



COALITION OF REFUGEE SERVICE AGENCIES

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

# CRSA MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS



**CATHOLIC CHARITIES ATLANTA**  
PROVIDING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES THAT ENABLE FAMILIES TO OVERCOME  
BARRIERS AND ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY.  
[CATHOLICCHARITIESATLANTA.ORG](http://CATHOLICCHARITIESATLANTA.ORG)



**CENTER FOR PAN ASIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
PROMOTING SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND EQUITY FOR IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND  
THE UNDERPRIVILEGED THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES,  
CAPACITY BUILDING, AND ADVOCACY.  
[CPACS.ORG](http://CPACS.ORG)



**CLARKSTON COMMUNITY CENTER**  
CONNECTING ATLANTA'S COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES THROUGH EDUCATION,  
RECREATION, AND THE ARTS.  
[CLARKSTONCOMMUNITYCENTER.ORG](http://CLARKSTONCOMMUNITYCENTER.ORG)



**FRIENDS OF REFUGEES**  
EMPOWERING REFUGEES THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES FOR WELL-BEING, EDUCATION  
AND EMPLOYMENT.  
[FRIENDSOFRFUGEEES.COM](http://FRIENDSOFRFUGEEES.COM)



**GEORGIA ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION NETWORK**  
PROVIDING FREE IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF CRIME AND  
PERSECUTION.  
[GEORGIAASYLUM.ORG](http://GEORGIAASYLUM.ORG)



**GLOBAL VILLAGE PROJECT**  
DEVELOPING A STRONG EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR EACH STUDENT WITHIN  
A CARING COMMUNITY USING A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH AND INTENSIVE  
INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY, ACADEMIC SUBJECTS, AND  
THE ARTS.  
[GLOBALVILLAGEPROJECT.ORG](http://GLOBALVILLAGEPROJECT.ORG)



**INSPIRITUS (FORMERLY LUTHERAN SERVICES OF GEORGIA)**  
GUIDING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES ON A PATH FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING.  
[WEINSPIRIT.ORG](http://WEINSPIRIT.ORG)



**INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE IN ATLANTA**  
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS TO INTEGRATE AND  
THRIVE IN GEORGIA COMMUNITIES.  
[RESCUE.ORG/ATLANTA](http://RESCUE.ORG/ATLANTA)



**JEWISH FAMILY & CAREER SERVICES**  
MAKING HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY HAPPEN.  
[JFCSATL.ORG](http://JFCSATL.ORG)



**LATIN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION**  
EMPOWERING LATINOS TO ADAPT, INTEGRATE AND THRIVE.  
[THELAA.ORG](http://THELAA.ORG)



**REFUGE COFFEE CO.**  
PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT AND JOB-TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES TO RESETTLED  
REFUGEES, CREATING A UNIQUE, WELCOMING GATHERING PLACE IN CLARKSTON,  
AND TELLING A MORE BEAUTIFUL REFUGEE STORY TO ATLANTA.  
[REFUGECAFFEECO.COM](http://REFUGECAFFEECO.COM)



**REFUGEE WOMEN'S NETWORK**  
INSPIRING AND EQUIPPING REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT WOMEN TO BECOME LEADERS  
IN THEIR HOMES, BUSINESSES, AND COMMUNITIES.  
[REFUGEEWOMENSNETWORKINC.ORG](http://REFUGEEWOMENSNETWORKINC.ORG)



**SOMALI AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER**  
PROVIDING CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RELEVANT SERVICES TO REFUGEES  
AND IMMIGRANTS IN CLARKSTON, GA AND SURROUNDING AREAS.  
[FACEBOOK.COM/SOMALIACC](http://FACEBOOK.COM/SOMALIACC)

**TAPESTRI**  
DEDICATED TO ENDING VIOLENCE AND OPPRESSION IN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE  
COMMUNITIES USING CULTURALLY COMPETENT AND LINGUISTICALLY APPROPRIATE  
METHODS.  
[TAPESTRI.ORG](http://TAPESTRI.ORG)

