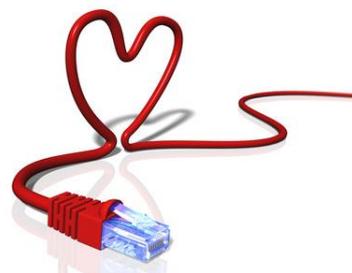


# Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees (POWR)

## A Parish Volunteer Kit

April 1, 2015



### Presenter:

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# A Parish Volunteer Kit

By Daniel Sturm, MRS Special Projects Manager

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# Introduction

## Critical Role of Volunteers

*“Catholic Charities Jacksonville has increased its capacity for helping newly arrived refugees through the POWR program. Fifteen parishes responded to our outreach and four established refugee ministries. We created lesson plans for all students and brought together a solid corps of volunteers.”*

Program Manager in Jacksonville, Florida

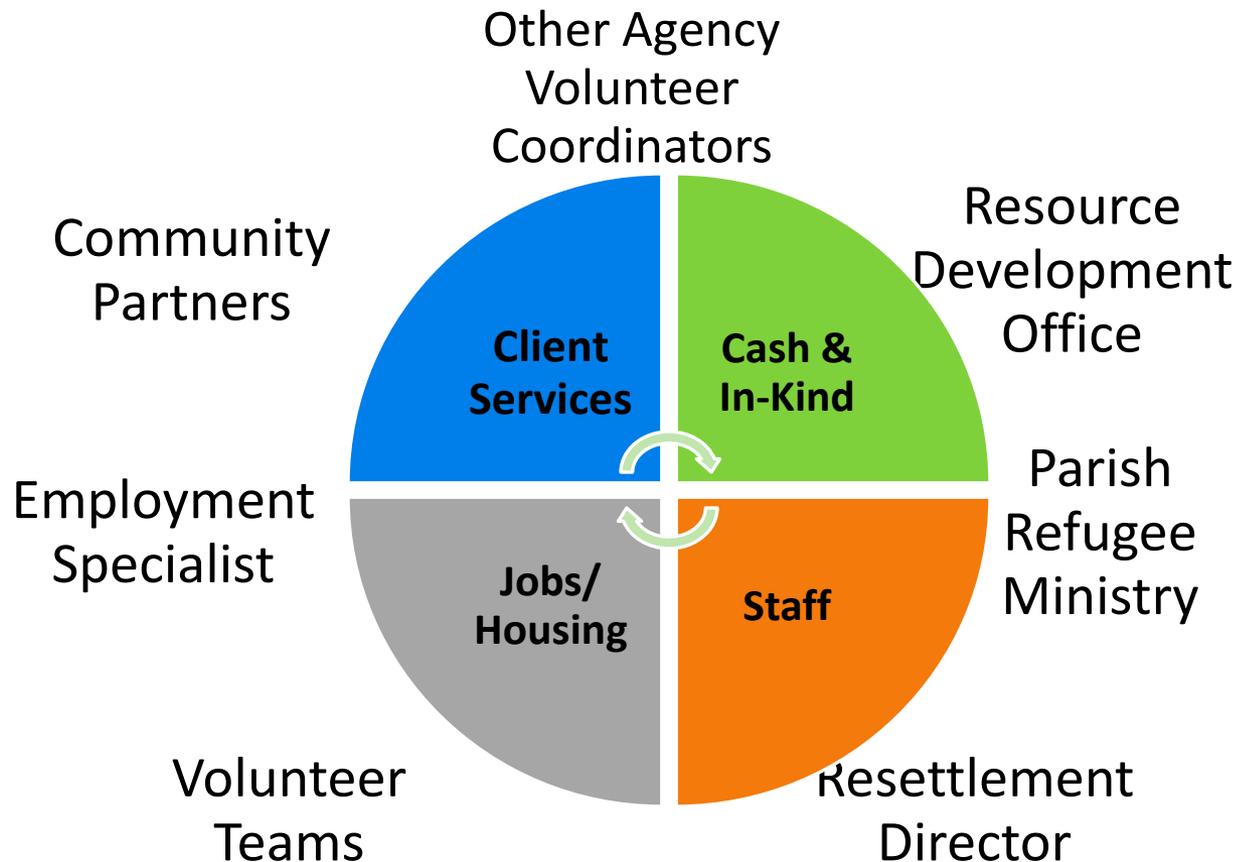
*“Catholic Charities Atlanta received an additional \$10,000 to support the Refugee Camp Immersion Project from the Nissan Foundation. The Nissan grant, combined with POWR funds helped make the project a success that we hope to build upon in the future. POWR allows us to make significant efforts to rebuild and redevelop relationships with area parishes.”*

