Introduced by Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, ECDC

## 10:55-11:05

### Transition/Breath-catching

## 11:05-12:15

### Breakouts #1: Higher Ed Action: Unilateral and Collaborative

- A.** English Language Learning and Career Pathway Support (Pyon Su Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Leads: Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator, ECDC; Axelle Nassirou, Project Associate, Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starter: M. Karissa Porter, Director, Refugee Career Pathways Program, Bluegrass Community and Technical College
- B.** Housing and Other Campus Utilization (Jimenez Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, ECDC
  - » Conversation Starter: ElBonita Elliott, Case Manager, Dean of Students Office, University of Maryland
- C.** Educational Opportunities (Atrium)
  - » SHERR Lead: Laura Wagner, Director of Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starter: Jennifer Murray, Dean of International Studies, Bard College
- D.** Service Learning and Volunteer Engagement (including staffing) (Prince George’s Room)
  - » SHERR Lead: Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US
  - » Conversation Starters: Dan McBrayer, Program Officer, Office of Refugee Admissions, Domestic Resettlement Team, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; Todd Scribner, Assistant Director, Education & Outreach, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; Dr. Robert Koulish, Research Professor and Director, MLAW Programs, University of Maryland, College Park

## 12:15-1:15

### Buffet Lunch and Networking

## 1:15-2:20

### Panel: Perspectives on Housing and Campus Utilization for Non-Student Refugees (Atrium)

- Moderator: Joel Colony, Vice President, External Engagement & Advocacy
- World Learning/School for International Training
- Panelists
  - » Holly Herrera, Section Chief, Domestic Resettlement, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
  - » Dr. Diya Abdo, Founder, Every Campus A Refuge; Professor of English, Guilford College
  - » Leslie Wilson, Associate Director, Refugee Housing Solutions, a Church World Service initiative for all Resettlement Agencies
  - » Dr. Danielle Macdonald, Liaison for Afghan Newcomers, Professor of Anthropology, University of Tulsa

## 2:20-2:30

### Transition/Breath-catching

## 2:30-3:30

### Breakouts #2: Barriers and Opportunities

- A.** English Language Learning and Career Pathway Support (Pyon Su Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Leads: Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator, ECDC; and Axelle Nassirou, Project Associate, Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starter: Nasir Kaihan, PhD Student (Education Policy Analysis: Refugee and Multilingual Learners), Arizona State University
- B.** Housing (Jimenez Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, ECDC
  - » Conversation Starters: Evi Long, Associate Director, CWS Network Housing; Sophia Martin, Housing Integration Officer, CWS
- C.** Educational Opportunities (Atrium)
  - » SHERR Lead: Laura Wagner, Director of Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starters: Elizabeth Zenger, Utah Director, One Refugee; Jacqui Hatch and Megan Ward, M.A. candidates, International Education Program and Refugee Educational Advancement Lab (REAL), George Washington University
- D.** Service Learning and Volunteer Engagement (including staffing) (Prince George's Room)
  - » SHERR Lead: Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US
  - » Conversation Starter: Myat Lin, Director, Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees

**3:30-3:40**

**Transition/Breath-catching**

**3:40-3:50**

**A Reading:** “Always Arriving,” by Dr. Fatemeh Keshavarz-Karamustafa, Chair & Director, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, University of Maryland (Atrium)

**3:50-4:05**

**Spotlight: Middlebury College – Jiran (Atrium)**

- Maha Abdullah, Jiran Co-Founder and Community Coordinator, and Emily Goldman, Jiran Co-Founder
- Introduced by Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US

**4:05-4:30**

**Breakout Reports. Reflections. Wrap up. (Atrium)**

**4:30**

**End of Day**

## Day 2 (Thursday, November 9, 2023)

### 8:00-9:00

#### Buffet Breakfast and Networking (Prince George's Room)

### 9:00-9:10

#### Opening of the Day (Prince George's Room)

- A Reading: "Ciudadania" and "The Day the Building Shook," by Camilo Montoya

### 9:10-10:25

#### Panel: Funding and Resources at the Intersection of Higher Education and Student and Non-Student Refugee Resettlement (Prince George's Room)

- Moderator: Laura Wagner, Director of Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
- Panelists
  - » Megan Ritter, National Strategic Outreach Lead, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - » Olivia Issa, Program Lead, Refugee Resettlement Initiative, National Association of System Heads
  - » Mary Karam McKey, Head, Corporate and Foundation Programs + Student Emergency Initiatives, Institute for International Education
  - » Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US (Welcome Campus Network)

### 10:25-11:00

#### Spotlight Suite: Partnership Innovations and Inspirations (Prince George's Room)

- Introduced by Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator, ECDC
- Partnership: Northern Nevada International Center + University of Nevada Reno
  - » Dr. Carina Black, Executive Director, Northern Nevada International Center (University of Nevada Reno)
- Partnership: Arizona State University + IRC
  - » Dr. Pamela DeLargy, Executive Director, Education for Humanity, Professor Practice in Global Studies, Arizona State University
- Partnership: University of Denver + ECDC African Community Center (ACC), "Ready for American Hospitality"
  - » Jessi Kalambayi, Program Manager, University of Denver