**WORLD RELIEF ATLANTA**  
EMPOWERING THE LOCAL CHURCH TO SERVE THE MOST VULNERABLE.  
[WORLDRELIEFATLANTA.ORG](http://WORLDRELIEFATLANTA.ORG)

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the work of the Coalition of Refugee Service Agencies (CRSA) and the incredible people we serve. The CRSA is a group of 16 nonprofit organizations that serve refugee and immigrant communities in Georgia and promote a more welcoming state. We provide resettlement, employment, adult education and youth programs, civic engagement, and many more unique initiatives to over 50,000 new Americans each year.

Georgia has one of the most successful refugee resettlement programs in the country, thanks in part to the availability of jobs in industries such as poultry processing, manufacturing, hospitality, and warehousing. Over the past five years, between 86% and 91% of refugees have been financially self-sufficient within six months of arrival in Georgia—among the highest rates in the country.

However, changes in U.S. refugee resettlement policies have resulted in a 68% drop in refugee arrivals in Georgia over the past two years. This year, we also witnessed the inhumane separation of families at the border, the elimination of Temporary Protected Status for certain populations, a continued travel ban on Muslim-majority countries, the diminishing of asylum protections, and attempts to reduce legal pathways for immigrants to come to the U.S. Our 16 member organizations continue to serve the entire immigrant population of Georgia—and we will be here to serve the community as long as we are needed.

We are encouraged by the unwavering support of our fellow Georgians and in this time of adversity, we take inspiration from the people we serve, who have shown us how to be resourceful, resilient, and optimistic. In this report, we present our collective data from fiscal year 2018 (October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018) and highlight the economic, social, and cultural benefits of creating welcoming communities.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frances McBrayer".

Frances McBrayer, CRSA Chair

*Senior Director of Refugee Services,  
Catholic Charities Atlanta*

# OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2018

In 2018, the CRSA engaged elected officials at the national, state, and local levels through outreach, education, and issue-based advocacy. We hosted our fifth annual New Americans Celebration at the Georgia State Capitol on March 15. This day of education and advocacy brought over 300 new Americans and welcoming community members to the State Capitol. The CRSA provided educational material to every General Assembly member and participated in 70 meetings with legislators to discuss the impact of proposed legislation on the immigrant and refugee community. We are proud that Georgia's General Assembly did not pass any anti-immigrant or anti-welcoming legislation 2018. In 2019, we will

continue to engage Georgia lawmakers on a bi-partisan basis to ensure that Georgia remains a welcoming place to live, work, and do business.



## Georgia Leads the Nation in Hospitality

CRSA member organizations collaborated with Welcoming America to foster welcoming communities across Georgia. Eight Georgia cities have passed Welcoming resolutions including Atlanta, Brookhaven, Clarkston, Decatur, Doraville, East Point, Norcross, and Stockbridge. In 2018, Metro Atlanta became the first major metropolitan area to adopt a regional welcoming plan, serving as a model for other regions in the nation to follow. This year DeKalb County also became the first county in the Southeast to pass a Welcoming resolution.

In 2018, the CRSA continued to celebrate Georgia's vibrant and diverse refugee and immigrant communities. The highlight was the CRSA's annual World Refugee Day celebration in Clarkston, Georgia. Clarkston, known as "the Ellis Island of the South," is celebrated for its diversity. World Refugee Day, hosted by CRSA member Refuge Coffee Co., brought over 300 Georgians to Clarkston to show support for refugees; hear from Congressman Hank Johnson and former refugees themselves; enjoy cultural performances; and purchase food, art, and clothing from new American artisans and business owners.