Program Manager in Atlanta, Georgia



# Needs Assessment

## #1: Resource Mapping & Goals





## #2: Establishing Volunteer Tasks

**The sky is the limit when it comes to identifying potential volunteer tasks. Single out issues that best match areas of need and your volunteers' skills.**

- Apartment set-up
- Bike repair
- Car donations
- Career orientation
- Citizenship classes
- College financial aid applications
- Dental work
- Doctor's visits
- Donation drives
- Employment mentoring
- ESL instruction
- Events planning
- Fellowship / friendship
- Financial literacy education
- Grant writing
- Health education
- Helping maternity clients
- Hiring refugees
- House hunting / apartment search
- Individual and family counseling
- Job search
- Legal assistance
- Library visits
- Material design
- Medical appointments scheduling
- Newspaper articles
- Office assistance
- Press releases
- School supplies
- Shopping
- Transportation
- Tutoring for school-aged children,
- Videography
- Warm meals
- Website management
- World Refugee Day





Migration &  
Refugee Services  
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# #3: Sample Initiatives

## POWR Program Projects (2010-14)

### Theme

#### Mock Camps:

*Raising Awareness*

#### Sewing Classes

*Improving Services*

#### Tea with Nurses:

*Healthcare*

#### Budgeting Classes:

*Financial Literacy*

#### Volunteer Video:

*Program Visibility*

#### Refugee Ambassadors:

*Donations, Service*

#### Refugee Storytellers:

*Empowerment, Visibility*

### Project Description

Students participating in the refugee [camp immersion project](#) walk through a simulated camp, station to station to get an idea of what life in a camp is like.

Refugees acquire marketable skills for self-employment. Parish volunteers teach sewing classes and organize donation drives.

In “Tea with a nurse,” Ursuline nurses come weekly to check in on clients with PTSD. This has led to a significant reduction in emergency room visits and calls to caseworkers.

Parishioners coach refugees on financial budgeting in partnership with a local college.

Powerful [storytelling](#) to increase program visibility and intensify its volunteer recruitment.

Project created new partnerships between POWR and area Catholic high schools. students served as Refugee Ambassadors and received service learning credits.

With training and financial support from regional PBS, 15 staff and clients to become videographers, tasked with [telling stories](#) about American life from a refugee perspective.

### Location

Louisville, Kentucky  
[dmihajlovic@archlou.org](mailto:dmihajlovic@archlou.org)

Buffalo, New York  
[ann.brittain@ccwny.org](mailto:ann.brittain@ccwny.org)

Cleveland, Ohio  
[txmrosko@clevelandcatholiccharities.org](mailto:txmrosko@clevelandcatholiccharities.org)

Rochester, Minnesota  
[khammell@ccwinona.org](mailto:khammell@ccwinona.org)

Jacksonville, Florida  
[Mkarolak@ccebjax.org](mailto:Mkarolak@ccebjax.org)

Indianapolis, Indiana  
[gcampo@archindy.org](mailto:gcampo@archindy.org)

Nashville, Tennessee  
[kbranson@cctenn.org](mailto:kbranson@cctenn.org)



# Designing Your Program

## Step 1: Volunteer Search

Involving parishes and other groups in your volunteer program is critical. With a broad network, you'll be able to match clients with friends, mentors and employers, while gaining new supporters.

Advocacy groups

**Americorps.org**

Business organizations

Chambers of Commerce

Corp. Community Affairs

**Deacons**

Employment Offices

Franciscan Cap Core

Graduate studies interns

**Hospitals and Clinics**

Humility of Mary

Ignatian Volunteers

**Jesuitvolunteers.org**

Junior Leagues

Kiwanis

**Knights of Columbus**

Libraries and nonprofits

Military military personnel

Parents' groups/PTAs

**Parishes and Churches**

Rehabilitation programs

Rotary Clubs

**Schools**

Scout troops

**Senior citizen groups**

Seniorcorps.org

Sororities/fraternities,

Student training programs

Unions & trade associations

United Way

Universities

University job offices

**Volunteermatch.org**

Volunteer recruitment fairs

Youth groups



# Involving Deacons

**If you wish to involve more parishes in resettlement work, you may wish to ask for the help of a deacon, whose major mission is the support of the poor.**

- The USCCB estimates that there are 18,725 permanent deacons in the U.S.
- Contact your [local diaconate diocesan](#) offices and/or your Bishop to state your case, and see if any deacons may be available/interested to join the cause.
- [Read more](#) about deacons in a report published by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.