### 11:00-11:15

#### Transition/Breath-catching

**11:15-12:15****Breakouts #3: Up Close with Funders and Resource Initiatives**

- A.** English Language Learning and Career Pathway Support (Nanticoke Room, 1st Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator, ECDC; and Axelle Nassirou, Project Associate, Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starter: World Education Services: Fatima Ramadan Sanz, Senior Policy Manager
  - » Resources Represented:
    - World Education Services (WES)
    - Upwardly Global
    - School for International Training
- B.** Housing and Campus Utilization (Jimenez Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, ECDC
  - » Conversation Starter: Jennifer Gillyard, Program Officer, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Department of State
  - » Resources Represented:
    - Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Department of State
    - Refugee Housing Solutions (RHS)
    - Every Campus A Refuge (ECAR)
    - Switchboard
- C.** Educational Opportunities (Prince George's Room)
  - » SHERR Lead: Laura Wagner, Director of Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
  - » Conversation Starter: Welcome Corps on Campus: Nele Feldman, Associate Director, Welcome Corps on Campus, Community Sponsorship Hub
  - » Resources Represented:
    - Welcome Corps on Campus
    - Higher Education Immigration Portal of the Presidents' Alliance
    - Institute of International Education (IIE)
    - National Association of System Heads/Refugee Resettlement Initiative (NASH/RRI)
    - Education Credential Evaluators (ECE)
- D.** Service Learning and Volunteer Engagement (including staffing) (Grand Ballroom Lounge)
  - » SHERR Lead: Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US
  - » Conversation Starters: Dr. Sarah Kureshi, Georgetown University School of Medicine; Ruba Omeira, Medical Student, Co-Founder and Program Lead, Refugee Health Navigator Program, Georgetown University School of Medicine
  - » Resources Represented:

- Refugee Welcome Collective (RWC)
- Their Story Is Our Story (TSOS)
- Welcome Campus Network (WCN)
- CORE (Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange)
- Refugee Resettlement Academy (RRA)

## 12:15-1:15

### Buffet Lunch and Networking (Prince George's Room)

## 1:15-2:15

### Community College Innovations and Inspirations Spotlight (Prince George's Room)

- Introduced by: Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US
- Spotlight: Dr. Pam Eddinger, President, Bunker Hill Community College
- Spotlight Suite:
  - » Mary Mercado, Director of Teaching & Learning, Adult Basic Education for College & Career, and Sara Haghighi, Instructional Program Manager, Refugee Education Program, Pima Community College (Tucson, AZ)
  - » Olga Prizhbilov, Director, Refugee Career Pathways, Los Rios Community College District (Sacramento, CA)
  - » Dr. Donna Kinerney, Dean of Instruction, Adult ESOL & Basic Skills for College and Careers, Montgomery College (Montgomery County, MD)

## 2:15-2:30

### Transition/Breath-catching

## 2:30-3:30

### Breakouts #4: SHERR Communities of Practice: Defining CoP Expectations. Drafting Deliverables.

- E.** English Language Learning and Career Pathway Support (Nanticoke Room, 1st Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Mariam Iskajyan, SHERR Program Coordinator, ECDC; and Axelle Nassirou, Project Associate, Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
- F.** Housing and Campus Utilization (Jimenez Room, 2nd Floor)
  - » SHERR Lead: Elisabeth Benfield, Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, ECDC
- G.** Educational Opportunities (Prince George's Room)
  - » SHERR Lead: Laura Wagner, Director of Refugee Student Initiatives, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
- H.** Service Learning and Volunteer Engagement (including staffing) (Grand Ballroom Lounge)
  - » SHERR Lead: Manal Sidi, Program Manager, Policy and Practice, Welcome.US



**3:30-3:45**

**Transition/Breath-catching**

**3:45-4:30**

**Community of Practice Summaries and Leadership. Next steps. Reflections. Call to Action. (Prince George's Room)**

**4:30**

**End of Workshop**

## Biographies of Speakers, Moderators and Organizers (in alphabetical order)

**Dr. Diya Abdo** is the Lincoln Financial Professor of English at Guilford College in North Carolina. Her book *AMERICAN REFUGE: True Stories of the Refugee Experience* was selected as a North Carolina Reads 2024 Book. In 2015, Dr. Abdo, a second-generation Palestinian refugee born and raised in Jordan, founded Every Campus A Refuge (ECAR), which advocates for housing refugee families on college and university campus grounds and supporting them in their resettlement. The flagship chapter at Guilford College, now one of several ECAR campuses, has hosted 90 refugees thus far. Dr. Abdo is the recipient of many awards, including the 2021 J.M. Kaplan Fund's Innovation Prize.

**Maha Abdullah** is an author, educator, and co-founder of Jiran, a summer language program that pairs intermediate and advanced Arabic students from Middlebury College with underserved Arabic-speaking families in New Britain, Connecticut. As a dynamic public speaker and a cultural competency trainer, Maha is an active advocate for social justice with a passion for shaping a changing world. She has led various projects and initiatives that help bridge differences and achieve deep understanding, including working with diverse communities and underserved populations, and 5 delegations at the United Nations. Maha has been repeatedly appointed on multiple leadership boards including: the YWCA's board of directors, Connecticut Speakers Bureau and the executive board of Islamic Association of Central Connecticut.

