



Offering Refuge. Inspiring Hope.

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What's New with Pella Welcome Corps?

A new year has brought some unique challenges and opportunities to Pella Welcome Corps.

You may have already noticed the first new step: a new name. For a number of reasons, we are rebranding from Pella Welcome Corps to **RESAP: Refugee Engagement and Support Alliance of Pella**. We are expanding our focus beyond settling refugees to include providing community engagement and support.

Some of our goals are to

- **strengthen** the Pella community by bringing fresh ideas and energy to our community
- **partner** with local businesses, churches, schools and organizations to provide a strong team of support for newcomers
- **access** both financial and physical resources as needed by newcomer families
- **collaborate** with other refugee settlement agencies in Iowa to learn about resources and processes
- **educate** our community about refugees, resettlement and the work of RESAP

With the start of a new year also came the anticipation of welcoming an Afghan refugee

family to Pella. Sadly, while we were waiting for an arrival date to be set, all refugee travel into the United States was suspended. Later that week, all foreign aid funding was frozen, which included federal funds pledged to refugees still in their first 90 days in the U.S. These monies were helping to pay for things like rental assistance, food, transportation, and help with job placement and school enrollment for around 890 newly arrived families throughout Iowa.

As a result, RESAP reached out to other resettlement agencies in the area, offering our services to recently arrived refugees who might be in need of resources and interested in relocating to Pella. The Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services in Des Moines connected us with a Venezuelan refugee family in a unique situation. They were in need of resources; we have a sponsorship group poised and ready. A new match was made!

While we are still working out details, we look forward to welcoming this family to our City of Refuge and helping them secure housing, employment, medical care, transportation, and English language learning, as well as introducing them to new places and new friends!




Pella Welcome Corps will now be known as RESAP—our name has changed, but our mission to resettle and support refugee families in Pella remains unchanged. All funds given to Pella Welcome Corps will remain with RESAP to do the work that was begun this past year.

What else have we been up to?

- Four members of the advisory board attended a **Refugee Summit** on Nov. 22 in Des Moines. We attended breakout sessions relevant to refugee support and connected with agencies who provide resettlement services. We all agreed it was a very worthwhile day! >>>>>>>>>>
- Members of RESAP met with Professor Shelley Bradfield to explore a **collaboration with four Central College students** who are studying Intercultural Communications.
- RESAP and Crossroads of Pella assisted in launching a **new ELL program that Vermeer Corp** now offers to employees. Eight volunteers meet regularly with ELL students and teachers in their Tuesday classes on the Vermeer campus. >>>
- Our **1:1 tutoring initiative** acquired curriculum, trained four tutors and began the process of matching the fifteen students on our waiting list with a personal tutor. If you are interested in tutoring an adult English language learner one hour/week, email info@resapella.org to find out more!



5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

- ① Refugees do not apply for resettlement themselves. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees identifies vulnerable cases to be considered for resettlement.
- ② Only the most vulnerable cases are considered. All refugees who are referred must fit at least one category, some of which include:
 -  Physical protection needs
 -  Survivors of violence or torture
 -  Women & girls at risk
- ③ Countries decide which refugees to support for resettlement.
- ④ Persons who have committed serious crimes or who might pose a securing threat are not eligible for refugee status or resettlement.
- ⑤ Refugee resettlement saves lives.