

WE ALL
ARE
AMERICA

FY2023

ANNUAL REPORT





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Visioning 2024: A Letter of Hope and Purpose

Dear Supporters, Partners, and Friends of We Are All America,

I'm deeply honored to be writing to you as WAAA's new Campaign Director. I want to thank Basma Alawee for her tireless work on behalf of our campaign. We wish her the absolute best as she transitions into her new role at the Community Sponsorship Hub.

This report highlights our achievements, initiatives, and the impact of our programs focused on empowering and advocating for refugees and immigrants across the United States. Our work remains dedicated to upholding the values of inclusivity, empowerment, and protection for those seeking refuge and a better life in the United States.

As we stand on the brink of a new horizon, I am thrilled to share with you our collective vision for WAAA as we venture into 2024 and beyond. Our journey, centered around the three core pillars that define our mission, has been nothing short of transformative. **The resilience, strength, and innovation demonstrated by refugees and immigrants are thriving thanks to your unwavering dedication to our shared mission.**

This annual report shows that **your contribution is not just financial; it is a catalyst for social change and a beacon of hope for those seeking refuge and a better life in America.** We are profoundly grateful for your commitment to centering the leadership of directly impacted individuals, promoting welcoming policies at the state and local levels, and advocating for comprehensive federal protection.

Thanks for your dedication and belief in our mission. Here's to a future filled with hope, progress, and positive change for all.

In solidarity,
Fatima Saidi

Visioning 2024:

Our Pillars



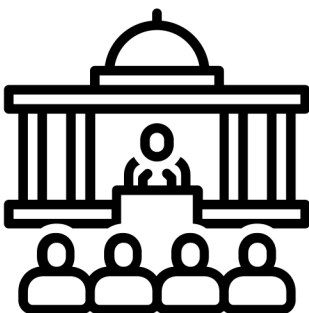
Pillar 1: Centering the Leadership of Directly Impacted Leaders

The heart of our mission lies in empowering individuals with lived experiences and building an infrastructure that amplifies the power of refugee and immigrant voices. We aspire to expand our support for grassroots efforts, enabling community-driven projects that uplift diverse and ethnic voices



Pillar 2: Promoting State and Local Welcoming Policies and Inclusive Initiatives

Our second pillar, dedicated to advancing pro-refugee and pro-immigrant policies at the state and local levels, has catalyzed change. In 2024, we will expand our footprint to more states, ensuring that our advocacy reaches communities that stand to benefit from our support.

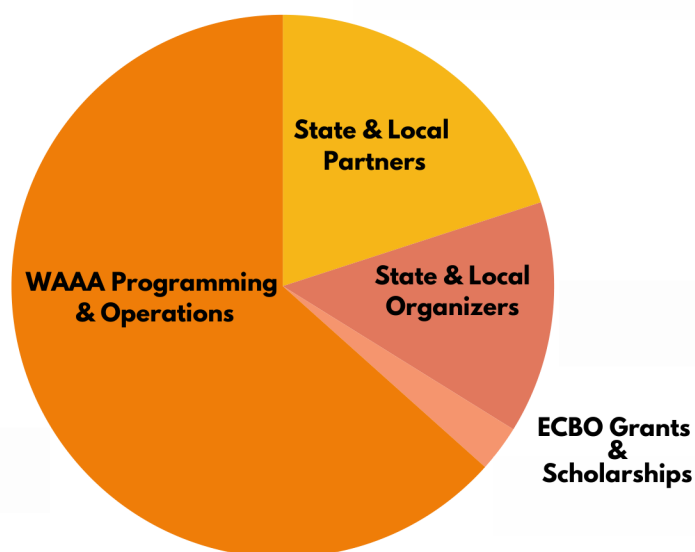


Pillar 3: Strengthening Our Federal Protection System

Our third pillar, focused on supporting comprehensive federal priorities for refugee resettlement and asylum seekers, has been pivotal in shaping national narratives. The focus on building organizing power will remain central, uniting leaders, advocates, and national partners in a shared action space.