**Elisabeth Benfield** is the Community Engagement & Sponsorship Manager at the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC). She oversees the Co-sponsorship and Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement (SHERR) programs, as well as private sponsorship initiatives. She holds a Master of International Development from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and a M.Ed. from the American College of Education. While in graduate school, Elisabeth had the opportunity to work closely with refugees and immigrants at the local level and learned of the critical need for newcomer support. Prior to working in resettlement, Elisabeth was in the education sector as a Spanish bilingual teacher.

**Dr. Carina Black** is Executive Director of Northern Nevada International Center in Reno, Nevada. A native of Argentina and a citizen of Switzerland and the U.S., Carina Black has lived in the United States since 1988. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1997 in Comparative Politics. She is the first Executive Director of the Northern Nevada International Center, an organization that manages professional and cultural exchange programs, refugee resettlement and language access for underserved populations. Carina has also been actively involved in various nonprofit local and national non-profit organizations that champion diversity and social justice; she teaches at the University of Nevada, Reno on subjects such as globalization, international affairs, and more.

**Matt Brown** is Director of Global Programs with World Learning and serves as the Program Manager for SHERR. He has worked for the organization for 25 years. He designs and manages diverse programs that enhance the technical and leadership capacities of individuals, universities, and other types of organizations to achieve their goals, with tools such as professional training, international exchanges, grants, and university linkages. Prior to SHERR, Matt's portfolio focused on programs supporting countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Malawi, Eastern Europe, and Pakistan. For 12 years, he served as a resident director in the Balkans. Matt began his career as an ESL teacher,

teacher trainer, and Peace Corps Volunteer in Pakistan and Bulgaria. Matt holds a master's degree in international and intercultural management from World Learning's SIT Graduate School, and an executive certificate in nonprofit management from Georgetown.

**Joel Colony** is World Learning's Vice President of External Engagement. Prior to joining World Learning, Colony worked for U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen in a variety of legislative roles, including as her foreign policy adviser. He completed a Fulbright Scholarship in Europe and a master's degree in global politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Colony is also an SIT Study Abroad alumnus from the China program.

**Dr. Pamela DeLargy** is the Executive Director of Education for Humanity (ASU's refugee education program) at Arizona State University (ASU). She is a public health and migration specialist who joined ASU in 2018 after a thirty-year career in the U.N and USAID, where she worked across the world in humanitarian and conflict settings. She headed UNFPA's humanitarian response programs for over a decade and was a leader in the UN's Women, Peace, and Security initiatives. She is Professor of Practice in Global Studies and currently oversees ASU's refugee education programs. She is a Horn of Africa specialist.

**Dr. Pam Eddinger** is president of Bunker Hill Community College in Massachusetts. Dr. Eddinger's service in the Community College movement spans 30 years, with senior posts in academic and student affairs, communications and policy, and executive leadership. She serves on several boards and commissions, including the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), WGBH Boston, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Boston Foundation (TBF), the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board, the Boston Private Industry Council, Achieving the Dream (ATD), the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Dr. Eddinger was honored in 2016 by the Obama White House as a *Champion of Change*. Most recently, she was appointed by US Secretary of Labor Martin Walsh to serve as the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship.

**ElBonita Elliott** hails from Lexington, KY (go Wildcats). ElBonita is a proud first-generation college graduate from Berea College and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Child and Family Studies, and Masters in Counseling from Eastern Kentucky University. ElBonita has worked for the University of Maryland for five years. During her tenure here, she served as a Resident Director with Resident Life, Campuswide Covid Testing Coordinator with the University Health Center, the Project Manager for the inaugural UMD Resettlement program and is currently serving as the Case Manager for the Dean of Students Office. In her free time, she watches teeth cleaning videos and gets the honor of being mommy to a beautiful little girl named Mackenzie.

**Dr. Kyle Farmbry, J.D.** a lifelong academic leader and scholar of entrepreneurial development and global education, is the 10th President of Guilford College. He joined Guilford on January 1, 2022, from Rutgers University, Newark, where he was Professor of Public Administration in the School of Public Affairs and Administration and previously served as Dean of the Graduate School. A proven senior administrator, executive, and thought leader, and an author of several books, Kyle holds a bachelor's degree in International Affairs, a master's in Public Administration, and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Public Administration from The George Washington University. In 2013, he earned his Juris Doctorate from the Rutgers University School of Law. In 2021 the National Academy of Public Administration elected Kyle a Fellow of the Academy, a prestigious honor recognizing his contributions to public administration and policy.

**Dr. Miriam Feldblum** is co-founder and executive director of the nonpartisan, nonprofit Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration. A national expert on the intersection of immigration and higher education, Miriam has written extensively and delivered presentations on undocumented, international, and refugee students, immigration policy and higher education, and highly skilled labor in the United States. She is a non-resident fellow at the Migration Policy Institute and author of *Reconstructing Citizenship: The Politics of Nationality Reform and Immigration in Contemporary France*. Miriam previously served as vice president for student affairs, dean of students, and professor of politics at Pomona College, as special assistant to the president, faculty research associate, and senior director at the California Institute of Technology, and as an assistant professor at the University of San Francisco. She received a BA in political science from Barnard College, and MA, MPhil, and PhD degrees in political science from Yale University.

