



CWS Jersey City clients celebrating World Refugee Day in June 2023

CWS JERSEY CITY ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2023

A Message from Courtney Madsen

Resettlement Services

Employment Services

Mental Health Services

Legal Services

Immigrant Children's Program

Community Engagement

This has been such an unbelievable year. CWS Jersey City has had the opportunity to expand our services to so many people in need in our community, thanks to the support of our partners and friends. We have served hundreds of Ukrainians seeking safety from war, provided basic needs support to Cubans and Haitians seeking safety and dignity, and have sought ways to increase our ability to serve children reuniting with their families. In 2023, CWS Jersey City served more than four thousand clients, an astonishing number! We simply could not have done it without your support, so thank you.

In 2024, CWS Jersey City will face new challenges as the world around us requires us to respond to new humanitarian emergencies. With continued support, CWS Jersey City can remain the trusted resource in our community for newcomers seeking safety and help. Trust is such an important thing in our clients' lives; and is something that has been lost for many of our clients, making the work of CWS Jersey City so much more important. We work to ensure that our clients receive the resources they need and have the tools they need to rebuild their lives successfully and rebuild trust in their new community.

I am incredibly proud of the accomplishments highlighted in the pages that follow. I can say on behalf of the entire team at CWS Jersey City that we appreciate the support we receive from you every day – it enables us to do the important work of helping people find safety and dignity in their new community. I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together in 2024!



Courtney Madsen
Office Director Jersey City,
Regional Director CWS Northeast





WE BELIEVE ALL FAMILIES DESERVE SAFETY & DIGNITY



Since 2015, CWS Jersey City has welcomed refugees, asylum-seekers, and humanitarian migrants from across the globe to Northern New Jersey. We empower our newest neighbors to build their lives in peace and security by providing robust and comprehensive social services support.



Service Provision in 2023

RESETTLEMENT SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

In 2023, CWS Jersey City expanded exponentially! The office grew from a staff of **40** to a staff of nearly **130**. Across all programs, the office served over **4,000** unique clients. From initial reception and placement services like housing and school enrollment to employment orientation and extended case management for families and vulnerable individuals, our services empower individuals and families to build fulfilling lives.



191 New Neighbors Welcomed via Reception and Placement Program

Through our Reception and Placement program, the CWS resettlement team provides initial welcome and core services to new neighbors for the first 90 days after arrival, empowering individuals and families to reach self-sufficiency.



2,717 Clients Receiving Refugee Cash Assistance

CWS Jersey City has offered Refugee Cash Assistance since our office opened in 2015. We provide a 12-month cash stipend for qualifying asylees, refugees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, parolees, and other humanitarian migrants.



1,986 Clients Enrolled in English Language Training

CWS JC offers remote English language classes to clients enrolled in our RSS and RCA programs. We offer English placement assessments to all classes and place clients in an appropriate level. CWS JC recently hired five new English teachers - we are thrilled to expand our ELT program.



1,141 Children Welcomed Through HSPRS

Our Home Study and Post Release Services (HSPRS) program launched in March 2022. In 2023, we have welcomed 1,141 clients from 27 countries living in 43 states. Our HSRPS team is proud to support unaccompanied minors recently released from ORR custody.



Two New Major Programs Launched

In 2023 CWS Jersey City received grants from federal Office of Refugee Resettlement to launch two major programs: Services to Afghan Survivors Impacted by Combat Program, which offers comprehensive mental health support to Afghans living in New Jersey, and the Employer Engagement Program, which promotes vocational ESL and further supports businesses in hiring refugees.



272 Employment- Eligible Clients Placed in Jobs

The CWS Jersey City employment team expanded its staff to include Dari, Pashto, Ukrainian, and Spanish speakers and worked creatively with thousands of employment-eligible clients to build resumes, offer professional development courses and prepare folks for successful, long term employment.