Visioning 2024: Making an Impact Together

In 2023, the WAAA organization received over **\$650,000** and distributed **\$130,000** to our state and local partners. We sub-granted **\$90,000** to our **State and Local Organizers**, awarded a **\$2,000** scholarship for training and events, and gave **\$16,000** as seed money to **Ethnic Community Based Organization (ECBOs)**. Furthermore, our achievements, from the Refugee and Immigrant Leadership Table to the Refugee Leadership Development Program and the Refugee Matters podcast series, are a testament to the tangible outcomes made possible by your support.



Thanks to **Unbound Philanthropy, Democracy Fund, The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation, Pillars Fund, Global Whole Being Fund, Proteus Fund/Rise Together Fund**, and other individual and anonymous funders, We Are All America has expanded its reach, increased the number of state-based organizers and National Table Leaders, and strengthened our programs to empower directly impacted immigrant and refugee leaders across America. Your belief in our vision has played a vital role in building a collaborative ecosystem between the immigrant rights movement and refugee resettlement coalitions, creating a unique and powerful force for positive and sustainable change.

OUR TEAM



Fatima Saidi

Campaign
Director



Nejra Sumic

National Field
Manager



**Isabel
López**

Digital
Organizer



**Anahita
Panahi**

Deputy Director
of Refugee
Affairs, CHIRLA



**Pierre
Uwimana**

Florida Refugee
Organizer, FLIC



**Kosar
Kosar**

Multicultural
Organizer, TIRRC



**Sara
Louis-Ayo**

Policy Organizer
and Legal
Assistant, MyLori



**Ray
Sookchain**

Marketing and
Social Media
Coordinator,
Isuroon



**Stephanie
Tanny**

Development
Coach &
Consultant



**David
Malikyar**

Afghan
Community &
Housing Navigator,
CHIRLA



**Kawser
Amine Bidar**

Northern CA
Refugee Organizer,
CHIRLA



**Jacqueline
Mugwaneza**

Multicultural
Relations Lead,
MIRC



**Naveed
Saifi**

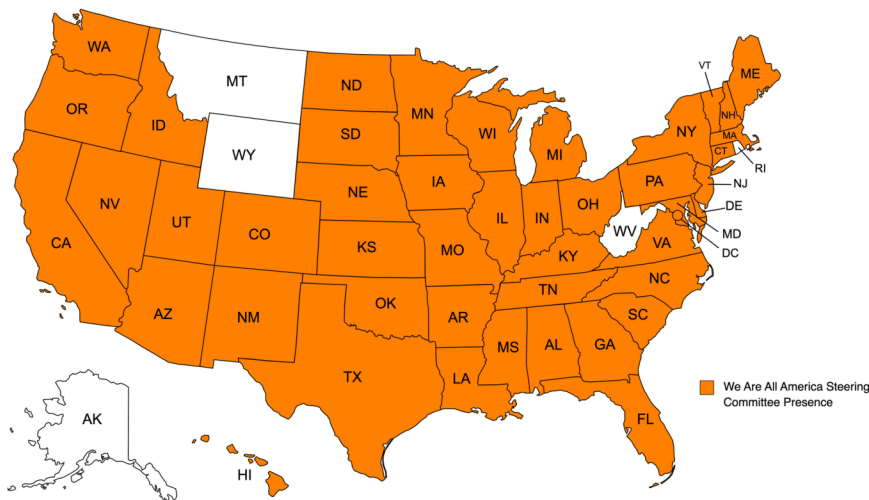
Newcomer
Inclusion
Consultant

We Are All America

We Are All America (WAAA) is a movement led by refugees and immigrants across the United States. Our goal is to build a strong organizing infrastructure that brings people together to support and welcome those escaping violence and persecution. WAAA aims to counter anti-immigrant sentiments and work towards creating more inclusive policies and practices at both the federal and state levels.

Thanks to our national Steering Committee partners, WAAA has grown from five to over 25 state-based organizers since 2017. Our Steering Committee has helped us grow our collective effort to the **largest national grassroots initiative for refugees and immigrants**, led by organizers who have firsthand experience as refugees and asylees, primarily from Middle Eastern, African, Asian, and South American backgrounds.