**Nele Feldmann** is the Associate Director, Welcome Corps on Campus at the Community Sponsorship Hub where she is leading the organization's work to launch private university sponsorship of refugee youth in the United States. She previously served as the Executive Coordinator of the Global Task Force on Third Country Education Pathways and as the Head of Student Emergency Initiatives at the Institute of International Education where she supported the creation of higher education pathways for refugee students globally. Nele has more than eight years of experience in designing, managing, and supporting programs that expand access to higher education for international, refugee, and displaced student populations. Nele graduated from the University of Bonn in Germany with a Master's in Translation for Arabic and French and a Bachelor's in Political Science. She worked and studied in France, Egypt, and Syria.

**Klaudia Gates** is a Senior Program Officer for the SHERR Program at World Learning. Originally from Poland, she has over 20 years of professional experience including language teaching, early childhood education, conflict resolution, and international education and exchange programming. Prior to joining SHERR, Klaudia designed professional exchanges for the International Visitor Leadership Program at World Learning. She has lived and worked in Poland, the Netherlands and the U.S. She has a Master's degree in International Education from the George Washington University and a Master's degree in English Studies from the University of Warsaw, Poland.

**Jennifer Gillyard** is a native of Philadelphia, PA who now resides in Dumfries, VA. Jennifer received her BA from the University of Virginia and an MA degree from Columbia University and Wesley Theological Seminary. Jennifer brings with her 15 years of child welfare clinical and policy experience. Her volunteering and travel have allowed her to gain experience with resettlement and challenges related to identification of housing and employment opportunities. At the U.S. Department of State, Jennifer is a Program Officer in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in the Office of Refugee Admissions on the Domestic Team where she manages a portfolio which includes identifying innovations in housing to expand capacity for the resettlement network as well as overseeing the housing technical assistance grantee, Refugee Housing Solutions (RHS).

**Emily Goldman** is an educator and researcher with a decade of experience designing and evaluating intercultural education programs for organizations like the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, and Middlebury College. She has also led humanitarian response projects for United Nations agencies and international NGOs across Middle East and Latin America. Emily co-founded Jiran in 2018 while working for Middlebury College's School in Jordan and hopes that the program will grow to serve communities across the country. In addition to working on Jiran, she is currently the Senior Program Lead at UC Berkeley's Global Policy Lab.

**Sara Haghighi** serves as the Instructional Program Manager at Pima Community College's Refugee Education Program (PCC REP) in Tucson, AZ. She oversees instruction for adult language learners with refugee, SIV, Asylee, and Humanitarian Parole status. She is a passionate educator who believes in empowering learners and raising their critical consciousness about social conditions—both their own and those of others. Her experience as a former refugee and her passion for education have influenced her thinking and interest in social justice for culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

**Jacqui Hatch** is a second year Master's candidate at the George Washington University in the International Education program, with an interest in Education in Emergencies. She currently serves as a Lab Leader for GWU's Refugee Education Advancement Lab and President of the International Education Association. Jacqui's work in resettlement stems from her experience working in Southeast Asia working on language and social emotional learning pedagogy with displaced populations in Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Malaysia. Jacqui currently interns at USAID researching Inclusive Higher Education practices and is a Policy Analyst at the Institute of International Education, focusing on exchange visa sponsorship and scholarship programming.

**Holly Herrera** is the Section Chief for Domestic Resettlement at the Office of Admissions at PRM. She began in this role in August 2021 at the beginning of Operation Allies Welcome. Prior, she was a Domestic Resettlement Program Officer. Holly has spent many years at the Federal and nonprofit level working in the refugee and immigrant field, including ten years at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, a national refugee resettlement agency. At USCCB, Holly developed programs and resources for the resettlement network, and conducted program monitoring and evaluation in the field. Following USCCB, Holly was the Federal Project Officer for the Survivors of Torture Program at ORR. Holly received her MBA in nonprofit management from George Mason University.

**Olivia Issa** serves as Program Lead for the National Association of System Heads' (NASH) Refugee Resettlement Initiative (RRI), where she works with higher education systems and institutions to build social and economic success for refugees and forced migrants. Olivia has been engaged in migrant-advocacy and resettlement work since she was 15 years old, across Chicago, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., working with a range of nonprofits and government agencies. Olivia earned a BA in Political Science from George Washington University.

**Mariam Iskajyan** is the SHERR Program Coordinator at ECDC, one of the ten national refugee resettlement agencies in the United States. Mariam previously led the U.S. refugee resettlement and asylum portfolio at the Win Without War Education Fund and implemented university partnerships and local service-delivery programs for refugees, immigrants, and displaced Indigenous communities at the California-based Tiyya Foundation. She has led national advocacy working groups on Temporary Protected Status for Yemen, Venezuela, and Syria and coordinated field delegations assisting displaced populations at the U.S.-Mexico and Venezuela-Colombia borders, and in the South Caucasus. She holds an MSc in Social Policy from the London School of Economics, an MSc in Migration, Mobility, and Development from SOAS University of London, and BAs in Political Science and International Studies from the University of California, Irvine.

