

Our Journey: Sponsoring a Refugee Family - 2016



THE CARR 
**COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR
REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT**
Reach out to Refugee Families

www.TheCARR.ca

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Introduction

In the fall of 2015, the members of our community were challenged to respond to a horrific international crisis and to commit to bringing families from the war-torn Middle East to a safe haven in Lanark County. Their response was overwhelmingly positive. Invitations to join The CARR Team resulted in a talented, experienced and highly motivated corps of volunteers stepping up to assist in any way they could. Donors gave generously to The CARR Refugee Fund and contributed clothing, household items and furniture necessary to create inviting homes for our newcomers.

This document reflects our journey. It begins with a personal perspective supported with news articles of the day and early communications.

In our early stages we realized that openness and transparency are paramount to building relationships so integral to the process. Relationships permeate all that occurs. They fall into several categories, which are provided in Section 2.

Section 3 provides the critical mechanics for pulling together a sponsorship and the essentials for the family.

This has been our journey to date - yours will be unique...



The Executive of The CARR from back left: Margo Bell, Gord Monroe, Colin Stephenson, Elsie Stresman, Ann Munroe, Krista Hearty McLean, Jennifer Dickson and John Schideler

THE BEGINNING – A Personal Perspective, Jennifer Dickson

We know that during the summer of 2015 the refugee crises facing Syrian families escaping to Europe was being discussed across Canada and indeed around the world... then of course, the photo of the tiny toddler washed up on the beach made it much more than a conversation. We needed to help!

For me, it was the day I made a presentation September 2nd, 2015, to a local discussion group I love – The Open Circle... my theme was the 200th anniversary of the early arrival of settlers to this area, and the discussion evolved into *“how might we use the celebrations to grow support for and develop a plan for contributing to the refugee crises facing Syrians?”*

Two days later, September 4th, Doug and Heather Burt sent twenty six of us an email, suggesting that the open circle develop our own refugee assistance 200th anniversary project, offering to arrange a discussion and including an article that offered four ways to help that we might consider:

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/09/03/four-ways-canadians-can-help-refugees.html>

Everyone forwarded that email, folks called, expressed support, the message rang out... YES. Let's explore this. Within a week it became apparent the no one's living room would suffice for the conversation, other options were considered, and then Deborah Duffy, President of the Perth & District Community Foundation (PDCF), stepped up and arranged a room at the Perth Town Hall for September 25th, and invited many who had expressed interest (see her email attached).

Take away messages:

Truly grass roots beginning – broad base of interest, enthusiasm, few ego agendas, no particular 'political' intent, no controlling of information, lots of energy, curiosity and good will.

We considered many approaches and developed some early priorities:

1. We decided to develop a project that had the intent to welcome Syrian families to the Perth area. This was a big decision; as other options (e.g. raising \$\$\$ to contribute to others initiatives) would require fewer volunteers and be much less work.
2. It became an early priority to inform ourselves about and assess all available government assistance options to proceed. (BVOR, SP, CG, Group of 5...Sponsorship Agreement Holder

options...) We were by then exploring how best to assist with a private sponsor application for a family in Kanata. How else might we proceed?

3. Organizational structure: We decided to identify and recruit experienced organizers (Ann and Gordon Munroe), put an informal 'executive' team in place, and to develop several teams, each with its own leader, to work with the growing numbers of volunteers that were signing up... we would meet weekly, the team leaders would do the same, and everyone would stay in close collaboration. We would look into becoming incorporated and not for profit at a later date. PDCF kindly offered to help on the financial management side, so we were not required to have immediate charitable organization status.

4. Material requirements: Several people offered to begin soliciting/inviting financial contributions; one local family business contributed \$15,000 to kick off the fund. This leadership inspired several others...(dollars - \$100,000 came in by December 1st) and furniture, clothing, translation services, education, transportation, housing options, welcome committee, legal requirements and information for new family.

5. We recognized the importance of communications – when considering a brand; we deliberately stayed away from using any place names (i.e. not Lanark County, not Perth...). We decided on Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement - CARR...Colin Stephenson created a CARR website, we approached Lake 88 through Krista Hearty McLean, we also informed the Lanark County political representatives about the project. I briefly described our project during the September 22nd Tay Valley Township Council meeting, received unanimous approval for a motion of support. Shortly after that first meeting, Tay Valley wrote a letter to each of the Lanark County Reeves, Mayors and our MPP and MP.

Take away messages:

Listen to and encourage each other, do lots of research, approach and collaborate with others who might be helpful at the government level, stay in touch, make becoming a volunteer a pleasant experience, be transparent about ALL our decisions, challenges, objectives, include and inform the broader community every step of the way... Be open to accommodating fast change as processes at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) evolve.

