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State Department shows support for refugee resettlement programs

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

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After much anticipation, President Biden's Emergency Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions raised the admissions ceiling from 15,000 to 62,500 on May 3, 2021, for the fiscal year 2021.

Although the numbers have not been released for fiscal year 2022, President Biden has committed his support to welcome families who have been forced to leave their homes due to famine, war and persecution into the United States.



According to the Refugee Processing Center Admissions and Arrivals May 2021 report, the top 10 countries of origin for refugees admitted to Georgia are:

Afghanistan; Burma; Democratic Republic of the Congo; El Salvador; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Guatemala; Honduras; Iran; and Liberia. Georgia has consistently held tenth place for the most refugees resettled in a state.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) released its Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2022 Report on June 24, 2021. The report estimates that 1.47 million refugees will be in desperate need for resettlement in 2022 as persecutions continue to make their countries unsafe.

The Refugee Resettlement Agencies in Georgia are preparing their responsiveness and flexibility to meet the needs of as many people assigned to the state.

Catholic Charities Atlanta (CCA) is joined by the International Rescue Committee, New American Pathways, and Inspiritus, among other agencies, in collaboration efforts to extend the reach of their services. Such efforts can be seen through the Georgia Coalition of Refugee Stakeholders, the Coalition of Refugee Service Agencies resettlement educational program, and the Georgia Welcome Co-op. Most recently, this collaboration has partnered with Mercer University's health students to link mental health services to newly resettled refugees.



Recently, Brian McKeon, deputy secretary of state, and Nancy Izzo-Jackson, senior bureau official at the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), along with Holly Herrera, program officer for Domestic Resettlement at PRM, visited Atlanta to learn and discuss how CCA and the coalition work collaboratively to welcome refugees. They also expressed their desire to learn directly from resettlement agencies, community stakeholders, and former refugees on how the State Department can better support newcomers and the communities that support them – all in an effort to honor the president's commitment to rebuild the United States' refugee program. McKeon and Izzo-Jackson both took a moment to express their gratitude and lent their support to the work that CCA does for refugees.

Izzo-Jackson and Herrera witnessed a family reunification at the Hartsfield Jackson Airport putting a face to the statistics of refugee migration. They brought flowers and a very warm welcome to the newly-united mother and daughter travelling directly from Ecuador, but who were both born in Colombia.

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