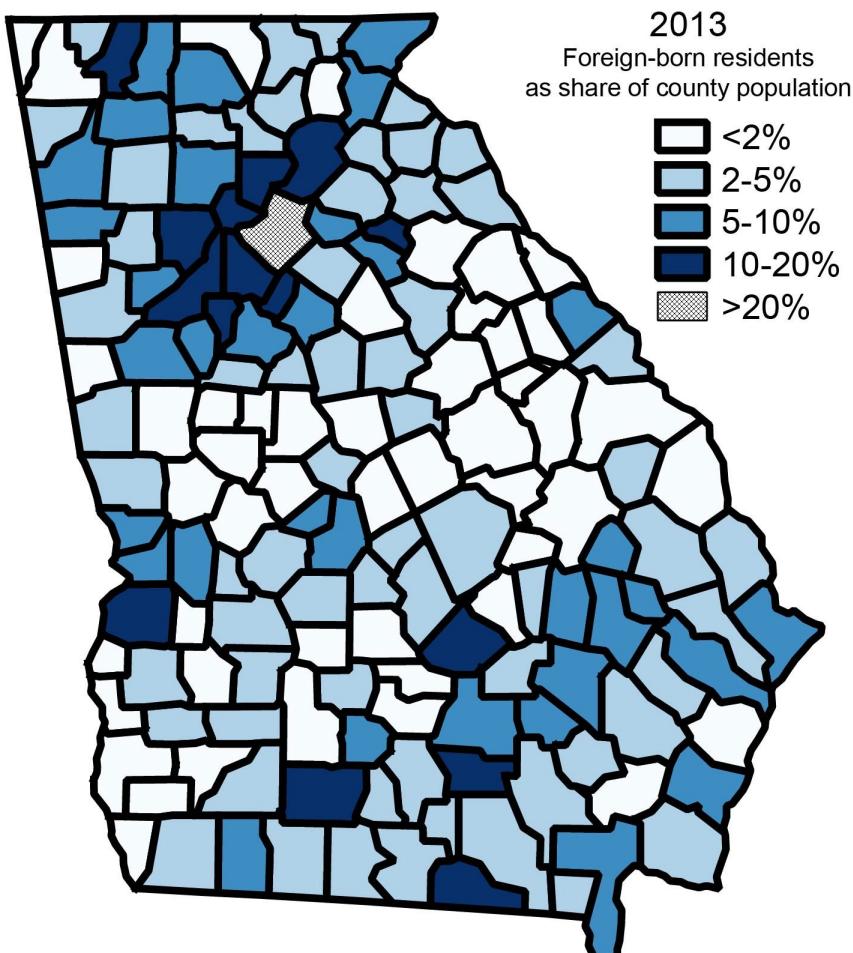
In 2019, the CRSA will continue to celebrate the contributions of Georgia's refugees and immigrants and engage leaders in ensuring that Georgia is a welcoming place for everyone.

## Our priorities for 2019:

1. Ensure that the U.S. reaches the President's goal of resettling 30,000 refugees in 2019 and encourage the U.S. to increase the national refugee resettlement goal to 75,000 in 2020.
2. Advocate for policies and legislation that respect the humanity and dignity of all immigrants.
3. Keep Georgia welcoming by advocating against any state policy or legislation that is anti-immigrant or anti-welcoming.

# GEORGIA: STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

Immigrants and refugees make up over 10% of Georgia's population and play a critical role in the state's economy.



## Immigrants in Georgia

**1,023,717** **41.9%** **74.9%**

foreign-born  
residents in GA

are naturalized  
U.S. citizens

speak English  
well or very well



## Immigrants Strengthen Georgia's Economy

Nearly  
**1 in 5**

self-employed  
business owners in  
GA is an immigrant



Immigrants in  
GA have  
**\$19.2  
billion**  
in spending power

Immigrants in  
GA contribute  
**\$4.7  
billion**  
in federal and  
**\$2.2  
billion**  
in state taxes