WAAA Steering Committee Presence Map



CWS States: GA, NC, VA, PA, OH, MI, TX, OR

Refugee Advocacy Lab States: CO, GA, KS, MI, NV, OR, UT, VA

NPNA States: WA, OR, CA, NV, AZ, UT, CO, NM, TX, OK, AR, LA, MO, MN, WI, IL, MI, IN, OH, PA, NY, ME, MA, NJ, MD, VA, DC, TN, NC, AL, GA, FL, HI

Refugee Congress States: AL, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NY, ND, OH, OR, PE, SC, SD, VT, VA, WA, WI

WAAA Organizers: AZ, CA, TN, FL, MN, LO, ME



PILLAR



CENTER THE LEADERSHIP OF THOSE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

The campaign empowers individuals with lived experiences by **building the infrastructure for refugee and immigrant power**. This includes collaboration, capacity building, leadership development, mentorship, and technical assistance support.

WAAA National Refugee and Immigrant Leadership Table

The WAAA Refugee and Immigrant National Table empowers local leaders to be part of a collective effort at the forefront of the refugee and immigrant movement. At the core of the table is our Executive Committee who helps set the vision. They are recognized as refugee and immigrant leaders who are committed to driving the growth of the table.

Join the Table or get more info [here](#).



43 Table Leaders

Languages Spoken **26**

16 Countries Represented

States **18**



REFUGEE CONGRESS

WE ALL ARE AMERICA

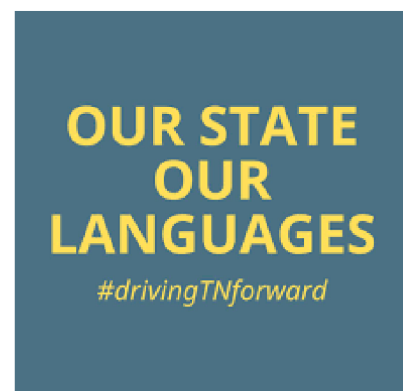


Ethnic Community Based Mini Grant Initiative

We Are All America launched its second **Ethnic Community Based Organization Mini Grant Program**, which awarded mini-grants to 3 advocacy projects and supported ECBOs that have been involved in local refugee and immigrant advocacy and policy efforts. During the application process, close to 40 Ethnic Community Based Organizations applied across the US.

Our State Our Language in Tennessee

launched the **#DrivingTNForward** public campaign in order to advocate for more languages to be added on the state drivers license test. Through **#DrivingTNForward**, the campaign was able to bring awareness and educate the general public and legislators about the needs of refugee and immigrant communities.



The Community Asylum Seekers Project in Vermont

educated and reached out to state legislators about the needs of asylum seekers in our state. Through their advocacy work, ASAP was able to speed up **work permits** for asylum seekers.



Woori Center in Pennsylvania

worked towards **Driver's License for All and Tuition Equity** and Inclusion campaign and ongoing civic engagement. Over 40,592 calls were made to community members and over 200 individuals were registered to vote.



Leadership Development

The Refugee Leadership Development Program provides **monthly workshops** to refugee and immigrant organizers across the United States. These workshops are **led by immigrants and refugees for immigrants and refugees**. The training series allows participants to learn more about advocacy tactics being used to advance pro-refugee/pro-immigrant policy on the state and national level, story-telling and narrative shifting, and connecting with resources and local networks to build more welcoming and inclusive communities. We are thankful to our executive committee and network partners who help us facilitate the workshops:



TENNESSEE
Immigrant
& Refugee
Rights
COALITION

REFUGEE
COUNCIL
USA

REFUGEE
CONGRESS

Monthly Workshop Themes

- Organizing and Leadership Development
- Campaign Planning
- Power Mapping
- World Refugee Day Planning & pushing local policy
- Fundraising for Refugee & Immigrant non-profits
- Engaging Elected Officials and Best Advocacy Practices
- Refugee Story-Telling and Messaging
- U.S. Gov. 101 & 201
- Digital Organizing for Refugee & Immigrant Communities