*numbers reflect data from 1/1/23 to 12/11/23

Event Spotlight: An evening with CWS Jersey City



Natali Traba Sosa



**CWS Jersey City Office
Director Courtney Madsen**



**Noel Pascual Bienes
Acosta**



**Refugee Cash Assistance Program
Manager Eyerusalem Michael**

CWS Jersey City hosted our first annual fundraiser on March 23, 2023. Clients from around the world cooked delicious food and played beautiful music. CWS staff shared the many accomplishments the team has achieved and some goals for 2023 and beyond!



Khaterra Azad and Esmat Mohsini



**CWS New York Office Director Chia-
Chia Wang**

Immigration Legal Services

AFGHAN LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UKRAINIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
VERA NETWORK'S LEGAL SERVICES FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS
OFFICE OF FAITH BASED INITIATIVES CLINIC PROGRAM

Mohammad's Story

Staff Attorney Florence Otaigbe shares her experience with an Afghan client, from initial resettlement to legal permanent residency:



I first met Mohammad when he reached out to Legal Department looking for assistance after receiving his Chief of Mission Approval which granted him a Special Immigrant Visa as basis to apply for a green card. At the time, he did not know much about the next steps, but he knew what his end goal was- a green card and permanent residency in his new home where he's been safe from the dangers he would've faced in Afghanistan due to his military work with the United States. When I let him know that his green card was at the office, he insisted that I be there to give to him. I made sure I was there, and I am so glad I was. Mohammad expressed so much kindness and gratitude that I will never forget. As he left, he told me, "have a good time forever," and I hope he has a good time forever too because he never has to worry another day about whether he can continue to stay in the United States or not. Hopefully, this is something all Afghans will be able to experience soon!

2023 Legal Department Highlights



Ukrainian Legal Assistance Team attorney Brandon Dolinger and paralegal Valery Isakov filed over **240** applications.

- **152** Employment Authorization Documents applications
- **71** Temporary Protected Status applications
- **15** Individuals included on asylum applications
- **2** Green Card applications
- **5** Travel documents



The OFBI clinic program hosted two pro se Employment Authorization clinics, the first in partnership with Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP and the second in partnership with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. Clinics assisted **37** clients with prepared and submitting work permit applications.



CWS Jersey City joined the New York Lawyers for Public Interest *Get on Board!* event to recruit attorneys to join the CWS Jersey City Migrant Justice Action Counsel, and raised over **\$20,000** to support legal services.

To contact the CWS Jersey City Legal Department, please email jclegal@cwsglobal.org



CWS Jersey City and Tent Partnership for Refugees Hiring Fairs



CWS Jersey City and the Tent Partnership for Refugees co-hosted three job fairs in 2023. Representatives from over 25 companies, including Starbucks, Amazon, Chobani, Marriot, Panda Express, and more, travelled to Jersey City to interview, recruit, and hire CWS Jersey City clients. Quarterly job fairs began in May 2023, and over 300 clients from around the world have attended. The office is eager to continue collaborating with Tent and will continue quarterly hiring fairs in 2024.

"The hiring events have brought refugees and employers together in ways that benefits everyone. It has been encouraging for refugees to see the commitment from employers towards supporting them and giving them the chance to work and start to rebuild their lives in the U.S. In turn, employers have gained valuable new employees who are invested and bring new skills and unique backgrounds to their teams! We're excited to see news of the events continue to spread and to host future fairs in 2024."

-Employment Program Manager Margy Kelly



Ukrainian Humanitarian Assistance Program Updates

In 2023, CWS Jersey City screened a total of 1,142 potential Ukrainian clients, and successfully served 846 qualified Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees through the Preferred Communities GAPS program for Ukrainians. We are proud to have provided our Ukrainian clients with comprehensive essential services, including Medicaid, SNAP, cash assistance, ELT classes, and more, assuring clients receive the vital support they require.



846 New Ukrainian Neighbors Served

Our new neighbors are from all over Ukraine and now live in Hudson, Bergen and Passaic counties in New Jersey. Ukrainians have brought their unique culture, skills, and vibrancy to our community and we could not be more grateful. Seeing the program grow since it launched in late 2023 has been incredibly fulfilling for our team.