## Immigrants are Essential to Georgia's Workforce



1 in 7 workers in Georgia's labor force is an immigrant

**38.4%**  
of farming,  
fishing, and  
forestry



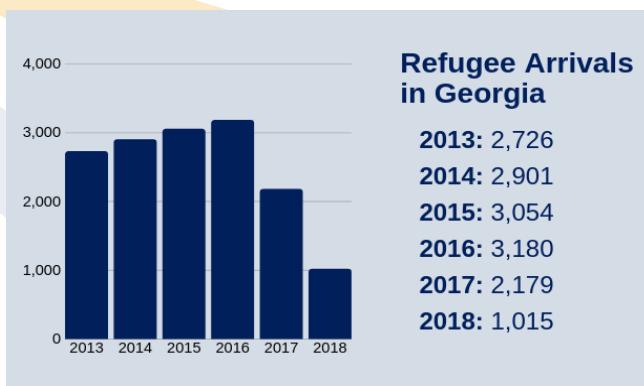
**27.4%**  
of construction  
and extraction



**24.5%**  
of computer and  
mathematical  
sciences



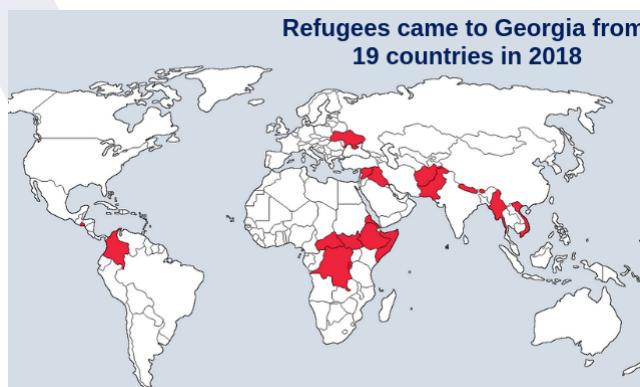
# REFUGEES CONTRIBUTE TO GEORGIA



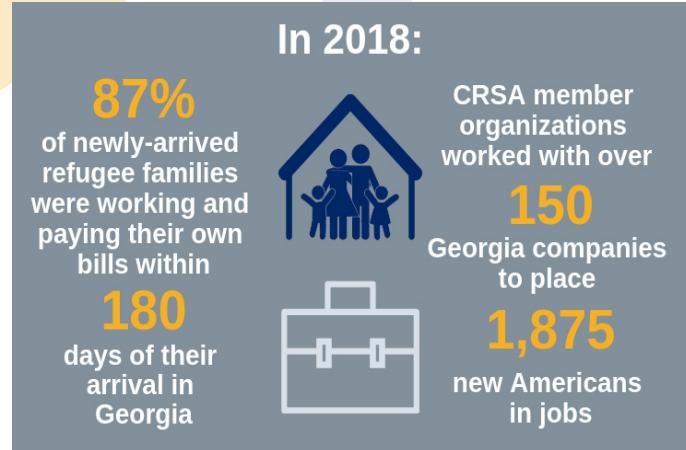
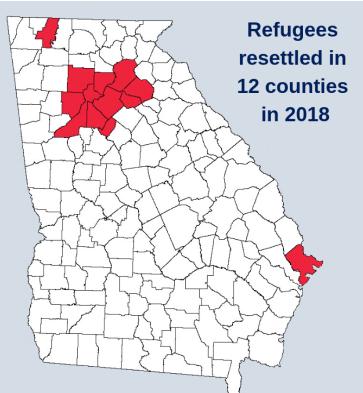
The refugee program is built around welcoming those who have fled persecution to a new home—and a new life—in America. In 2018, CRSA member organizations welcomed just 1,015 refugees to Georgia—continuing a downward trend since 2016 as a

direct impact of the reduced national annual refugee admissions ceilings set by the current Administration.

Refugees arrived in Georgia from 19 different countries in 2018, including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria.



Once in Georgia, refugees resettled across the state—in 12 different counties. The majority of refugees resettled in DeKalb County, predominantly in Clarkston and the surrounding areas.



