HIAS Pennsylvania
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Refugee Orientation & Community Resource Coordinator
Haverford House Fellowship 2016-2017

Mission & Organization Overview
Based on the value of “welcoming the stranger, HIAS Pennsylvania provides legal, resettlement and supportive services to immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from all backgrounds in order to assure their fair treatment and full integration into American society. HIAS Pennsylvania advocates for just and inclusive public policies and practices.

HIAS Pennsylvania (HIAS PA) serves over 2000 individuals each year of all ethnicities, and religion through the following 4 programs:

- **Citizenship Assistance for Vulnerable Adults Program** provides application legal services and classes to elderly and vulnerable refugees and immigrants who are seeking to naturalize.

- **HIAS PA’s Immigration Legal Services** helps individuals navigate the different federal agencies, especially the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. In this program, we serve the most vulnerable including **unaccompanied and abused immigrant youth, survivors of interpersonal violence and trafficking, victims of torture, and isolated Latino immigrants**.

- **Our Asylee Outreach Project** links those granted asylum to social and refugee services, conducts self-sufficiency workshops for asylees, and provides immigration legal services and public benefits advocacy to asylees.

- **HIAS PA’s Refugee Resettlement Services** provides case management, acculturation and a pathway to self-sufficiency for the newest arrivals. During the past fiscal year we resettled 167 refugees including ethnic minorities who fled Burma/Myanmar, ethnic Nepalese driven out of Bhutan, religious minorities from the former Soviet Union, as well as families from Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We assisted one Syrian refugee family. **HIAS PA seeks a Haverford House Fellow for this program.**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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<tr>
<th>Job Title:</th>
<th>Refugee Orientation &amp; Community Resource Coordinator</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program:</td>
<td>Refugee Resettlement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
<td>Director of Refugee Programming and Planning, Carrie Fox-Kline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cfoxkline@hiaspa.org">cfoxkline@hiaspa.org</a>, (215) 832-0920</td>
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<td>Hours:</td>
<td>Four days per week over approximately 50 weeks</td>
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Background Information

The world is facing a global refugee crisis. Wars, conflict and persecution have forced 59.5 million (compared to 42.5 million in 2011) to flee their homes and seek refuge and safety elsewhere, according to a June, 2015 report from the UN refugee agency. Much of the increase is due to the war in Syrian, but other areas of conflict, including Sudan, Congo and Eritrea, have resulted in displacement. This represents the largest number of refugees the world has known since World War II. Of that number 19.5 million people were classified as refugees, while 40 million people were internally displaced or in the process of seeking asylum. Many of these refugees have been living in camps where they have poor living conditions and no opportunities for work or education. Every year, the US provides resettlement opportunities to thousands of the world’s most vulnerable refugees, in a program endorsed by the President (and every President since 1980) through an annual determination. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), which resettled 70,000 during FY 2014, reflects our own tradition as a nation of immigrants and refugees.

Through our national affiliate, HIAS PA has a contract with the Department of State to resettle refugees in the Philadelphia area, giving them an opportunity for a better life. While some refugees join family members already residing in the area who assist with housing and economic integration, most arrive in the United States having no established family or community. As part of the agreement with the Department of State, resettlement agencies are responsible to provide a broad range of social services and case management to help them achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. The HIAS PA Refugee Resettlement Program works to find a safe, secure and affordable home for the family; greets the family at the airport and provides for a warm meal that night; assists in applying for social security cards and public benefits; facilitates access to a thorough medical screening; conducts community orientation and case management; and helps refugees to become self-sufficient through employment and education.

Successful integration of refugees is critical both for the refugees themselves and to maintain public support for the refugee program. Increasingly, refugee resettlement is being criticized, and certain public officials seek to close our doors to refugees. Thus, it is essential that agencies such as HIAS PA provide quality services to refugees and build bridges between members of the public and new refugees.

This Fellowship enhances the early integration of refugees by stressing financial literacy and food security. Financial knowledge has become not just a convenience but an essential survival tool. Without an appreciation of money concepts and a baseline understanding of financial options, people are likely to make poor financial choices—and, in the worst cases, face homelessness after being stateless. In addition to understanding the household budget, there are also more concrete things that refugee families must quickly learn upon arrival such as how to open a bank account, how to write a check, what a credit card is, and more.