87%

Found the
workshops
valuable

355

Leaders
trained across
11 workshops

78%

Improved their
understanding
of the topics



Global Refugee Forum

The 2nd Global Refugee Forum (GRF) was held in Geneva, Switzerland from December 13th-15th – and reached a new historic height with the engagement of **more than 25 refugee leaders from the US** and **over 300 refugee leaders from across the globe**. We Are All America’s National Field Manager Nejra Sumic, who serves as an Advisor on the United States Refugee Advisory Board (USRAB), participated as part of the United States Government Delegation – Anahita Panahi, California Refugee Organizer at We Are All America and Deputy Director of Refugee Affairs at CHIRLA also attended with the support of Refugee Congress as part of the Refugee Congress Delegation.

The Global Refugee Forum was designed to support the practical implementation of the objectives set out in the Global Compact on Refugees and provided an opportunity for States and stakeholders to announce concrete pledges and contributions, highlight progress made, share good practices, and take stock of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

At the 2023 GRF, the U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to the Global Compact on Refugees by announcing eight new pledges, including a robust refugee resettlement program, economic inclusion and social protection, and refugee-inclusive education. These pledges are central to We Are All America’s commitment to advancing the social, economic, and civic inclusion of immigrants and refugees across the United States. As we look ahead to 2024, the WAAA Refugee and Immigrant Leadership Table will work to hold local, state and federal governments accountable to these pledge commitments and continue to advance the values of welcome and inclusion for all newcomers.





“ While we are facing incredibly difficult humanitarian crises and the largest number of people who are forcibly displaced, I could not think of better timing to attend the UNHCR Global Refugee Forum. We need representation of refugees and their perspectives and expertise more than ever across the globe. ”

Nejra Sunic



PILLAR

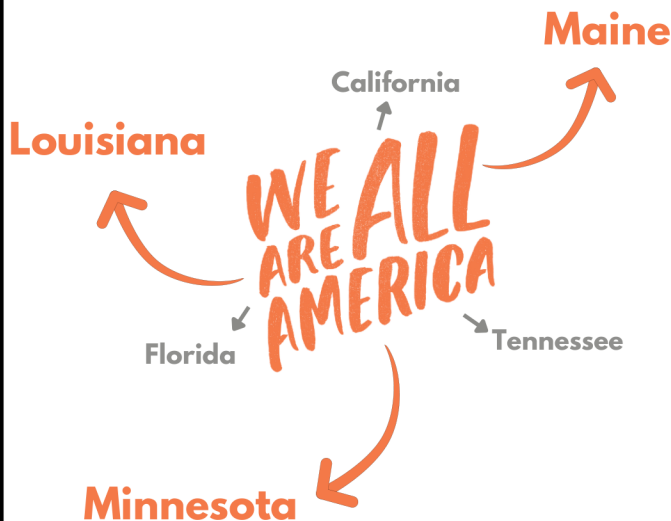
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PROMOTE STATE AND LOCAL WELCOMING POLICIES AND INCLUSIVE INITIATIVES

The second pillar aims to **advance pro-refugee and pro-immigrant policies at the state and local levels**, by actively advocating for change and organizing activities to build support, with current representation in 6 states: California, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, and Tennessee. Thanks to our Steering Committee partners, our field presence reaches **over 25 states nationwide**.

This year, We Are All America...

Expanded to 3 new states:



Uplifted over

67

impactful

World Refugee Day

events within the

WAAA

Network



State and Local Wins

Tennessee Refugee & Immigrant Rights Coalition



TIRRC achieved success this year during its advocacy days, effectively defeating all anti-immigrant and anti-refugee bills. The coalition expanded its impact through **local and statewide civic engagement efforts**, connecting with thousands of voters.