## Refugees support Georgia's vital industries



Entry-level jobs allow refugees and other immigrants to maintain an income to support their families while building new skills and gaining a better grasp of the English language.

# CRSA SUPPORTS WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

## In 2018, CRSA Member Organizations:

Brought over

**\$21.1  
million**

in private and federal  
funding to Georgia



Raised

**\$2.6  
million**  
in fees for  
service



Much of these funds are invested back into Georgia's welcoming communities through job creation, housing support, and basic needs purchases at local businesses. However, with fewer arrivals, private and federal funding generated by CRSA member organizations in 2018 was \$700,000 lower than the year prior.

With fewer arrivals also come cuts to spending in local economies. Over the past two years Georgia communities have lost more than \$2.7 million in potential revenue.\*

## In 2018, CRSA Member Organizations:

Employed  
**331 full-time**  
and  
**338 part-time**  
staff



Our staff  
represent over  
**20 countries**  
and speak more than  
**40 languages**



*In 2018, CRSA member organizations spent over \$1.5 million directly in local Georgia economies through initial purchases made on behalf of clients, including rent, utilities, food, cell phones, MARTA cards, furniture, and household necessities. New Americans continue this investment into their new communities soon after their arrival, as they secure employment, achieve self-sufficiency, pay taxes, and spend locally.*

## In 2018:

**5,776**  
volunteers donated over  
**162,000**  
hours of service to CRSA  
member organizations



A value of over  
**\$4 million**



*In 2018, CRSA member organizations partnered with over:*

- 200 faith communities
- 200 schools and universities
- 300 businesses
- 300 civic and corporate organizations

Our work would not be possible without the support of private organizations, faith communities, and individuals who believe in supporting new Americans.



\*Calculated by comparing CRSA's annual spending in local communities in 2016 with spending in 2017 and 2018.

# CRSA MEMBERS PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES

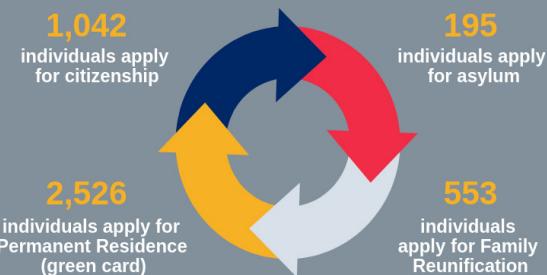
Establishing safety and stability is the first step to self-sufficiency. In 2018, CRSA member organizations provided initial housing and basic needs for 1,015 newly-arrived refugees, and 4,506 health or food security services to immigrants and refugees.

CRSA member organizations help refugees and immigrants navigate new systems, address barriers, and take advantage of opportunities in their new homes. These organizations also serve welcoming communities by providing language support, building cultural competency, and providing direct services to community members.

## In 2018, CRSA Member Organizations:



## In 2018, CRSA Member Organizations helped:



It is important that every immigrant in Georgia obtains the most secure immigration status for which they are eligible. CRSA member organizations help by providing low-cost, high-quality immigration services. Several CRSA member organizations offer services targeted to the needs of specific populations.

*One of the most important rights and responsibilities for new citizens is to participate in the democratic process. CRSA member agencies helped 8,187 new Americans register to vote in 2018 and provided training and support to help new voters navigate the voting process.*

Some groups of immigrants and refugees have unique needs.

## In 2018, CRSA Member Organizations served:



# STORIES OF NEW AMERICANS IN GEORGIA



San and her family came to Georgia five years ago through the refugee resettlement program after fleeing persecution in Burma. She spoke little English and found school challenging at first but—with support from CRSA member organizations along the way—in 2018 San successfully graduated with honors from Clarkston High School and earned a scholarship to Agnes Scott College. She was recently interviewed by

The New York Times and told the reporter, “I feel like I could help a lot of people have a better life, a better education, and not lose hope in themselves.”



Amena is a student in a family literacy program that offers English classes to refugee women and an early childhood development program for their children. This summer she passed the citizenship test and was sworn in as a new American citizen. Amena voted for the first time in November 2018.