From: PDCF [<mailto:pdcf@bellnet.ca>] **Sent:** September 16, 2015 9:50 AM **Subject:** SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS -POSSIBLE LOCAL INITIATIVE

Dear Community Leader,

The Perth and District Community Foundation is hosting a meeting of representatives of local service clubs, churches and governments on Friday September 25, 2015 from 9 am to 10 am in the courtroom in Perth Town Hall.

The purpose of the meeting is to determine whether there is local interest in exploring the idea of sponsoring Syrian refugee families to resettle in the Perth area. At a time when Perth and neighbouring communities are celebrating the 200th anniversary of immigrant settlement, this seems a fitting way to launch community life for the next 200 years.

You are invited to attend or to send a representative from your organization. If no one is available to attend, we would be grateful if you would let us know whether or not you are interested in learning more about this project and, if so, who in your organization we should contact.

It is hoped that we will come away from this short meeting with an idea of whether or not there is community support for this project and, if so, a rough plan for going forward.

Please let me know by email to pdcf@bell.net whether you or a representative of your organization are able to attend. And please feel free to circulate this email to anyone you consider might be interested.

And please also let me know if you are aware of any other person or organization in our community looking into the possibility of sponsoring refugees.

Meanwhile, I would be happy to discuss this with you by telephone. 613-278-2392,

I apologize for any frustration you are experiencing at not having access to the names to which this message is being sent. However, as some of them are individuals in their private capacity I didn't wish to share their emails without their permission. I would be happy however to tell you what organizations I am sending to you if you are interested.

Deborah Duffy
President
The Perth and District Community Foundation

cc. Lynn McIntyre
Executive Director
The Perth and District Community Foundation
Greg Anderson

Early News Articles

1. From liberal.ca – LIBERALS COMMIT TO LEADERSHIP ON SYRIAN CRISIS

OTTAWA – A Liberal government will take immediate action to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada and address this tragic humanitarian crisis, said Liberals today.

“Canadians can and must do more to help Syrian refugees who are desperately seeking safety. This is about showing leadership and doing what is right as Canadians,” said Liberal candidate for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce–Westmount, Marc Garneau. “Since March, Justin Trudeau has been calling on the Canadian government to immediately accept 25,000 government-sponsored Syrian refugees. Canadians expect action on this issue from their government.”

A Liberal government would:

- Expand Canada’s intake to 25,000 refugees from Syria through immediate, direct sponsorship by the Government of Canada. We will also work with private sponsors to intake even more;
- Invest at least an additional \$100 million this fiscal year to increase – without reducing standards – refugee processing, as well as sponsorship and settlement services capacity in Canada; and
- Provide an immediate \$100 million new contribution to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to support the critical relief activities in Syria and the surrounding area.

“Mayors and premiers from across the country have already taken action, together, and Canadians have stepped up personally to assist in the crisis,” said Liberal candidate for Markham–Stouffville, Jane Philpott. “Leading this country means bringing people together with hope for the future. We have a responsibility to significantly expand our refugee targets and give more victims of war a safe haven in Canada.”

2. From www.shoah.org.uk - The World’s Most Humble President Just Opened His House to 100 Syrian Refugee Children

Image Credit: AP

The news: One hundred children orphaned by the Syrian civil war could find a home in Uruguayan President José "Pepe" Mujica's summer retreat, "a mansion and riverfront estate surrounded by rolling pastures," according to [Yahoo News](http://www.yahoo.com). That would be a welcome sight for any of the hundreds of thousands of refugees displaced by Syria's political turmoil. The children could arrive as early as September, coming from refugee camps in the Middle East. The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) does not relocate orphans without a family member; each child would arrive with at least one relative — like an uncle, cousin or sibling. The exact number of children expected at Mujica's summer residence is still being worked out, particularly since the Uruguayan government will be responsible for all of the expenses. More than [2 million Syrians](#) have fled the country since the conflict began in 2011. Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon have taken in the majority. More than 1 million Syrians have relocated to

Lebanon, while 600,000 are in Jordan and 700,000 are in Turkey. Germany and Brazil have granted immigration visas to Syrian refugees, 10,000 from the former and 2,000 from the latter.

Notice who's not in the mix? U.S. President Obama's administration has been pretty listless in aiding Syrian refugees. Out of the estimated 2.3 million Syrians displaced, the U.S. only admitted [31](#) into the country in 2013. That number seems even worse when you take into account the fact that [135,000 Syrians](#) have applied for asylum by January of this year. Most applications were rejected because of strict immigration laws instituted to prevent terrorists from entering the country.

In February 2014, the Obama administration announced that it would ease up some of the immigration restrictions. According to a statement signed by Secretary of State John Kerry and Jeh Johnson, secretary of homeland security, the U.S. will grant exemptions to Syrian refugees "on a case-by-case basis to the 'material support' bar in U.S. immigration law," reported [Reuters](#).