# Search Resources

In addition to reaching out to parishes and other community partners, you can utilize the following social networks to identify volunteer with special skills:



[Jesuit Volunteer Corps](#) supports organizations that provide direct service to marginalized people by placing volunteers at schools, non-profits, and other sites around the world.



[Idealist.org](#) publishes this guide to volunteer management and recruitment.



[Volunteermatch.org](#) is an excellent online service matching interested volunteers with organizations that need help, across the U.S.



[Serviceleader.org](#) provides information for volunteer managers, including recruiting, screening, training, record keeping, volunteer recognition, etc. Includes samples of volunteer applications and other forms.



[Volunteercenter.net](#) provides materials free of charge, as direct downloads.





# Screening for Skills

**Your volunteer coordinator is well advised to cast a wide net. In addition to assembling parish teams, he/she should consider recruiting master's or doctoral interns majoring in subjects such as:**

- Anthropology
- Business
- Communications
- Counseling
- Education
- Foreign languages departments
- International Studies
- Journalism
- Medicine
- Political Science
- Public policy & administration
- Religious Studies
- Social Work
- Theology





# Background Screening

Your agency should develop a written policy documenting the volunteer screening process. This policy should include a list of screening elements each volunteer must complete, guidelines for selecting or disqualifying volunteers and clear instructions on interpreting a criminal history check.

## CCUSA and Verified Volunteers Partner to Offer Online Volunteer Screening Platform

[Verified Volunteers](#), the first-of-its-kind platform for volunteer background screening, and Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), which works to alleviate poverty through its network of local agencies around the country, announce their strategic alliance to make vetting volunteers safer, streamlined, and [less costly for CCUSA member agencies](#).





# #2: Volunteer Orientation

To maximize volunteer efforts, develop orientation materials that provide hands-on guidance, covering the following topics:

- Information about your program
- Understanding who refugees are
- Volunteer guidelines and procedures
- Volunteer roles and responsibilities

**SAMPLE**

## Roles of Volunteer/Family Mentor

- Be a consistent force in an individual's/family's life
- Give of your time, humor and happiness and less of material things
- Be a friend and ally if appropriate but not a case manager or interpreter
- Visit the family 1-2 times per week;
- Encourage the use of English, be an ear to listen & provide the opportunity to practice
- Take the initiative to help teach things that may need attention—i.e. how to dress
- Set boundaries—you want to be a friend, not a source of dependency

→ Excerpted from [Family Mentor Manual](#) (CCC Alaska)



# Family Mentor Manual

## POWR Program in Anchorage, Alaska



Family Mentor  
Manual



**Congratulations on becoming a volunteer!** This is an experience that not only brings joy but may also bring a change of perspective. Volunteering can also be time-consuming. Many parts of this guide are interactive in that they provide you the opportunity to reflect on what is expected of you, what you think you can do and what you are realistically able to do.

### Roles of Warm Meals Volunteers

- Members of the Warm Meals Committee will be in charge of providing warm meals or groceries for a newly arrived refugee family.
- Each week, the team will deliver two meals to the family. Meals are given for the first two weeks only.



Meals Committee  
Information Packet



Refugee Assistance & Immigration Services



Transportation Committee  
Information Packet



### Roles of a Transportation Volunteers

Transportation is one of the areas that RAIS staff consistently needs volunteer support. By providing transportation to and from special events, you are not only giving refugees a ride in your car. You also have the opportunity to get to know Anchorage's newest members. The people that you serve will be incredibly grateful.





# #3: Organizing Volunteers

**It's important to assign specific tasks. Consider the following approaches to organizing your volunteers, and see what works best for your program:**

## **1. Organized by project**

- Warm Meals
- Transportation
- Job Coaching/ESL

## **2. Organized by time period**

- Pre-Arrival: Welcoming Team Committee and/or Mentor Team Volunteers
- Post-Arrival: Refugee Mentor, ESL Mentor and/or Mentor Team

## **3. Organized by level of expertise**

- Pro-bono lawyers
- Nurses
- Graduate students of social work





# Sample Volunteer Guides

The following volunteer orientation manuals were developed with the support of the POWR program. Some of the guidance may be replicable in the context of your agency's parish volunteer program.