Refugees resettled from developing countries are at elevated risk of food insecurity because they initially face high levels of underemployment or unemployment, language barriers, shopping difficulties, and a tremendous shift in the budget and management of household resources. Finding nutritious food on a limited budget is a key element of food security and integration. Resettled refugees often arrive to Philadelphia with little knowledge of nutrition or available food choices. Refugees come from countries in which the food, diet and health care systems can be quite different from those in the US. The large groups of refugees currently being resettled by HIAS PA are coming from an agrarian background. Bhutanese refugees, for instance, have been residing in camps in Nepal for 18
years and are experienced farmers. Similarly, most refugees from Burma, Sudan, Congo or Eritrea are also farmers and have been living in refugee camps for many years. In these camps, they become dependent upon food rations.

Using volunteers to supplement the work of the staff has two advantages. First, refugees who are mentored by volunteers usually feel more welcomed, gain more confidence and integrate more quickly into life in Philadelphia. Second, volunteers who are exposed to refugees soon because strong supporters of refugee programs because they see firsthand what refugees have had to overcome, and also the potential of refugees to contribute to the region. Thus including a volunteer component in this Fellowship serves both individual refugees, but also has a larger public impact.

The position is an excellent opportunity to gain entry into the unique and special activities related to resettling refugees, many of whom have lived in camps or were forced out of their native countries due to war, persecution or conflicts.

**Summary of Responsibilities**

The Refugee Orientation & Community Resource Coordinator will be responsible for the following:

1. **Financial Literacy (20% of time)**
   a. With the refugee team, coordinate the scheduling and implementation of financial literacy sessions for each newly arrived refugee family.
   b. Support newly arrived refugees with setting up a bank account.
   c. Keep a record of attendance at each orientation session and ensure appropriate documentation in client files.
   d. Update existing curricula as necessary.
   e. Conduct informal evaluations on the quality of the educational sessions, the retention of information, and the relevance of topics.

2. **Food Security (30% of time)**
   a. Ensure eligible parents of young children are enrolled in the Women’s Infants and Children’s (WIC) Program—a program for low income parents to receive formula, milk and other nutritious food for children under 5.
   b. Research community focused markets close to the resettled communities identifying those that accept food stamps and where they can find relevant foods/clothing.
   c. Provide hand-outs or other information (i.e. computer links/google spread sheet) that help refugees and/or volunteers and staff find food pantries, “green light pantries” which offer fresh vegetables and other resources offering free or low cost nutritious food.
   d. Support the maintenance and/or expansion of refugee gardening efforts in the Northeast region of Philadelphia.

3. **Increase Integration through Volunteerism (40% of time)**
   a. With refugee team, provide orientations to community members who seek to volunteer.
   b. Match volunteers who wish to be mentors to refugee families.
   c. With refugee team, host 2 volunteer feedback sessions during the year.
   d. Coordinate 1-2 major events, including Refugee Thanksgiving, which brings refugees together and increases visibility and importance of refugee resettlement.
IV. Other Organizational Requirements (10% of time)
   a. Willingness to undergo Child Abuse and Criminal Clearances mandated by state law for individuals who have contact with children.
   b. Represent the agency to other stakeholders, service providers, and the general public.
   c. Actively participate in supervision, weekly case meetings and other department, agency, community and provider meetings, as needed.
   d. Attend regular conferences and in-service trainings.
   e. Other duties as assigned by Director of Refugee Programming and Planning

Job Qualifications

- A commitment to social justice and refugees and an interest in working with diverse communities
- Ability to work independently and as a member of a team.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skill in English required.
- Strong computer skills, including Microsoft Office applications, with accuracy in data entry.
- Ability to work with a multicultural caseload and ethnically diverse staff.
- Initiative and communication skills required to build working relationships with a wide range of agencies and individuals.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment in decision making practices.
- Strong organizational and time management skills.
- High degree of skill in doing detailed reporting and maintaining accurate case files.
- Ability to identify challenges and provide recommendations for solutions.
- Willingness to learn about resources in the City of Philadelphia (as well as surrounding counties) and to travel on public transportation throughout the City.
- Valid driver’s license preferred.

Work Environment
HIAS PA’s refugee team has considerable experience in working with interns and Fellows. Fellows receive support through individual supervision, attendance at staff development and educational meetings, and team meetings. HIAS PA’s staff is very productive, but also seeks to create a warm, family-like atmosphere which values each person’s contributions and ideas. The Fellow will have her/his own desk, phone and e-mail.