

# making every penny count

PHILANTHROPY REPORT | AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2023

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT: WELCOMING THE STRANGER!

### Pilot Program Sets Asylum Seekers up for Success

Just one year ago at this time, CCM was working feverishly to finish preparations to welcome families to the Asylum Seeker Transitional Housing Program (ASTHP). This pilot project was created to support asylum seekers living in a dedicated transitional housing site in Southern Maine. Recognizing our 40+ years of experience successfully resettling refugees here in Maine, the State of Maine and the City of Portland asked for our assistance in welcoming and providing social services to a group of families seeking asylum in the United States. Here are some key results through June 30, 2023:

CCM has served **107** asylum-seeking families representing more than **440** individuals. The population is **46%** adults and **54%** children. Most families have undergone long arduous journeys from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Haiti, and other regions.



**52** adults and working age children have applied for Employment Authorization Documents (EADs), and **23** have received their EAD.



Biddeford Adult Education held more than **100** classes for this group, onsite and off, and CCM assisted adults in classes at Portland Adult Education to continue.

As of June 2023, **99%** of the population successfully submitted applications for asylum or Temporary Protective Status; **98%** completed intakes with Quality Housing Coalition, and **19%** of eligible families secured permanent housing in a particularly challenging market.



**100%** of families were assessed and aided to apply for the Department of Health and Human Services benefits for which they were eligible, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Maine Care, and York County Women, Infants, and Children program.



**131** school-aged children were assisted with school enrollment.

Most importantly, the other service providers and local community has been exceptionally welcoming and supportive of these families. The ASTHP team networked with community-based programs to provide additional services and customized programs. From adding bus stops to the regional transportation plan to organizing clothes drives and holiday parties, we are grateful for neighborly kindness that has helped ensure a successful start for the families.

### How do Asylum Seekers differ from Refugees?

An **asylum seeker** is anyone who has fled persecution in their home country and is seeking a safe haven in a new country but has not yet been granted asylum (sanctuary). Asylum seekers wishing to remain in the United States must file applications within a year of arrival. Under current federal law, an asylum seeker can receive permission to work in the U.S. 150 days after an asylum application is submitted. There is pending legislation (S. 3665) sponsored by Senator Susan Collins in the Senate and Representative Chellie Pingree in the House (H.R. 6693) to reduce this time to 30 days after an application is filed.

A **refugee** is any person who is outside their country of origin and unable or unwilling to return there or to avail themselves of its protection on account of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular group, or political opinion. (as defined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The United States decides which refugees to resettle within our borders. The State Department oversees the admission of each refugee to the states after they have been granted refugee status following individual interviews by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials, have passed extensive inter-agency security background checks with multiple national security and intelligence agencies, and have passed health screenings. Refugees are eligible to work upon arrival and may stay in the United States indefinitely.

Visit our FAQs page at [refugeeimmigrationservicesccm.org](https://refugeeimmigrationservicesccm.org)

# HELP US Put Children First!



## WHY WE GOLF

*"My daughter has always woken up asking if she is going to school and if I said 'yes', she would say: 'I love school so much'. St. Elizabeth's welcomed my daughter and me as immigrants and they understood that everything was new to us. They provide learning, play, hospitality, discipline, stability, and peace of mind. At St. Elizabeth's, all the smiles of life reflected back, and I knew it was different. I honor and respect the care staff have given to my children."*  
- G., a Parent in Portland

More than just a fun day on the links, our 21st Annual Golf Classic raises critical scholarship funds for low-income working families at our nationally-accredited Child Development Centers, St. Elizabeth's in Portland and St. Louis in Biddeford. This year's tournament takes place Monday, September 18, and you can help us Put Children First!

- Be a player!
- Sponsor a hole!
- Volunteer at the event!
- Make an in-kind donation for our live auction!

FMI visit [www.ccmaine.org/golf](http://www.ccmaine.org/golf) or contact Donor Relations Manager, Denise Picard at (207) 523-1188 or [dpicard@ccmaine.org](mailto:dpicard@ccmaine.org).

## New Leadership at Catholic Charities USA

After an extensive search, Kerry Alys Robinson, a renowned expert in Catholic leadership and philanthropy, has been named the next president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA).

When Robinson begins her tenure at CCUSA on August 23, 2023, she will become only the second layperson and second woman to guide the domestic humanitarian work of the Catholic Church in the United States. Robinson will succeed Sister Donna Markham OP, Ph.D., who is retiring this summer after nine years of transformational leadership.

"Catholic Charities Maine is a member of the CCUSA Network, and I was honored to be a part of the search committee tasked with filling the role that Sister Donna Markham held as a groundbreaking leader," Catholic Charities Maine CEO, Steve Letourneau said. "Sister Donna has also been a great friend to CCM. I am confident that Kerry Alys Robinson, who has devoted her professional life to advocating for social justice, will be a stellar successor."

Robinson currently serves as an executive partner of Leadership Roundtable, an influential organization of laity, religious, and clergy working together to promote best practices and accountability in the management, finances, communications, and human resource development of the Catholic Church in the United States. At the invitation of the Vatican, she also has advised the Church on how to empower and engage women leaders. Robinson has been an advisor to and trustee of more than 25 grantmaking foundations, charitable nonprofits, and family philanthropies.



Read more at [ccmaine.org/news](http://ccmaine.org/news).

## Turning New Pages for New Mainer Children

CCM's Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS), in partnership with I'm Your Neighbor Books (IYNB), has recently begun providing a bag of books to each immigrant child who is resettled in Maine. IYNB is a non-profit with a mission to share and engage with children's books depicting Immigrant and new generation families, build the welcoming skills of long-term Americans, and create a crucial sense of belonging for New Arrivals.

*"Books offer a place where the reader's inner joy and grief are heard and where curious new ways and worlds can be imagined. I am so grateful that RIS Assistant Director Charles Mugabe shares my passion for welcoming children with the power of stories. As a refugee himself, Charles appreciates how books and learning provide the power to change the world."* - Kirsten Cappy, Executive Director of I'm Your Neighbor Books

For this initiative, Kirsten Cappy, Executive Director, IYNB, is working with RIS Assistant Director Charles Mugabe to curate books set in each child's home culture, a gift that can help bring comfort while the child experiences an often-chaotic new world.



## Community Sponsor Spotlight

Our Community Partners program is a way for local businesses to provide year-long support for our work empowering Maine's most vulnerable people and strengthening local communities. This month we're shining a spotlight on our **Crystal** level partners whose commitment makes our mission possible. We thank **Cross Benefit Solutions**, **Systems Engineering**, and **BGA Financial** for their dedicated support and belief that working together we can make lasting changes in our communities!



Help us go green and make your donation dollars go further

by emailing [development@ccmaine.org](mailto:development@ccmaine.org) with "subscribe" in the subject line to receive future newsletters via email.