Having supported the U.S. military in Afghanistan, Abdul Karim’s life was in danger and he was forced to flee his home country. In 2014, he received a Special Immigrant Visa to come alone to the United States. With advanced English—along with Dari, Farsi, and Pashto—he found stable employment as a security guard, but dreamed of a career in IT. A CRSA member organization supported Abdul Karim to apply for school, and in 2018 he was accepted to the Computer Science program at Georgia Piedmont Technical College where he will explore a new career in computer programming. He looks forward to his professional journey ahead.



Firdous is a single mom from Pakistan with two school-age sons. With the help of a volunteer, Firdous earned her driver’s license and purchased her own car in 2018. This accomplishment has enabled her to gain a greater sense of independence and allowed her to better support her family.

# STORIES OF NEW AMERICANS IN GEORGIA



Bonner Scholar Bertha graduated from Berry College in 2018. During her college career she studied abroad at the University of Ghana, interned at West African Aids Foundation, and volunteered as an assistant teacher for five weeks at a primary school in Nairobi, Kenya. She was also able to visit Tanzania, where she lived for 11 years prior to coming to the U.S. Bertha was a regular volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club and worked as a service desk assistant at the Berry College Memorial Library.

Recently she organized a fundraising event for the Burundian community across the U.S.



Mohammad and his family arrived to Atlanta through the refugee resettlement program, after fleeing their home in Syria. CRSA member organizations helped enroll the children in school and supported Mohammad in finding employment. A mechanic by trade, in 2018 he was able to achieve his dream of opening his own auto shop—The Best Works Auto Care Center in Roswell—after receiving a \$10,000 microenterprise loan through a CRSA member organization.



Originally from Sudan, 18-year-old Ahmed and his family were resettled in Atlanta in 2014. Two years later, Ahmed was matched with a mentor through a CRSA member organization. Mike helped Ahmed get his first job at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year at Golder Associates, an environmental consulting and engineering firm in Atlanta. Ahmed worked there while attending Lakeside High School full time and maintaining a 3.5 GPA.

Mentor Mike Smilley said, “I think Ahmed would be successful in any environment and I was lucky to be a small part of his life. I definitely gained more than he did.”

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Asylum:** Asylum status is a form of protection available to people who meet the definition of refugee and are already in the United States or are seeking admission at a port of entry. Persons may apply for asylum in the United States regardless of country of origin or current immigration status

**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA):** On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced that certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines may request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal. They are also eligible for work authorization. Deferred action is a use of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period of time. Deferred action does not provide lawful status.

**Immigrant:** A person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence.

**Immigrant Detention:** The policy of holding individuals suspected of visa violations, illegal entry or unauthorized arrival, and those subject to deportation and removal in detention until a decision is made by immigration authorities to grant a visa and release them into the community, or to repatriate them to their country of departure. Sixty percent of immigrants detained are held in privately run detention facilities. In 2018, Georgia ranked fourth in the nation in the average number of immigrants detained per day in the U.S. (3,717). Georgia is home to three privately run immigrant detention centers, Stewart, Irwin County and Folkston Ice Processing Centers.

**Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR):** Also known as legal permanent residents, and informally known as green card holders, are immigrants under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), with rights, benefits, and privileges to reside in the United States permanently.

**Mixed-Status Family:** A family whose members include people with different citizenship or immigration statuses.

**Naturalization:** The process by which U.S. citizenship is granted to a foreign citizen or national after they fulfill the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

**Refugee:** Under United States law, a refugee is someone who is located outside of the United States; is of special humanitarian concern to the United States; demonstrates that they were persecuted or fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group; is not firmly resettled in another country and is admissible to the United States. Persons with refugee status are eligible to work in the United States and apply for Lawful Permanent Residence (Green Card) after one year.