Maine Immigrants Rights Coalition



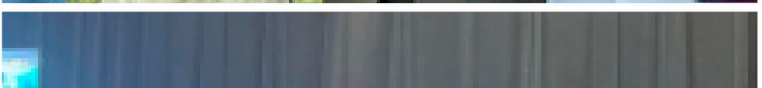
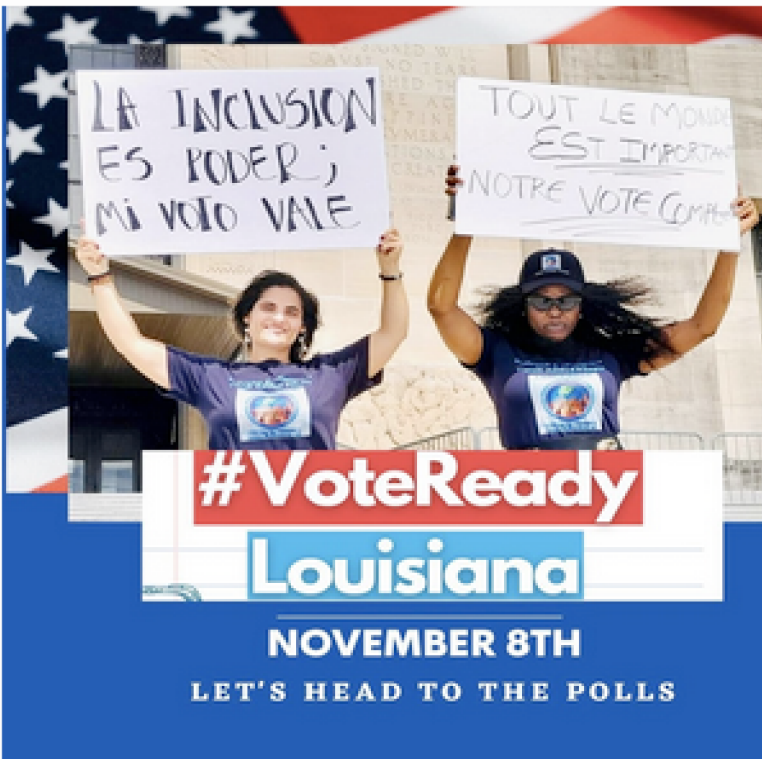
MIRC offered continuous resettlement support to refugees and immigrants, **securing funding to provide beds for 100 incoming asylum seekers.**

Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants



LORI worked on advocacy and civic engagement efforts this year. The group not only achieved the Fair Chance Ordinance's passage but also **worked to make both New Orleans and Baton Rouge welcoming cities.** For World Refugee and Immigrant Day, LORI supported planning efforts with **46 countries represented with 500+ people in attendance.**





Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition tackle resettlement crisis



Florida Immigrant Coalition



At FLIC, efforts to defend **against an anti-immigrant bill, SB1718**, were successful in mitigating its impact. In Jacksonville, the focus was on addressing housing issues. Our refugee community organizer contributed to the **passage of a Tenants Bill of Rights and the establishment of a Tenants Union through the City Council.**

Coalition for Humane Immigrants Rights



In collaboration with CHIRLA, the CA Welcomes Coalition **co-sponsored the CA Extended Case Management (CECM) bill**, despite not securing the \$18 million budget in 2023. The coalition is actively revitalizing and preparing for potential amendments before reintroducing the bill. Additionally, through the ESAVN program, feedback and data collection from grantees are informing advocacy efforts for program success post its June 2024 sunset date. CHIRLA's impactful year also includes **hosting a CA Statewide Convening on Refugee Resettlement and Asylum, attracting 70 attendees** and fostering crucial dialogue.

Isuroon



Isuroon in Minnesota played a crucial role in advocating for the **passage of Driver's License for All** at the State Legislature. In addition, the organization successfully **secured \$1 million in funding to establish the Isuroon Legal Center**, dedicated to assisting refugee and immigrant families with civil legal issues.



EMPOWERING MUSLIM WOMEN & GIRLS

To Overcome Language Barriers, Racism And Religious Intolerance.



FL IMMIGRATION: IMMIGRANTS UNDER ATTACK APRIL 13TH, 2023 @ 6PM EST

This informational session and roundtable serves to educate the community at large about a proposed harmful policy, SB1712, that if passed would affect every person interacting with immigrants. Florida healthcare providers, business owners, faith leaders, and educators could be penalized for welcoming our different immigrant communities. As the 4th largest immigrant populated state, Florida has been traditionally known for its welcoming and diverse culture, but this policy could have serious safety, economic and medical ramifications.