**Carol Jenkins** is the CEO of World Learning Inc., which encompasses three distinct branches: The Experiment in International Living; School for International Training, which includes SIT Study Abroad and SIT Graduate Institute; and the nonprofit global development and exchange unit World Learning. Jenkins has served in multiple positions at World Learning over more than a decade. She first joined in June 2007 as senior director of international programs after a 16-year career in

humanitarian aid and development. She was named CEO in February 2018. Prior to joining World Learning, Jenkins held senior program positions with International Medical Corps and World Vision, including a period during which she was posted in southern Africa. Jenkins holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Messiah College in Pennsylvania. She was a fellow at the Luskin School of Public Affairs at University of California, Los Angeles, in 2012 and a participant in the Leadership Program at the International Civil Society Center.

**Nasir Kaihan** is a Doctoral Candidate and Research Assistant in Education Policy, Research, and Evaluation at Mary Fulton Teachers College - Arizona State University. He has over eight years of experience working in program management, program reviews, monitoring and evaluation, and policymaking focused on migrants, IDPs, returnees, and host communities with UNESCO; advancement in higher education with the American University of Afghanistan and international university partnerships with USAID, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Mexico. His career and research interests lie in the education outcome of refugee and bilingual learners, girls, and other disadvantaged segments of society. Nasir has led, attended, and presented at more than ten conferences and workshops in the U.S. and internationally.

**Jessi Kalambayi** is the Program Manager at Ready for American Hospitality (RAH) at the University of Denver (DU) - a collaboration between ECDC's African Community Center (ACC) and the Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality. With a bachelor's degree from the Metropolitan State University of Denver, Jessi did diversity, equity and inclusion work with the United Nations Association of Boulder County. At ACC, Jessi assisted refugees with ESL enrollment, Public Benefits, and employment support. As the RAH Program Manager at the University of Denver, she uses her multicultural background to advocate for and connect with the refugee population and acts as a liaison between the two entities.

**Mary Karam McKey** is Head of Corporate and Foundation Programs and Student Emergency Initiatives at the International Institute of Education. Mary leads a dynamic portfolio of mission-aligned scholarship, fellowship and small grants programs funded primarily by corporate and foundation partners. In addition, she oversees IIE's initiatives focused on increasing access to higher education for refugee and displaced people globally. Mary is based in IIE's San Francisco office and is proud to work with a globally dispersed team. In her nearly 20 years with IIE she has led the design, development, and management of several transformational scholarship and leadership programs in the United States, Southeast Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. Prior to joining IIE, Mary served as Director of Grant Programs at AYUSA, a Senior Program Officer at AMIDEAST and a National Field Coordinator at the Arab American Institute in Washington, DC, where she started her career.

**Dr. Donna Kinerney** is a dean at Montgomery College where she leads grant-funded programs providing English language, basic academic, and workforce readiness skills for immigrants, refugees, and native English speakers. Her work focuses on entry points to career pathways, including apartment maintenance, health care, information technology, and childcare. Dr. Kinerney testified on the Workforce Investment Act for the U.S. House of Representatives and was a Blue Ribbon Panel member of the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education, and on the National Skills Coalition Advisory Panels for Skills Equity and for Postsecondary Education. Her chapter describing these projects "The Montgomery College Experience with Workforce Education for Adult English-Language Learners" appeared in [Working Toward an Equitable and Prosperous Future for All: How Community Colleges and Immigrants are Changing America](#).

**Dr. Robert Koulish** is a political scientist at the University of Maryland, Director of the MLAW Programs in the BSOS College at UMD, Research Professor in the Department of Government and Politics, and Lecturer at Law in the UMD Carey School of Law. He has been actively involved in refugee resettlement at UMD since 2021. Additionally, he has worked with and researched issues about refugees at the U.S.-Mexico border, and traveled there with Maryland students for a winter course on human rights violations and activism at the border. Teaching about crimmigration, refugees and the border is part of his regular schedule. Much of his research agenda is devoted to crimmigration, immigration detention and risk assessment. Koulish has four books and several articles, book chapters and op/eds on these topics, and is co-founder of the International Crimmigration Scholars Network (CINETS).

**Sarah Kureshi, MD, MPH** is an Associate Professor and Vice Chair for Education in the Department of Family Medicine at Georgetown University School of Medicine. Dr. Kureshi is the Director of the Patients, Populations & Policy course and Co-Director of the Health Equity & Advocacy Longitudinal Thread. She serves as Faculty Advisor for the Refugee Health Navigator Program as well as a Physicians for Human Rights Asylum Network Provider. Dr. Kureshi is a clinician and residency preceptor at Medstar Medical Group Family Medicine at Fort Lincoln.

**Myat Lin** is the Director of Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees, Maryland Department of Human Services. Working closely with refugees for over 8 years in refugee camps in Thailand shaped Myat Lin's outlook on life, especially towards the most vulnerable populations. Myat worked for the Refugee Resettlement Unit (RRU) under the Refugee and Migration Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand from 1998-2006. Following his own resettlement in the U.S. in 2006, Myat continued his work with humanitarian immigrants and took on various positions both at the national and local resettlement agencies. Myat Lin assumed the position of Director of Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA) within the Family Investment Administration of the MD Department of Human Services in February 2019. This position is also referred to as the MD State Refugee Coordinator.