Mujica keeps one-upping President Obama. This is not the first instance where Uruguay's president has taken the lead. Mujica turned his [leftist guerrilla past](#) into game-changing national leadership through several strategic political moves and by capitalizing on an everyman brand.

Mujica is known as the sandal-wearing, VW Beetle-driving, farm-living "poorest president in the world." He donates most of his [\\$12,000 monthly salary](#) to charity and lives in a one-bedroom home, even though a report indicates his assets to be well into the six-figure range.

[Coolness factor](#) aside, Mujica broke ground by making Uruguay the first country to legalize the production, distribution and consumption of marijuana. Notably, he also legalized gay marriage and took in six detainees from Guantanamo Bay, which the U.S. still hasn't dismantled after promising to do so six years ago.

Under Mujica's presidency, Uruguay is aggressively fighting a \$2 billion lawsuit filed by Phillip Morris, since the country's strict anti-smoking laws force the company to place graphic warnings on 80% of all cigarette packs. And Uruguay now has the most liberal laws on abortion in all of Latin America.

Are you taking notes, Mr. President? Lucia Topolansky, Mujica's wife, [said](#) that the move to take in the Syrian orphans is to "motivate all the countries of the world to take responsibility for this catastrophe."

Networking

Here is the note I sent in November:

Dear family, colleagues and friends,

Over the last few weeks, some of you have asked to know more about my recent new commitment to help address the crises facing many, many of our neighbours across the continent in Europe. I decided to send this to let you know a little more about this dynamic project that I'm a part of... it's SUCH a pleasure to be engaged in this endeavour and I'd love to share it with you!

Back in September, shortly after that appalling photo story about the three year old washed ashore in Greece, a group of citizens got together to talk over and gauge community interest in sponsoring refugee families to settle here in our area. The interest was enthusiastic, so we created The Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement and I'm doing communications (among other things!) on the executive committee. (By the way, this is entirely independent of my service on the Tay Valley Township Council.) Now, in late November, we already have several team leaders and a growing number of volunteers working hard to prepare our Settlement Plan so we can hit the ground running as soon as we are connected with our first family.

We have a goal of \$100 000 - this will allow us to welcome two to three refugee families to our community, depending on the size of each family. It looks as though that will happen in the very near future, as we have already raised more than one third of this financial objective. Our intention is to help the families build new lives here in the Perth area and we are working with an established Sponsorship Agreement Holder in Ottawa to bring it all together.

Our teams of volunteers are hard at work and we are all thrilled to be a part of something that will make a positive difference in the lives of new Canadians who are now living in such traumatic conditions and who have been forced to flee their homelands.

I hope this interests you and your friends, colleagues and family too! If you would like to see more of what I've been up to, please just be in touch, or check out our new website at www.TheCARR.ca. We also have a Facebook Fanpage that I'd love for you to 'like' and 'share' with whomever you think might be interested (that will help to get the word out about the work we are doing). The Facebook link is on our website, or you can go directly to it here www.facebook.com/TheCARR.ca.

If you would like to support our cause financially and want to help sponsor a refugee, we welcome your donation – just click here on our website <http://thecarr.ca/donate.htm>. At this time of year a donation to the CARR Refugee Fund might be a wonderful present for

certain people on your list and/or for an office gift exchange. Our online option allows you to dedicate your gift to that special person.

If you would like to volunteer, check out the volunteer page at <http://thecarr.ca/volunteer.htm> and let us know.

If you want to know more, do reach out to me personally.
Thank you. Warmly,
Jennifer

p.s. Here's a radio interview we did with Lake 88 on Nov. 10th <http://thecarr.ca/news.htm#int1>
p.p.s. Here is an article that was published in the Perth Courier
http://thecarr.ca/docs/TheCarr_PressRelease-Oct%2026.pdf

Relationships

Formal Relationships:

1. The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa SAH (Settlement Agreement Holder) / CARR: CARR, a Constituency Group under the Diocese. The CARR Executive communicates directly with and receives excellent support and advice from Don Smith, Chair of the Ottawa Diocese Refugee Working Group and Carol Hotte, Diocesan Refugee Program Administrator. The Settlement Plan and BVOR application are submitted to the SAH.
2. Perth and District Community Foundation (PDCF)/CARR Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): CARR Fund was established by PDCF to collect donations by cheque or via Canada Helps. PDCF issues tax receipts and releases funds to CARR via St. James the Apostle Church. The reporting requirements of both organizations are defined in the MOU.
3. St. James/CARR Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): St. James serves as co-sponsor to provide a vehicle to release funds to CARR from PDCF whereas CARR is responsible for budgeting and management of funds. Financial reporting requirements of both organizations are defined in the MOU. As CARR is considered an outreach of St. James, liability insurance coverage is provided for CARR volunteers with police checks; there are no costs for the checks since St. James provides the letters required to waive the fees. (Rev. Ken Davis)

Informal Relationships:

4. St. Paul's United Church, Perth/CARR: St. Paul's provides meeting and storage space; St. Paul's Youth Group and Sunday School members gave welcome gifts to the family; church representatives, in conjunction with the CARR Cross-Cultural Adaptation Skills Team (CCAS), is planning congregational outreach and cross-cultural education (Rev. Gerry Kerr)
5. T.R. Leger Immigrant Services - English as a Second Language (ESL) Training (Upper Canada District School Board): Language assessment was completed immediately following the family's arrival in Perth; formal ESL classes are offered in Brockville, ON (Julia Case)
6. Local Immigration Partnership Renfrew Lanark (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada): cross-cultural workshops are available in association with CARR CCAS Team. (Chèla Breckon)
7. Rev. Dawn Clarke, Perth Road United Church, and Four Rivers Presbytery: shared their experience as private sponsors reuniting families and provided resources.
8. Zuby Salooje, Islamic Centre, Sydenham Rd., Kingston, ON: welcomed Munroes to potluck dinner and fall bazaar, and keeps in contact by email.
9. **Networking with Local Resettlement Groups:**

- a) St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, Perth (Colleen Smyth);
- b) Merrickville Bridge to Canada (Audrey Bridge)
- c) Syrian Refugee Committee of Mississippi Mills- SRCMM (Arnie Francis)
- d) Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church, Almonte (Sandy O’Hara, Cathy Solowjew)
- e) Lanark Deanery Refugee Committee, Carleton Place (Aisha Toor)
- f) Refugee 613, Ottawa (Louise Taylor) www.refugess613.ca;
- g) Capital Rainbow Refugee, Ottawa (Lisa Hebert) www.capitalrainbow.ca

10. Media Relationships:

Our web master, Colin Stephenson, launched The CARR website early in the fall as an educational and promotional vehicle for our fledgling, grassroots organization, informing the community at large of our mission, engaging their support, attracting volunteers and soliciting contributions, both monetary and in-kind. For up-to-date news, volunteer opportunities and donor information, visit www.TheCARR.ca.

The immediate and on-going response of local media has played a significant role in building support for resettlement of refugee families in the area. The following organizations have assisted The CARR:

- a) LAKE 88.1 - In-Focus interviews, press releases, announcements
- b) EMC Perth Courier - press releases and reporting of events: print and digital options at www.INSIDEOTTAWAVALLEY.COM
- c) Lanark Era - press releases and reporting
- d) Cogeco Cable - Lifestyles Interview
- e) Hometown News
- f) Facebook

We are considering extending the communications network to include:

- a) Jack FM
- b) CFRA Radio
- c) CBC Ottawa Radio and Television
- d) CTV Ottawa Television
- e) The Ottawa Sun
- f) The Ottawa Citizen
- g) Fifty Five Plus
- h) The HUMM

11. Business Relationships:

From the onset, The CARR leadership recognized that community support and participation were integral to the project’s success and that the value of developing relationships with local business could not be underestimated.

It is incumbent upon an organization to recognize and celebrate the generosity of the community. One very tangible means is by supporting local businesses and accessing local resources as much as possible. The CARR business community stepped in by giving and encouraging monetary and in-kind donations, offering meeting and storage space, giving legal advice and providing unsolicited promotion of our resettlement initiative. The support from local business *includes but is not limited to* the following: Anderson Foss Barristers, Solicitors, Allan and Partners Chartered Accountants, McLean Insurance/Fathers and Sons Barber Shop/Perth Blue Wings, Foodsmiths, McMullan Appliance Expert Mattress World, Blair & Son Home Furnishings, Commonwell Insurance, Urban Hearth, Leo Adams Investment Inc., Store N Lock, McAdoo Construction Ltd., Centennial Truss Fabricators Ltd., Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Realtor Regan Lee, Perth Salvation Army, Big Brothers Big Sisters (Jewels), Perth Campus Algonquin College (Dean Christopher Hahn), Classic Theatre, Terrascapes Landscaping (Brian Raweurda), The Sunflower Bake Shop and Spring Children.

12. Organizational Relationships:

Local organizations play an integral role in developing champions for the cause across the community with invitations to share The CARR's story at monthly meetings and information evenings in neighboring communities, gifts to welcome newcomers and monetary contributions: Perth Probus Club, Smiths Falls Rotary Club, Rideau Community Health Services, United Way-Lanark County, Asbury Methodist Church (Rev. Roxanne Goodyear), Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Lombardy (Rev. Valerie Kelly), Interval House, Lanark County Quilters' Guild, The Table Community Food Centre, Canadian Federation of University Women – Perth & District, and RSTP (Refugee Settlement Training Program), a federal government program offering webinars, workshops, and on-line resources.

