

## GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Dublin resident founds the Dundrum and Rathfarnham Area Community Sponsorship group



Dundrum and Rathfarnham Area Community Sponsorship group

© Ann Kelleher/Dublin Live

Ann Kelleher was inspired to found the Dundrum and Rathfarnham Area Community Sponsorship group (DARA) after seeing the news about Kabul being captured by the Taliban. After she heard about community sponsorship on the radio, she connected with the Irish Refugee Council, who guided her on the process of sponsoring a refugee family. Kelleher's initiative spread by word-of-mouth, where she described people's generosity and interest in the sponsorship programme as overwhelming. Thus far, DARA has raised over half of its €20,000 goal.

The group is currently looking for accommodation for the family. The size of the property the group secures will impact the size of the family that DARA can sponsor.

Are you a policymaker or civil society leader designing a refugee sponsorship program?

[Download the GRSI's policy design workbook.](#)

New Zealanders coming together to resettle refugees



Hisham al-Zarzour came to New Zealand under the CORS pilot in 2018.

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The Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship (CORS) scheme, which launched in late 2021 after a successful pilot from 2018-2021, aims to bring 150 people to New Zealand over the next three years. Hisham al-Zarzour and his young family arrived in Christchurch in July 2018 as part of the pilot programme.

Prior to their arrival in New Zealand, the South West Baptist Church communicated with the al-Zarzours and showed them pictures of their new home, which Mr. al-Zarzour said was instrumental in helping his family feel welcome. In general, community sponsors embrace all the practical aspects of helping people start a new life.

Just eight months after the family's arrival in New Zealand, tragedy struck in the form of the March 2019 massacre at Al Noor Mosque. Mr. al-Zarzour was wounded during the attack, and said that the support his family has received through their sponsor group has helped them through the experience. He has no doubts about the value of sponsorship, which is about having a community long-term – even beyond the formal sponsorship period.

## Camosun students from Kenya raise \$2,500 for Doctors Without Borders



Students from Kenya recently completed a two-month program at Camosun, and fundraised for Doctors Without Borders.

© Camosun College

Camosun College partnered with World University Service of Canada (WUSC) to bring nine refugees from Kenya to Victoria, Canada through HIREs, an employment-linked sponsorship pathway program. While settling in to Victoria, the nine newcomers learned in their English Language Development class about Terry Fox, who, after losing a leg to cancer, ran across Canada in the 1980s to raise money for cancer research. Inspired by his story, students took the initiative to raise \$2,500 for Doctors Without Borders (MSF) by selling bags of candy. The students chose MSF because of their extensive work in Kenya.

The students have since completed their eight-week hospitality program at Camosun and are now working, through HIREs, in hospitality in Tofino, Canada. "We've been here in Canada for just three months, and we already did a donation, and we felt good, and the future looks bright," said Mohamed Abdinasir, a student in the program. "You can do so many things together. Everyone is very proud of that fundraising. We really feel proud of Camosun, and we feel like Canada is our home now, and we'll thrive here."

Check out the [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative on Twitter!](#)

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## Syrian refugee now giving back to the community, working with the Canadian Red Cross



Hassan Al Kontar lived in an airport in Malaysia for months before he was privately sponsored to come to Fort St. John. He is currently working with the Red Cross to give back.

© Global News

For the past eight months, Hassan Al Kontar has been living in Fort St. John, British Columbia, enjoying everything the city and surrounding area has to offer. Al Kontar is a Syrian refugee who spent seven months at a Malaysian airport followed by two months in detention, before being privately sponsored in Canada. He was a barista when he first arrived, but is currently working with the Canadian Red Cross as an Emergency Care Worker. Al Kontar says that it is his way of giving back to the community. While he has many friends in Canada, he hopes to one day reunite with his family, who remain in Syria.

### What is the GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of six organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, The Giustra Foundation, The Shapiro 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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