**Evi Long** serves as the Associate Director, CWS Network Housing at Church World Service, working to expand affordable housing opportunities for newcomers and create resources for clients, affiliates, and landlords. She is CWS' point of contact for housing partnerships, and provides specific housing training to the network, meeting regularly to gauge housing needs, address housing issues, and provide guidance on engaging communities to support housing for newcomers. Evi collaborates with CWS' PRM funded TA project, Refugee Housing Solutions, with resettlement experience and connection to on-the-ground needs. Evi worked six years on the local level with refugee populations prior to her position at the national level.

**Sophia Martin** is the Housing Integration Officer at Church World Service, working to expand dignified, safe, and affordable housing opportunities for newcomers. Prior to her current role, Sophia served as the Digital Content Coordinator on CWS' Refugee Housing Solutions (RHS) Project. At RHS, she worked alongside housing and resettlement subject matter experts to create and disseminate housing resources for newcomers, facilitate Technical Assistance sessions, and offer housing-related trainings to resettlement practitioners. Sophia holds a BA in History with a concentration in Social Science Research and Environmental Studies. She lives in Washington, DC.

**Dan McBrayer** is a Program Officer for the Domestic Resettlement Team, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, at the Department of State. Dan co-leads a team focused on building a volunteer pipeline for resettlement at the State Department. He began work with displaced people as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Georgia and later monitored aid to internally displaced people following the Russian invasion of 2008 as a Fulbright researcher with Transparency International Georgia. Dan came to State from Peace Corps Headquarters after being detailed to work on Operation Allies Welcome. Prior to that he worked at the National Institutes of Health, establishing and strengthening partnerships across the globe. Dan is a father of three, baseball coach, genealogist, and outdoor enthusiast, and volunteers with scholarship high school exchange students living in communities across the U.S.

**Dr. Danielle McDonald** is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Liaison for Afghan Newcomers at the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Danielle has worked closely with newcomer communities and refugee resettlement agencies to help people settle on campus and in the city of Tulsa. She also conducts archaeological field research in Jordan, exploring the transitions from hunting-gathering to the origins of agriculture.

**Mary E. Mercado** is Director of Teaching & Learning in the Adult Basic Education for College & Career Division at Pima Community College where they provide Adult Basic Education, English as Second Language, Refugee Education and Citizenship classes to more than 4000 adult learners per year. Mary earned her Master of Education degree with Distinction in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University and Bachelor of Arts degree with Distinction in Elementary Education from The University of Arizona. Her credentials through the Arizona Department of Education include Adult Education, Principal, Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education. She is bilingual/bicultural in English and Spanish.

**Jennifer (Jen) Murray** is the Dean of International Studies at Bard College, where she oversees study abroad programming, tuition exchanges, and special international scholarship programs. In September 2021 she established and led Bard's Afghan Student Transition Team to recruit and support recipients of Bard's 100 scholarships for displaced Afghan students. She is an active member of the Forum on Education Abroad, has received a Fulbright International Administrators award, and has held positions at Hunter College, School of Visual Arts, and SUNY Ulster Community College throughout her career. Jen earned her BA at Rutgers University and MS Ed at Baruch College, CUNY.

**Axelle Nassirou** is the Project Associate for the Refugee Students Initiative with the Presidents' Alliance. She is an attorney with global experience advising public institutions and private organizations, notably in public international law. While she has gained expertise in U.S. immigration law doing pro bono work for several nonprofits in D.C., her interest in immigration stems from her experience as an immigrant and her dedication to social justice. She has previously founded a social venture EdTech, which aims at improving African students' global mobility and access to Higher Education. She holds an LL.M. from the George Washington University Law School and a MA in Gender and Development from the Australian National University.

**Ruba Omeira**, MPH, is a fourth-year medical student at Georgetown University School of Medicine, currently applying in the specialty of emergency medicine. Ruba is one of the co-founders of the Refugee Health Navigator Program and currently serves as one of the program leads. Ruba's commitment to supporting refugee populations is deeply personal, as her extended family has all experienced the hardships of becoming internally or externally displaced refugees due to the Syrian



civil war. She is also the co-founder of the Environmental Health and Medicine track in the School of Medicine, a 4-year curriculum that explores the impact of climate and environmental changes on clinical medicine, population health, environmental justice, and health systems.

**Dr. Patricia A. Perillo**, Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Maryland (UMD), brings over 30 years of experience in higher education to her alma mater. Leading a division comprising 16 departments, more than 4,000 staff members, and a significant budget, her work emphasizes transformative student experiences and institutional values of community, service, and inclusion. Dr. Perillo's previous tenure at Virginia Tech, as well as roles at other notable institutions, highlights her dedication to collaborative educational environments and student well-being. A respected scholar-practitioner, she holds a doctoral degree in Public and Community Health from UMD, intertwining her expertise with her passion for student affairs. Her leadership extends internationally, including service as past president of ACPA – College Student Educators International. Dr. Perillo, originally from Wilmington, DE, and a first-generation college graduate, believes in education as a catalyst for justice and community betterment. Outside of her professional sphere, she enjoys arts, sports, outdoor activities, and time with family and friends.

