Serving Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Human Trafficking Survivors in Southern CA



International Institute of Los Angeles

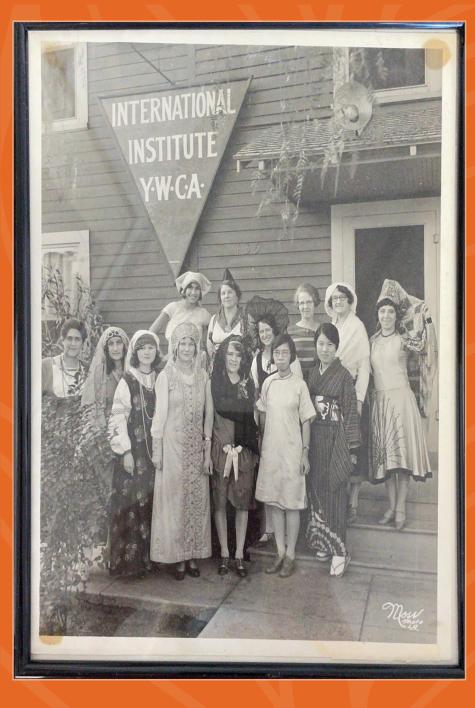
Cambria Tortorelli President & CEO

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Overview

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- Helpful definitions
- A Few Key Facts
- Setting the Scene in the US
- What is happening in SoCal
- How you can help

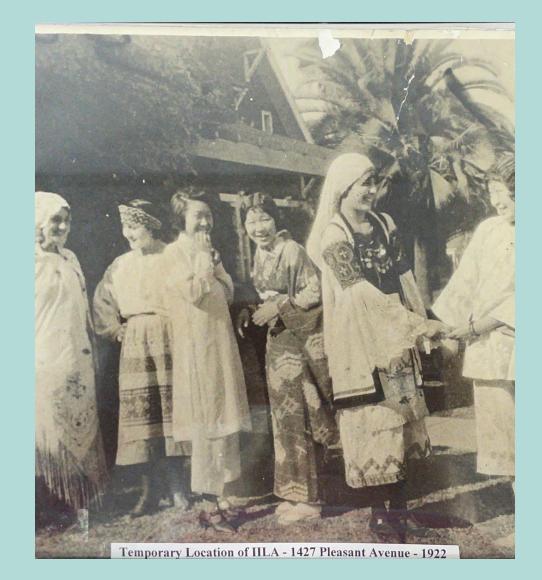




WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LOS ANGELES?

A (VERY) BRIEF HISTORY

- IILA was founded in 1914 by the YWCA to help women and girl immigrants arriving from Europe and East Asia.
- Our mission is to help individuals and families achieve selfsufficiency and provide community leadership with the goal of cultivating and promoting multicultural understanding.





IILA Today

- We serve more than 50,000 immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, survivors of human trafficking and low-income working families and children every year through:
 - Network of pre-schools and in home childcare providers;
 - Immigration legal services;
 - Pre-school nutrition program;
 - Case management for survivors of human trafficking and unaccompanied minors;
 - Refugee, asylum seeker and asylee resettlement, employment
 - Other social supports including transportation subsidies and assistance with utility debt.



Some helpful definitions

Who is a Refugee?

• Someone who has fled their own country because they are at risk of serious human rights violations and persecution there. Refugees have a right to international protection. Refugees entering the US have been processed by the US State Department and have been granted a green card.

Who is an Asylum Seeker?

• A person who has left their country and is seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country, but who hasn't yet been legally recognized as a refugee and is waiting to receive a decision on their asylum claim. Seeking asylum is a human right. Asylees are people who have received asylum.

Who is a Migrant?

• Someone who is staying outside of their country of origin but who is not a refugee or asylum seeker. Many migrants leave their country because of poverty, political unrest, gang violence, war, natural disasters or other serious circumstances.



108.4 MILLION

people have been forcibly displaced due to conflict, persecution or natural disasters.



refugees globally.

56,771

people have died while migrating between countries since 2014.

ONLY 24%

of refugees are hosted by high-income countries.

(Sources: IOM, UNHCR)

Setting the Scene in the USA

- Since 1980 and passage of Refugee Act, US has admitted over 3 million refugees.
- President Biden has authorized the US to accept 125,000 refugees in FY 23-24 (starting in October).
- This does not include Ukrainian refugees admitted under the U4U program or 30,000 per month Haitians, Cubans, Nicaraguans or Venezuelans permitted to enter as parolees. All groups must have a US sponsor.
- Continuing to resettle the 75,000 Afghans who arrived in 2021 and 2022 and the thousands of Afghan SIVs who are now arriving.
- 10 national refugee resettlement agencies manage networks of local affiliates who are responsible for resettling refugee arrivals.



Refugee Resettlement in SoCal

- IILA is one of only FOUR refugee resettlement agencies serving LA, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura Counties.
- Refugees are assigned by the State Department to USCRI, our national partner agency.
- IILA is expecting to resettle 450 refugees this fiscal year.





What happens when a refugee arrives in their new community ?



IILA's is responsible for assisting with their initial resettlement (30-90 days)

Reception and Placement case management responsibilities include:

- Contact/coordinate with US Tie—if there is one
- Arrange temporary/permanent housing
- Disburse refugee grant (\$1,325 per person)
- Enroll in public benefits, including CalFresh and MediCal
- Provide community orientation and referrals
- Enroll in employment services
- Assist with school registration
- Arrange for Refugee Health Screenings
- Assist with accessing medical care

GOAL OF THE PROGRAM IS TO HELP REFUGEES BECOME SELF SUFFICIENT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

How does IILA serve survivors of human trafficking?

- HT survivors are all foreign born and include babies and children.
- Most HTS are labor trafficked with a smaller percentage sex trafficked. A small number are both labor and sex trafficked.
- HTS receive case management services and assistance with enrolling in federal and state benefits.
- They also receive the following assistance:
 - Housing
 - Employability services
 - Mental health screening and therapy
 - Medical care
 - Legal Services



How can you help?

- Donate to our Refugee, Afghan or Ukrainian Funds.
- Host a fundraiser or donation drive (hygiene kits, household items, computers, cell phones, etc.).
- Raise awareness in your community about our obligation to help persecuted people fleeing for their lives.
- Volunteer to assist a family or individual resettle (financial mentoring, assistance with resume writing and interview skills, and finding employment, etc.).
- Become a Sponsor Group through Welcome Corps.



Welcome Corps

- The Welcome Corps is a new service opportunity for Americans to welcome resettling refugees.
- It was launched by the federal government in January 2023
- With training and support, sponsor groups take on the responsibilities of resettling refugees.
- <u>https://welcomecorps.org/about/</u>

QUESTIONS?

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