**Sanctuary City:** There is no one definition of sanctuary city but rather it is a broad term applied to jurisdictions that have policies in place designed to limit cooperation with or involvement in federal immigration enforcement actions. At this time, no Georgia city has officially proclaimed itself a sanctuary city.

**Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) for Iraqi and Afghan Nationals:** These visas are available to Iraqi and Afghan employees and contractors who were employed by or on behalf of the U.S. government in Iraq or Afghanistan for one year or more who have experienced or are experiencing an ongoing serious threat because of that employment. Persons granted SIVs are permanent residents of the United States and are eligible to apply for citizenship after five years in the U.S. SIVs are also eligible for the same services as refugees.

**T Non Immigrant Status:** Allows victims to remain in the U.S. to assist federal authorities in the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking cases. The visa allows the recipient to live and work in the U.S. while the case is tried.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Temporary Protected Status (TPS):** Establishes a legislative basis for allowing a group of persons temporary refuge in the United States. Under a provision of the Immigration Act of 1990, the Attorney General may designate nationals of a foreign state to be eligible for TPS with a finding that conditions in that country pose a danger to personal safety due to ongoing armed conflict or an environmental disaster. Grants of TPS are initially made for periods of 6 to 18 months and may be extended depending on the situation. Removal proceedings are suspended against aliens while they are in Temporary Protected Status.

**U Non Immigrant Status:** Set aside for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement or government officials in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity.

**Undocumented Immigrant:** Undocumented immigrants are foreign nationals who lack proper authorization to be in the United States. These immigrants either entered the United States without inspection according to immigration procedures, or entered the United States on a temporary visa and stayed beyond the expiration date of the visa. A foreign-born person who does not have a legal right to be or remain in the United States.

**Violence Against Women Act Immigration Provisions:** In cases of domestic violence, child abuse or elder abuse involving immigrant victims, VAWA has provisions to help victims whose immigration status is dependent on the abuser. These provisions allow victims to apply for permanent residence through “self-petition” or through a battered spouse waiver. VAWA also has a cancellation of removal to prevent the threat or use of deportation as a form of abuse. Successful VAWA cancellation of removal petitions can result in permanent residence for the victim and children.

**Visa:** Authorization that a citizen of a foreign country generally must obtain prior to traveling to the United States. Non-immigrant visas are obtained for travel to the United States on a temporary basis. These can include visas for tourism, visits, business, employment or study. Immigrant visas are for travel to the United States for those that want to stay permanently. These can include visas for family-based immigration, employment, business, and adoption. Immigrant visas are also granted through Special Immigrant Visa programs and the Diversity lottery program.

**Welcoming City, County or Region:** A community that joins the Welcoming America network and works across multiple sectors, such as government, business, and non-profit, to create inclusive policies and practices such as making it easier for entrepreneurs to start a business or having government documents available in multiple languages. Welcoming Cities are guided by the principles of inclusion and creating communities that prosper because everyone feels welcome, including immigrants and refugees.



**Mission:** To engage a broad coalition to highlight the cultural, social, and economic contributions of refugees and immigrants in Georgia.

**Vision:** We envision a future where every person who calls Georgia home is valued, respected, and able to build a successful life.

**Contact Us:** If you would like to learn more about CRSA or any of our partners, please contact Fiona Freeman at the IRC in Atlanta:

[Fiona.Freeman@Rescue.org](mailto:Fiona.Freeman@Rescue.org)

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION



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[@CRSA\\_Georgia](https://twitter.com/CRSA_Georgia)



[crsageorgia.wordpress.com](https://crsageorgia.wordpress.com)

## CRSA MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Catholic Charities Atlanta

Center for Pan Asian Community Services

Clarkston Community Center

Friends of Refugees

Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network

Global Village Project

Inspiritus (formerly Lutheran Services of Georgia)

International Rescue Committee in Atlanta

Jewish Family and Career Services

Latin American Association

New American Pathways

Refugee Coffee Co.

Refugee Women's Network

Somali American Community Center

Tapestri

World Relief Atlanta

## CREDITS

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