13. Political Outreach:

Reaching out to the various levels of government from the beginning, and providing updates, proves to be important in growing support and reducing opposition to the refugee resettlement initiative. By being proactive and inviting local leaders to join the discussion, it is possible to create a softer climate for the newcomers' arrival and establishment in the community. Lanark County Warden Keith Kerr championed the cause with communiqués to all the Reeves and mayors of the County of Lanark and the sitting MP and MPP. Two members of The CARR Executive met with Scott Reid MP and David Costal, Executive Assistant to Randy Hillier MPP.

14. Professional Relationships:

When the newcomers arrive, The CARR must call upon several health care professionals to provide initial medical assessments and essential follow-up. The following are assisting the first family: Dr. Stephanie Popiel, Dr. Robin Kennie, Dr. Kevin Orser, and Dr. Curtis Bain.

The Bank of Nova Scotia Corporation has committed support to newcomers by providing resources in Arabic and access to translators. These services are available at the Perth Branch. (Shirley Lotz)

15. Personal and Donor Relationships:

The glue that binds an organization together is the relationships that are created through personal networking and nurturing of donors. Whether that contact was over coffee, on the telephone or through social media, personal contact contributed significantly to The CARR's early successes. The most significant factor is the generosity of spirit so evident in the welcoming of our new neighbours to our community.



At one of The CARR Volunteer meetings.

The Fundamentals of Sponsorship

1. CLASSIFICATION OF REFUGEES

- Government refugees. The government sponsors this group of refugees. They are supported financially for one year and have some government workers or contracted groups supporting them.

- Private sponsored refugees. Local groups or family members with documented funds and documented ability to assist may enter into a contract to sponsor refugees.

- Blended Visa Office-Referred Program. This is a combination of the two. The government supports the family for six months; the organization sponsors the family for six months.

2. SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT HOLDER (SAH)

Groups wishing to sponsor refugees to Canada may choose to deal directly with the government as a community group, or work with a SAH as a constituent group.

Role of SAH

SAHs are government pre-approved organizations, which assist groups with process and paperwork. Each SAH has signed an agreement with the federal government to essentially be a 'go-between' for groups wishing to sponsor refugees.

SAH proofs applications from constituent groups and guarantees to the government that those sponsoring refugees through them have adequate funds and support resources for the sponsorship commitment being made.

SAH is a source of knowledge regarding the refugee sponsorship process.

The majority of SAHs are religious based.

CARR conducted an e-mail survey of known sponsorship groups to determine their satisfaction level with their SAH. A small team interview was held with the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa SAH rep Don Smith. The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa is based locally, which is an advantage.

Donald Smith – Chair of the Diocesan Refugee Working Group – SAH rep.

Carol Hotte – Diocesan Refugee Program Administrator

Executive Archdeacon David Seltzer – signing authority for Anglican Diocese of Ottawa

E-mail - general email for Don and Carol – refugee@ottawa.anglican.ca

SAH sends out lists of Blended Visa Office -Referred Program (BVOR) refugee names as government makes them available.

3. The CARR COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Executive

The current basic structure has an executive composed of co-chairs; vice-chair/settlement team coordinator; finance/web page; communications co-chairs; fund-raising and secretary/volunteer coordinator. The composition of the executive evolves with the needs of the group.

It is the role of the executive to provide direction and leadership for the organization.

Settlement Teams

The role of the Settlement Teams is to provide expertise, support and people power for all the tasks necessary in sponsoring newcomers.

The vice chair oversees several settlement teams. The settlement team leaders head groups of volunteers in various areas including: cross culture and adaptation; documentation; welcome/family support; education, language and employment; housing, furniture and clothing; health; communications; finance; fund raising; and volunteers.

The secretary records the minutes of executive and settlement team meetings.

See Appendix A (page 24) for more information on The CARR Role & Responsibilities: Coordinators & Team Leaders.

4. TEAMS

4.1 Cross Culture and Adaptation

- Enable cultural awareness for members of The CARR and the general community
- Facilitate cultural adaptation services for new comers to our community

4.2 Documentation

- Research required documentation for sponsorship
- Collate information for group settlement plan
- Provide support to executive by completing documentation for sponsorship
- Research available government documentation

4.3 Welcome/Family Support

- Plan and implement supports required prior to family arrival
- Plan transportation for family as required
- Co-ordinate daily support for new comers after arrival

4.4 Education/Language/Employment

- Liaison with schools for enrolment and support for children

- Liaison with schools for enrolment and support for adults
- Provide English Language Learning for family as required
- Network and support search for employment opportunities

4.5 Housing/Furniture/Clothing

- Locate adequate housing for newcomer family
- Prepare accommodation for arrival of family
- Coordinate and deliver sufficient furniture to meet family needs
- Coordinate options for clothing for family

4.6 Health

- Research procedures and documents needed for family to access health services (medical, dental, mental health, vision, hearing)
- Liaison between health providers and family for health needs

