

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

A Warm Welcome through *Programa Siria*

Paula Florencia was watching a Netflix documentary about the realities of the Syrian war with her youngest son when he asked her: "If Argentina was at war, would anyone in the world help us?" This was a life-changing question for Paula who, after some research, discovered the opportunity to be a "Caller" (sponsor) with Argentina's *Programa Siria*.



Hodina and her son Charles fled Syria and were sponsored by a family from Sierra de los Padres.

Through the UNHCR she was connected to Hodina—a 43-year-old hairdresser from Latakia, Syria—and her son Charles. After nearly a year and a half of paperwork and communication over Whatsapp, Hodina and Charles finally arrived in August in Paula's town, not far from Mar del Plata. With their first conversations through Google Translate, the little family began the long process of integrating to their new home. A sheet of Spanish words sits on the table next to a beautiful Arab coffee maker, one of the few things that made the long trip from Syria. Charles attends school in Mar del Plata and for both of them the experience of everyday life, shopping, cooking, greeting people, is a learning opportunity.

"You need to open your mind to be willing to help and take care of others," Paula said. "There are always excuses not to help... But there are people who want to help so it's important that people learn about the Syrian Program." To read the full story, [click here](#).

United Kingdom Sponsorship Awards Canada House, London



The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative's International Award went to Ireland for its community sponsorship pilot.

On October 8, sponsoring groups from around the UK met at Canada House, London for the 2019 Community Sponsorship Awards. The event was organized by Sponsor Refugees, the Citizens UK Foundation for Community Sponsorship of Refugees.

Many prizes were awarded to the people working hard to make the UK community sponsorship program a success. The winner of the Community Sponsorship Group of the Year was Bude Refugee Support Group. Ellie Stacey from the Bude Group, which has sponsored two families so far and helped set up another group in Falmouth, agreed that once people 'catch the sponsorship bug' it's infectious.

The International Award, supported by the GRSI, went to Ireland for its community sponsorship pilot. It acknowledges the work that contributors from across Ireland have put into launching the Irish pilot. (Read more about it [here](#).) (cont. page 2)

SHARE YOUR VOICE AT THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM

Help promote community sponsorship of refugees around the world!

The GRSI wants to amplify the voices of sponsors and sponsored-refugees from around the globe.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Using your Smartphone or other device, record a video of yourself (max. 30 seconds) answering one of the following two questions:

1. How has sponsorship changed your life?
2. How can sponsorship change your life?

Upload your video [here](#) by Nov. 30, 2019.

One of most exciting, and unplanned, moments of the night was when Hani Arnaout, one of the hosts, recognized one of the runners-up for the Newcomer of the Year Award, Samer Khaled Karob. They last saw each other in a UN refugee camp in Jordan. The picture below captures the joy of their reunion. The award celebrated that Samer 'personifies integration', having found work and built a new life in the UK, after being welcomed to East London by a Hillsong church group.



Hani Arnaout, one of the hosts, recognized one of the runners-up for the Newcomer of the Year Award, Samer Khaled Karob from the refugee camp.

An Afternoon Celebrating UK Sponsorship

Hannah Feldman, Citizens UK.

On the afternoon before the UK sponsorship awards, 80 people involved in refugee resettlement (including newcomers, sponsorship groups and local government employees) gathered in Westminster, London for an (Inter)national get-together. There were people from across Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales, demonstrating the breadth of the sponsorship scheme. We shared fellowship, networking, advice – and of course, a little politics.

Inspired by stories of several successfully-sponsored refugees, we set our agenda and priorities for how to improve and accelerate refugee resettlement in the UK, including a consensus to campaign for better routes to family reunion. So look out world – we are ready to blow the roof off community sponsorship!

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP IN THE NEWS



- Italy settles 91 via Humanitarian Corridors
- The power of good intentions
- A U.S. sponsorship success story
- Irish Minister's statement after winning CS award

NEW! Foundations of Community Sponsorship

Available as of November 15

The GRSI is pleased to introduce a new resource to the community sponsorship space. *Foundations of Community Sponsorship*, is a set of training materials created by the GRSI to support organizations in countries developing community-based refugee sponsorship programs. They were developed with the input of sponsorship group members, UNHCR offices, sponsored refugee newcomers, community sponsorship organizations and government experts from around the world.

Foundations of Community Sponsorship can be used to support successful integration outcomes through training sponsorship trainers and preparing sponsorship group members. It is a set of modularized and reflective training resources which includes two important tools: a **Training Manual** for in-person delivery as well as a complementary **Online Learning Resource**. These materials are universally applicable, but can also be tailored by local organizations for different community-based refugee sponsorship programs.

Foundations of Community Sponsorship will be available in English on the GRSI website refugeesponsorship.org as of November 15, 2019. French, Spanish, German and Portuguese translations will be available in the coming months. (Note: A password will be sent to organizations in order to access the training package and it will be circulated in our next newsletter.)

Job Posting: GRSI Director for Europe

Deadline: November 29, 2019

The GRSI is seeking a highly motivated individual to provide leadership for its rapidly expanding activities in Europe. The Director for Europe will help develop and lead a regional strategy to promote refugee sponsorship among a wide range of stakeholders. Working closely with the GRSI Chairperson and other members of the GRSI leadership team, the Director for Europe will play a key role in advancing the GRSI's high-impact and high-profile international agenda.

For more information, [click here](#).

What is GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of five organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, the Giustra Foundation and the University of Ottawa. It aims to help other countries set up their own community-based refugee sponsorship programs, strengthening local communities and improving the narrative on refugees in the process.

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