**Karissa Porter** is the Director of Refugee Career Pathways Program at Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) in Lexington, Kentucky. Karissa has been involved in refugee resettlement work since 2005. She worked for 13 years as a case manager and medical case manager in local resettlement before becoming involved with the Refugee Career Pathway work at BCTC. Karissa grew up in Mali, West Africa where she learned to speak French fluently and developed a passion for cross-cultural communication and how global concerns impact everyone.

**Olga Prizhbilov** is the Director of Refugee Career Pathways (RCP) with Los Rios Community College District in California since 2021. RCP served over 1,600 refugees, helping them gain self-sufficiency through education and employment. Prizhbilov and team welcomed refugee students when the U.S. took out troops from Afghanistan in 2021 and Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022; working with community-based organizations, refugees received academic, mental health, and legal support, and resettlement services. Prizhbilov has been a change agent in community college education since 2008, helping individuals clarify and reach their career goals and building community.

**Megan Ritter** is the National Strategic Outreach Lead for Refugee Programs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Her line of effort focuses on developing and maintaining strategic national partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations. Prior to her current position, she worked on ORR's state-funded programs, as well as for Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**Fatima Ramadan Sanz** is the Senior Policy Manager at World Education Services, where she leads the organization's advocacy strategy to promote the inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students in the U.S. workforce and higher education system. Prior to joining WES, Fatima worked in international development organizations, including UNESCO and Teach for Qatar implementing educational programs in the Middle East and West Africa.

**Todd Scribner** is the Assistant Director of Education at Migration and Refugee Services at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is responsible for educating Catholics on the Church's teaching on migration, with a particular emphasis on the intersection of Catholic Social Teaching, US policy, and American life. His role at USCCB also focuses on institutional engagement with

universities and other organizations in the planning of short- and long-term initiatives, most recently with Princeton University, The Catholic University of America, and The Center for Migration Studies in NYC.

**Manal Sidi** is the Program Manager supporting the Welcome Campus Network (WCN), a space to amplify the work of higher education institutions (HEI) to welcome and support newcomers, and represents Welcome.US in SHERR, which utilizes the infrastructure of WCN to grow and deepen HEI engagement. Her background is in community participatory research and evaluation, specifically engaging and collaborating with refugee and immigrant community members. She holds an MPH from Emory University Rollins School of Public Health. Her drive stems from her personal experience resettling from Somalia and her interest is to elevate the experience of newcomers in this work.

**John Sunnygard** is Associate Provost Global Learning and International Affairs (SIO) at Western Kentucky University. He leads the university's comprehensive strategic global learning and international engagement activities. John and WKU Global initiated the WKU Resilient Refugee Program in January 2022. WKU Global has implemented comprehensive programs to support, integrate, and foster belonging for forced migrants studying at WKU. Working with forced migrants leverages the totality of John's experience while adding new dimensions to campus international education. He holds degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University. John served in the Peace Corps.

**Sandra Vines** is the Senior Director for Resettlement at the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Sandra has been with IRC headquarters in New York since 2016. She has worked in the field of refugee resettlement and processing since 2004. Her past professional experience includes associate director for refugee resettlement & integration at Church World Service, head of resettlement at the RSC in Turkey, the RSC Africa in Ghana, and domestic resettlement with the International Institute of Rhode Island. As Senior Director for Resettlement, Sandra oversees program quality for Reception and Placement, Matching Grant, Preferred Communities as well as initiatives such as complementary pathways, community sponsorship, virtual case management and community engagement.

**Laura Wagner** is the Director of Refugee Access. Most recently, Laura was the Senior Program Officer for Integration at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) where she worked with a national network of refugee resettlement agencies to develop innovative and client-centered programs for refugee integration. Laura's expertise includes refugee resettlement, education, and integration, program development, and project and grants management. Laura graduated from Bucknell University and earned her Master's in International Education Development from Teachers' College, Columbia University.