4.7 Fund Raising

- Coordinate with Perth and District Community Foundation (PDCF)
- Network
- Facilitate, plan, and implement fund-raising opportunities

4.8 Finance/Project Finance

- Manage finances of The CARR
- Liaison with PDCF and St. James the Apostle Anglican Church
- Develop and implement procedure for transferring funds from PDCF to St. James
- Develop and maintain bookkeeping system
- Manage CARR bank account for paying authorized expenses
- Liaison with Family Support Team member responsible for teaching family Canadian financial ways
- Reports regularly to Executive

4.9 Communication

- Deliver internal (within CARR) updates
- Liaison with community through radio, newspaper, public presentations, social media
- Network with local politicians and organizations
- Develop and maintain web site, social media accounts

CAUTION! E-mail is an excellent way to communicate internally. Please use it responsibly - use reply all with caution. *Make sure e-mail does not become snow-mail.* Who needs to receive information?

4.10 Volunteers

- Designate a volunteer coordinator
- Maintain an up to date database of all volunteers

- Work with team leaders to determine skill set need
- Maintain contact with unassigned volunteers
- Make recommendations to Vice-Chair and Team Leaders for 'best fit' for volunteers
- Recruit new volunteers as needed

5. POLICE CHECKS

Our SAH and due diligence dictate that all CARR volunteers shall have a police check. Those dealing with sensitive issues (funds, private information, direct contact with family) shall have a Vulnerable Sector Police Check. All others shall have a Police Information Check.

The volunteer coordinator working with St. James church office will obtain a volunteer letter for each volunteer requiring a police check.

It is recommended that while an individual with a Police Information Check may keep the original police check, the volunteer coordinator or designate see the original document. The volunteer coordinator shall maintain originals of vulnerable sector checks.

Issues identified on the police record will be dealt with by the volunteer coordinator, the volunteer, and if necessary the chair. This will be treated as confidential information.

Volunteer police checks shall be renewed every two years from the date on the police check. Two options for renewal for regular police checks include getting a new police check and making a written declaration with a commissioner of oaths. A new Vulnerable sector check shall be required every two years.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 6.1 Create a group settlement plan. What are the duties and responsibilities of each team?
Begin to complete government forms, which are part of application.
- 6.2
 - a. Upon receiving approval from the SAH rep that we had demonstrated readiness to sponsor a family, a designated member of The CARR received government lists of BVOR refugee families. As soon as the government lists are sent, the CARR representative quickly selects possible families and sends our request to the government office in Winnipeg. Upon being matched with a family there is a short time line to confirm the request. Check government web site – currently 3 days to confirm, 10 days to submit the application to Ottawa for SAH signature and on to Winnipeg.
 - b. When applying for a family on a BVOR list, the group representative must reply to BVOR@rstp.ca; indicating your constituent group's name (CARR) and the case number(s) you are applying for in the subject line. You can ask for more than one case

in the same email. In the e-mail itself indicate that you are a member of a specific SAH group (Anglican Diocese of Ottawa). Copy the email to your SAH (refugee@ottawa.anglican.ca)

- 6.3 The BVOR program involves the completion of government forms about The CARR along with signatures from The CARR, our co-sponsor St. James and our SAH, the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa.
- 6.4 Currently the application package for a BVOR includes:
 - a. Undertaking/Application to Sponsor – Undertaking to Sponsor Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad IMM5373 (08-2015) E;
 - b. Sponsor Assessment – IMM5492 (05-2015) E - signed by sponsor;
 - c. Sponsor Assessment – IMM5492 (05-2015) E - signed by co-sponsor;
 - d. Settlement Plan – Sponsorship Agreement Holder or Constituent Group – IMM 5440 (10-2009) E;
 - e. Attachment to IMM5440E Settlement Plan;
 - f. Document Checklist IMM 5437 (05-2015) E.
- 6.5 Verify that you are using current version of government forms on the Government of Canada web site for each application.
- 6.6 The private sponsorship program requires extensive information regarding the family being sponsored in addition to information about The CARR.
- 6.7 For private sponsorships, the University of Ottawa Refugee Sponsorship Support Program connects groups with pro-bono lawyers to assist with the completion of a refugee family's application and documentation.
- 6.8 Completing the refugee family's application involves much interaction with the family. This is accomplished with the assistance of local interpreters and/or family members. Each adult has a 14-page questionnaire to complete which 'tells his or her life story.' Documentation (photocopies of passports, birth, marriage, education, training, military service, previous marriage/divorce) needs to be obtained and officially translated. Each accompanying child's information is needed on an individual application on an abbreviated application form. The questionnaire and supporting documentation are forwarded to our lawyer. The lawyer makes recommendations where gaps are noted or lawyer is satisfied that 'the story' is complete. The lawyer then transfers the information onto government forms. It is reviewed for accuracy by the family, and then reviewed by an immigration law specialist at the law firm.
- 6.9 The family application and documentation are added to The CARR documentation (similar to BVOR CARR forms) to complete the application package. These are then forwarded to our SAH for approval, signature and sending to the government.

