



St. Vincent Catholic Charities

PROVIDING HELP. CREATING HOPE.

2800 W. Willow • Lansing, MI 48917 • Office: (517) 323.4734 • www.stvcc.org

St. Vincent Catholic Charities Refugee Services - Background

St. Vincent Catholic Charities (STVCC) Refugee Services is and has been the refugee resettlement agency for the Lansing area since the inception of the program following the end of the US involvement in the Vietnam War in 1975. Over the past 45+ years, STVCC Refugee Services has resettled nearly 17,000 refugees from 53 countries. Refugees are defined as people who have fled their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion and membership in a social group. Refugees cannot safely return to their country. Individuals in this program have received a designated refugee status from the United Nations or the US government prior to their arrival in the US.

For each new arrival, STVCC Refugee Services provides resettlement core services such as finding housing, securing food, enrolling in benefits (including Medicaid), enrolling in school and helping them to access proper documentation such as Social Security Cards and Michigan IDs. STVCC provides employment, post-resettlement services, and intensive case management and therapeutic services to new arrivals with extensive medical and mental health/social adjustment concerns. Local partnerships help STVCC provide interpreters for health services, to conduct specific community educational programs, and to provide for emergency support such as rental assistance. Private donations have helped STVCC maintain staffing throughout these challenging times, while providing a resource to help clients in emergencies and for unfunded items such as vocational training fees.

At the end of 2016, STVCC and all refugee resettlement agencies around the country received unprecedented numbers of new arrivals as then President Obama worked to respond to the Syrian crisis by resettling more Syrians in the US. In January 2017, however the program took an about face. The Presidential Determination, which sets the annual number of refugees projected to come in the country, was slashed from 110,000 to 50,000. That year saw several challenges to the overall program such as “travel bans” and “pauses.” The following years, through 2020, had record low numbers of arrivals, leading to family separation, the closing of 100 resettlement sites and significant suffering by refugees stuck in camps and other precarious situations.

This year, the program is in the process of rebuilding. STVCC is moving from resettling 53 refugees in 2020, to up to 100 in 2021, and a projected 400 refugees in 2022. Special populations to be resettled in Lansing include women and children from DR Congo, individuals persecuted because of their LGBTQI status and unaccompanied young people who have aged out of qualification for the refugee foster care program.

Learn more about the program at <https://stvcc.org/services/refugee-services/>

Make an offering at <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E6318&id=23>

Please note “For Refugee Services” in the special instructions box.