77 kids Enrolled with CWS's Ukrainian School Impact Team

In 2023, 77 Ukrainian children were enrolled in New Jersey schools with assistance from School Impact Grant case managers. In addition to this, 8 children, ages 0-5, were enrolled in NJ Head Start and Early Head Start to receive comprehensive early education services. In addition to these services, all students were given the opportunity to join CWS Summer Programming, sign up for tutoring, and take part in school advocacy.



5 CWS JC Ukrainian Clients Are Now CWC JC Staff members

CWS is proud to hire staff from our many diverse client populations. We currently have five former CWS JC Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee clients on staff: Karyna Dibrova, Alona Bondarieva, Nikita Kachur, Nataliia Mishyna, and Olha Livel work as case managers in the Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Support Services, and Employment Support Services programs.

Ukrainian Humanitarian Parole Assistance Program Manager Mohammad Izadi reflects on the past year's achievements:

Our office has achieved some remarkable successes. One of the most significant achievements has been our ability to secure housing for a substantial number of clients in need. Our commitment to providing prompt assistance is evident in the waiting time for clients from initial contact to program enrollment, which has been reduced to 1 day. This swift response ensures that our clients receive timely help and support. Additionally, through various programs, we have been successful in providing computers and phones to almost all clients who needed them, enhancing their access to communication and resources.

Overall, despite the challenges, our office's dedication and perseverance have led to significant achievements, improving the lives of the Ukrainian population we serve through the PC GAPS program.

Highlights from CWS JC Summer Camp 2023

CWS JC hosted our second annual summer camp in July and August! Over the course of six weeks and 12 sessions, 67 children from Afghanistan, Syria, Honduras, Haiti, and Ukraine spent their summer days playing and learning. Activities included a trip to South Mountain Reservation, multiple visits to New York City, art museums, theater workshops, science experiments, and memories to last a lifetime!



2023 Community Engagement and Corporate Partnership Highlights



250+
Volunteers



\$200,000+
Raised



15+ Volunteer
Events

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers!



A group of 40 volunteers from Deloitte joined CWS Jersey City in June to pack school kits for Cuban and Ukrainian English language learners. Thank you, Deloitte!



Volunteers from Goldman Sachs helped the CWS Team clean out our “free store” in July!

They left the store in exceptional condition. Thank you, Goldman Sachs!



Volunteers and staff came together this October to set up a Halloween party. Newly arrived youth learned how to trick or treat safely, and got to experience the joys of a Halloween haunted house at the CWS Jersey City office



In November, volunteers from McKinsey and Company came to the CWS Jersey City office to meet with employment eligible clients to practice interview skills and offer 1:1 resume building assistance. Clients prepared to bring resumes to CWS job fairs. Thank you, McKinsey!

If you are interested in becoming of corporate partner of CWS Jersey City, please email corporatepartnershipsjc@cwsglobal.org

BE PART OF THE WELCOME

How to support CWS and our new neighbors

Volunteer

Tutor students, teach adults English, get a group together to complete a household setup, or help us clean our free store. There are many ways to get involved! If you are interested in volunteering with CWS Jersey City, please email volunteersjc@cwsglobal.org

Donate In-Kind items

Drop off items at our store at 440 Hoboken Avenue! Organize a donation drive for hygiene products, diapers, household goods, or other items which help newly arrived families settle into their homes. If you are interested in donating, please email donationsjc@cwsglobal.org

Financially Support CWS Jersey City

Set up a recurring donation of \$10, \$25, or \$50. Making a financial gift is the most effective way to help! Your funds will go where they are most needed. Will your employer match your philanthropic gift? You can double your impact through an employer match.

Rent to Refugees

Families are eager to establish themselves in our community. If you know any landlords who want to support this work, please encourage them to contact CWS to learn about the benefits of renting to our new neighbors

Hire Refugees

Encourage your employer to learn about the benefits of hiring refugees. Refugees and many humanitarian migrants are authorized for employment and do not need visa sponsorship. We would love to support your business or your employer in efforts to hire refugees.



CWS Jersey City staff at World Refugee Day 2023

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR WELCOMING COMMUNITY

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