[Bit.ly/WebinarFLImmigration](https://bit.ly/WebinarFLImmigration)



PILLAR



STRENGTHENING OUR FEDERAL PROTECTION SYSTEM

Our third pillar focuses on **backing federal priorities for refugee resettlement and asylum seekers** and working to **change the national narrative** on the contributions of refugees and immigrants in the United States. By bringing together leaders, advocates, and national partners, **we're building organizing power on a national level.**

WAAA National Advocacy Days

Policy Asks

- Cosponsor and pass the Afghan Adjustment Act, the New Deal for New Americans, and the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act.
- Support robust FY 2024 federal funding to rebuild the refugee resettlement program.
- Cosponsor yet to be introduced legislation, including the Refugee Protection Act and the Stateless Protection Act.

The Impact



100+ grassroots refugee & immigrant leaders equipped to advocate



21 states represented



34 meetings held with members of Congress



Raised awareness about pro-immigrant & pro-refugee legislation

Partners





“It was amazing that I got the chance to talk with my Rep. from Georgia about the Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA). The office promised me that it would be talking about the AAA with their team and we will try to cosponsor it. This was very important for me and further motivated me to ensure that my friends and I get involved in important causes and events, such as We Are All America’s Advocacy Days that provides immigrants like me an opportunity to raise my voice.”



Haseebullah Khorsand



Refugee Council USA Refugee Advocacy Days

On May 1-3, 2023, RCUSA hosted its first in-person Advocacy Days since 2019. **May 1st was a day-long Refugee Leadership Training co-hosted in partnership with We Are All America and Refugee Congress.** Reserved for participants with lived experience of forced displacement, nearly **100 refugee/asylee registrants** were present. May 2-3 consisted of meetings with Members of Congress and two themed discussions open to all participants. In those two days, **participants conducted over 131 meetings with Congressional offices (74 House, 57 Senate)**, representing 36 states plus the District of Columbia.

The total number of participants, including accompaniers and volunteers, was around 250. Of those participants, **at least 114 were forcibly displaced people (FDPs)**, representing more than 20 countries of origin.



Lead Sponsors



Contributing Sponsors



Supporters



National Webinars

We Are All America holds national webinars focused on supporting and advocating for federal priorities. These events, held in collaboration with partner organizations, bring together experts in the field for members of our immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeker community to ask questions and get involved.

5

**Webinars held
in 2023**

with over

382

**Total
Attendees**

#NoAsylumBan Rapid Response

Co-lead the
#NoAsylumBan
campaign efforts with
Welcome With Dignity

+

Edited & published
video testimonies

+

Conducted outreach to
partner organizations to
amplify message.



We Are All America 2023 Convening

The WAAA Convening is an event to **showcase the collective efforts** of our organizers, WAAA National Table Leaders, Steering Committee members, and partners. This year, the WAAA Convening brought together **leaders, advocates, and supporters from 15 countries and 22 states across the United States.**

In total, **37 individuals representing a diverse range of backgrounds and speaking 28 languages attended.** The event's primary goal was to plan for a future based on WAAA's core pillars. For next year, our hope, goal, and dream is to work together to create inclusive communities where everyone feels welcome and protected, as we have been doing since 2017.

““

For me, the convening accomplished a number of key goals including the opportunity to hear from folks all over the country on how they are thinking about this work and how best I can leverage my work and organization to support these efforts. I really enjoyed getting to know folks in-person which gave us the opportunity to build trust and deepen our relationships with one another.



””

Daniel Valdez, *Chief External Affairs Officer at Welcoming America*

““

Joining this convening isn't just an invitation; it's an opportunity to engage with inspiring leaders, share stories, and build bridges that transcend borders. Working hand in hand with refugee and immigrant community leaders is not just valuable; it's essential for creating a more inclusive future where we all belong.



””

Andrés Bautista, *Digital Content Manager at NPNA*



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