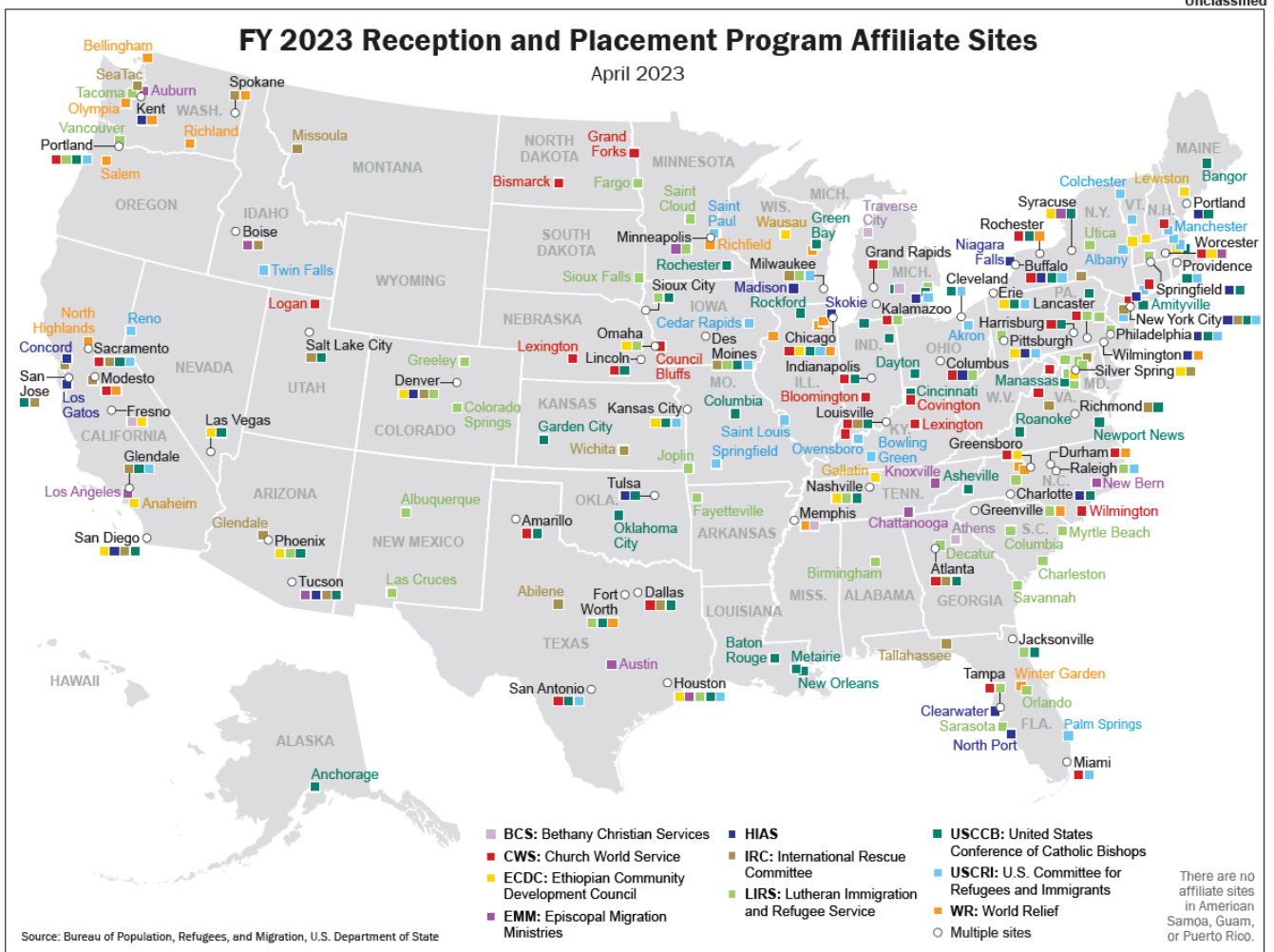
**Megan Ward** is a graduate student at George Washington University studying International Education with a special interest in Education in Emergencies. Megan is co-lab leader of GWU's Refugee Educational Advancement Lab (REAL) and works at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) as a Youth Success Specialist supporting recently resettled youth ages 15-24 with identifying and achieving their educational goals. Her background experiences include teaching English to speakers of other languages, special education, program coordination, and French studies.

**Leslie Wilson** is Associate Director at Refugee Housing Solutions. With decades' experience in global grassroots development with the Peace Corps, Save the Children, and Church World Service (CWS), Leslie returned to the U.S. just before the 2022 influx of Afghan asylum seekers. At that time, she joined the CWS Refugee Housing Solutions (RHS) team. Now as CWS Associate Director, Special

Projects, Leslie liaises with many RHS stakeholders, including higher education institution partners, including SHERR and ECAR. She works with faith communities as well, especially when they intersect with higher education. Through technical assistance and capacity expansion support, Leslie and other RHS team members offer support to the State Department's 10 national resettlement agencies as they seek and secure safe, affordable housing in communities and on campuses for refugees and other newcomers.

**Elisabeth Zenger** is the Director of One Refugee Utah. Elisabeth grew up in Southeastern Idaho with goats, chickens, and a pond in her backyard. She received a Master of Public Administration with an emphasis in nonprofit management from Brigham Young University in 2019 and has worked in immigrant and refugee services for the past five years. Elisabeth currently serves as the Utah Director for One Refugee, a nonprofit that supports college students from refugee backgrounds in their pursuit of higher education.

# National Resettlement Agencies and their Affiliates



# Resources at the Intersection of Higher Education and Refugee Resettlement

Every Campus A Refuge (ECAR) <http://everycampusarefuge.net/>

National Association of System Heads-Refugee Resettlement Initiative (NASH/RRI)  
<https://nash.edu/refugee-resettlement-initiative/>

Higher Education Immigration Portal (Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration)  
<https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/>

Qatar Scholarship for Afghan Project (QSAP/IIE) <https://qsap.org/>

Welcome Campus Network (Welcome.US) <https://welcome.us/who-we-are/our-partners>

Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (IRC) <https://coresourceexchange.org/>

Switchboard (IRC) <https://switchboardta.org/>

Refugee Welcome Collective (CWS) <https://refugeewelcome.org/>

Refugee Housing Solutions (CWS) <https://refugeehousing.org/>

Welcome Corps on Campus (consortium led by Community Sponsorship Hub)  
<https://welcomecorps.org/>

Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement (consortium led by World Learning)  
<https://www.worldlearning.org/program/supporting-higher-education-in-refugee-resettlement/>