6.10 Then we wait.

7. Translators

Currently CARR is working with three (amazing) volunteers who are fluent in the Arabic language.

Informal daily interpretation is needed until the family becomes fluent in English.

Written translations are needed for documentation. This includes family resources, and correspondence with applicants for private sponsorship.

Paid professional translators are utilized for legal and medical appointments. (Immigrant Women Services Ottawa)

8. Information for Family – Family Binder

Volunteers collected information useful for the family coming to the community. With the assistance of our volunteer translators it was translated into Arabic. The binder contains both English and Arabic versions of information for ease of use by family and support team.

Information includes:

- Description of CARR, ways we can help
- How Government of Canada helps with BVOR program
- What the volunteers from CARR, St. James will do
- Respecting the family's privacy
- Preparing the family for life in Canada beyond sponsorship year
- Family rights and responsibilities during their first year in Canada
- Money and Finances
- Learning English, looking for work
- Living in Perth during sponsorship year

9. Essentials for the Family

Physical:

- Accommodation – housing
 - Appliances – stove, fridge, microwave, washer, dryer
 - Dishes, glasses, mugs and cutlery
 - Pots and pans
 - Blender/food processor
 - Can opener
 - Crockpot/slow cooker

- Furniture
 - Kitchen/dining table and chairs
 - Living room chairs & couch
 - Beds – headboards and mattresses/box springs
 - Bedside tables
 - Dressers
- Bedding – sheets, pillows, blankets, comforters
- Telephone – cell phone
- Internet
- Computer/laptop
- Food
 - Stocked pantry based upon diet/religion
 - Fresh fruit and vegetables
 - Fresh meat/fish if appropriate
- Clothing
 - Based upon time of year – best to acquire once gender and ages /sizes of family members is known
 - New pyjamas for first night
- Toiletries
 - Keep basic until family circumstances known – i.e. toothbrushes, shampoo etc.
- Bidet attachment for toilet
- First aid kit
- Diapers if infant(s) involved
- Age appropriate toys for children
- Craft supplies for children
- Books
 - Picture books for children
 - Pictorial dictionary
 - Dictionary containing both English/Arabic translation and vice versa or whatever appropriate language
- Family doctor/clinic
- Optometrist
- Dentist
- Hearing

Arrival:

- Small group to meet family upon arrival
- Interpreter
- Transportation for family and luggage to accommodation
- Car seat(s)/booster(s) as required
- Is the family staying a few days with someone or going directly to their new housing?
- Welcome basket – a nice gesture waiting for them upon arrival to their new home – contains some ‘extras’ or ‘treats’ - some ideas:

- Check recipes for country and religion and include appropriate spices, nuts, chocolate etc.
- Specialty tea and/or coffee
- Maple syrup (so Canadian)
- Nice notepad and pen
- Picture frame(s)
- Welcome Home sign in English and Arabic (or appropriate language)

Support Services:

- Interpreter
- Translation services
- Core group of volunteers for family interaction
 - Available whenever needed
 - Assist with adjustment
 - Assist with required forms/paper work
 - ESL
- Volunteer drivers for transportation to and from appointments
- Shoppers to assist with shopping
- Financial
 - Information regarding the Canadian Banking system
 - Bank account
 - Budget
 - Option of credit card
 - Volunteer to assist with banking
- Education
 - Schools approached once area of housing confirmed
 - ESL support for children in school
- Employment

Note: it is important to determine what is needed for the family and avoid accepting donations of items until a clear list has been established and only items on the list should be accepted.

This is not a comprehensive list of what might be required – it will vary for each family.

The CARR Acronyms

BVOR	Blended Visa Office-Referred Program
CARR	Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement
CCAS	Cross Cultural Adaptation Skills
CG	Constituency Group
ESL	English as a Second Language
IFHP	Interim Federal Health Plan
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PDCF	Perth and District Community Foundation
PR	Permanent Residency
RSTP	Refugee Settlement Training Program
SAH	Sponsorship Agreement Holder

APPENDIX A - Roles and Responsibilities

- **Fundraising:**

- Contacting, private business, local professionals, community organizations and residents to solicit donations
- Organizing and hosting fundraising events
- Social media campaigns

- **Financial management:**

Custodial management of funds (PDCF)

Sponsorship fund management:

- Tracking the funds needed vs. funds raised
- Securing financial statement for Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)
- Set up CARR's plan for distribution of funds to family
- Manage distribution of funds to family as per plan

Family finances:

- Assist family in setting up bank account
- Teach re credit and credit cards
- Identify available financial counselling services (if possible, in newcomer's language)
- Provide guidance on budgeting including fixed (i.e. rent, utilities, etc.) and variable costs (food, etc.)

- **Communication:**

- Create and manage Web page
- Prepare press releases
- Set up media interviews
- Advertise CARR events
- Social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter, e-blasts)
- Provide link with other municipalities (e.g., Lanark Highlands, Perth, Tay Valley, etc.)

- **Settlement Services:** Responsibilities defined under Team Leaders' Roles

TEAM LEADERS:

Documentation - *work with Adaptation and Settlement team to:*

- Identify and complete documentation needed for sponsorship application process (e.g., settlement plan, etc.)

- Identify and complete Settlement-related forms: (SIN Card, benefits (health care/OHIP card, child care benefits, etc.))
- Research relevant Canadian laws, rights and responsibilities

Housing, furnishing and clothing:

Housing:

- Prepare temporary/interim housing before newcomers arrive in case little notice is given
- Scout affordable and appropriate housing before newcomers arrive (I.E., near schools, stores, with culturally sensitive landlord, etc.), -

Note: If possible, involve newcomers in the final permanent housing decision

Furnish, stock & set up home(s) for newcomers.

- Stock and secure **furniture** and other supplies needed to set up home
- Stock **food supplies** needed (include some familiar foods to ease stress in adaptation process)
- Collect affordable and/or gently used **clothing** (including winter) for each family member

Welcome:

- Meet newcomers at airport
- Deal with customs and immigration
- First and subsequent contact for several months (shared with adaptation and settlement team).
- Assist with school registration

Shopping:

Food:

- Teach them how/ where to shop for food (Take into account their need for national foods in diet)-
- Introduce them to Canadian food and cooking

Clothing:

- Help newcomers buy clothing and introduce them to second hand and bargain stores
- Advise them on how to dress appropriately for Canadian climate

Religion:

- Locate appropriate places of worship (as required)

- Ensure meetings with newcomers are held in locations and in a manner that is sensitive to the newcomers' religious & cultural practices (e.g. meetings held in a Christian church may not be appropriate – also consider gender-related issues.)

Transportation: Provide transportation to:

- Medical/dental, health-related appointments,
- Specialty grocers,
- Schools & training,
- Job interviews,
- Mosque, Church, (as applicable)

Child Care

- Identify culturally sensitive and affordable childcare options in your community.

Explain re sponsorship process (our roles & responsibilities vs. theirs)

Cross-cultural and Adaptation skills

- Research newcomers' culture, religion, history, communication styles, etc.
- Raise community awareness of newcomers culture and learn how our own cultural assumptions may affect and create stress
- Design and deliver a **Cross-cultural Adaptation program** for newcomers and selected CARR and community members which will allow participants to contrast and compare difference in culture and communication styles/practices of both newcomers and local community including: history, culture, climate, industry, customs, religion, arts, sports, health, education, employment situation, role of women, expectations, etc.) in order to promote mutual understanding and minimize culture shock.

Canadian laws, rights and responsibilities:

- Teach newcomers re applicable Canadian laws, and introduce them to local law enforcement to build their trust in our legal system.
- Teach the newcomers re the their rights and responsibilities as Permanent Canadian residents

Language Needs:

Translation/interpretation

- Find interpreters/translators (as required) check with settlement agencies, multicultural councils, etc.) Note: take into account, age, gender, political sensitivities

English as Second Language (ESL):

- Research available ESL courses (check with area's Settlement agencies)
- Identify teachers (Note: local ESL teachers have been identified)

- Help newcomers choose appropriate course (e.g., courses focused on language in the workplace, schools and/or managing a household, etc.)

Health:

- Health Benefits:
- Assist new comers apply for health benefits /OHIP,
- Ask local Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) contact for info on Interim Federal Health (IFH).
- Find family doctor, dentist, optometrist and nutritional counselling (as needed) and explain medical system.
- Determine which vaccinations are needed for school registration (as applicable).
- In case of special medical needs, research sources of special equipment, care and support.
- In case of trauma (check Canadian Victims of Torture website i.e., www.ccvvt.org to learn about torture and treatment options), social and emotional counselling needs; identify and secure services as needed.

Education, Job Training and Employment:

- Ensure newcomers are enrolled in appropriate ESL programs (see above)
- Research and assess education and training needs of newcomers (e.g. ESL, day care, schools, colleges, universities)
- Provide access to job search techniques training as required
- Arrange for driver training (as needed)
- Arrange for child care (as needed)
- Research employment and counselling services tailored to newcomers' needs
- Research services available from Employment Resources Centers (e.g., internet, fax, computers, printers, workshops on job search & counselling services)
- Research employment preparation workshops, e.g. resume writing, interview skills & securing a job in Canada)
- Provide practical help and emotional support
- Research applicable re-qualifications procedures for newcomers with professional skills & education.

“The most significant factor is the generosity of spirit so evident in the welcoming of our new neighbours to our community”.

Thank you