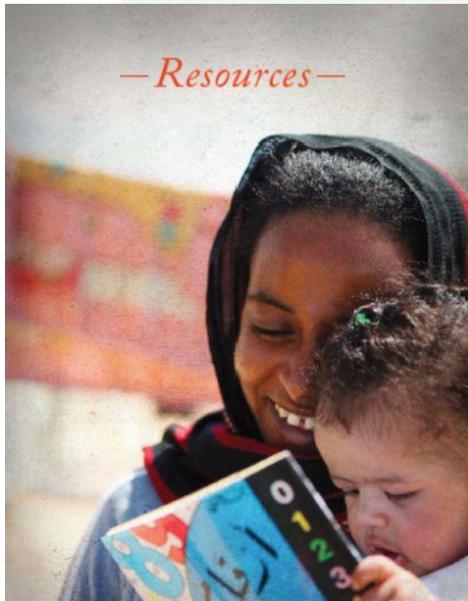
- [Family Mentor Manual](#) (Anchorage, Alaska)
- [Meals Committee Information Packet](#) (Anchorage)
- [Transportation Committee Information Packet](#) (Anchorage)
- [Volunteer Documentary](#) (Jacksonville, Florida)
- [USCCB Volunteer Management Resources](#) (Section on *Volunteerism*)

The following resources are available on MRS's [My Membership Blog](#):

- Mentor Program Manual (Charlotte, North Carolina)
- Welcoming the Stranger Refugee Apartment Sponsorship Kit (Charlotte)
- Refugee Ambassador Guide (Indianapolis, Indiana)
- Vol. 1 - Resettlement Services (Richmond, Virginia)
- Vol. 2 - Volunteer Roles and Job Descriptions (Richmond)
- Vol. 3 - Volunteer Service Agreement & Record (Richmond)

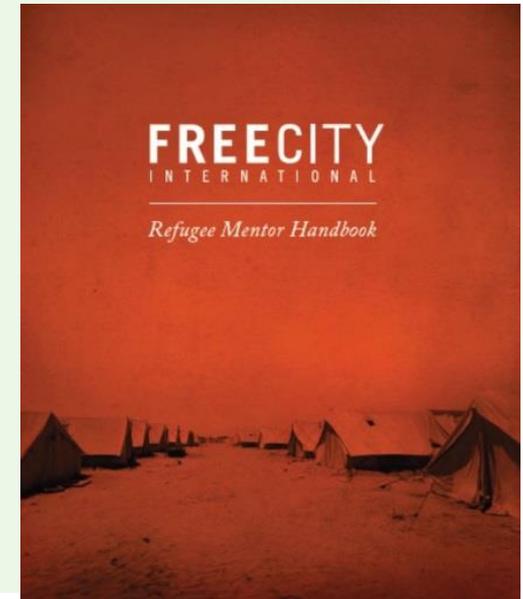


# Free City Mentor Handbook



The Refugee Mentor Handbook, from FreeCity International, includes background information on refugees and the resettlement process, guidelines for being a mentor and communicating across cultures, and supplemental resources.

[www.freecity.org/docs/mentor-handbook.pdf](http://www.freecity.org/docs/mentor-handbook.pdf)





# Volunteers Meeting Refugees

- Consider bringing a photo of yourself and your family or friends to your first meeting with the refugee family.
- Ask questions that show your interest in who they are and their life experiences, show them that you are not just there to teach them, but to be their friend.
- If possible, establish a few tangible things you can do to help your refugee family (i.e. English tutoring, job hunting, trips to the doctor). This might help the refugee see value in the relationship and get them invested.
- Make sure you communicate clearly about your preferred mode and amount of communication. Some refugees come from cultures where social interaction is constant and may think calling their mentor several times a day is normal.
- Be patient with the refugee and with yourself. There is no step-by-step method of building a strong cross-cultural relationship, each one is different and they all take



Excerpted from: [www.freecity.org/docs/mentor-handbook.pdf](http://www.freecity.org/docs/mentor-handbook.pdf)

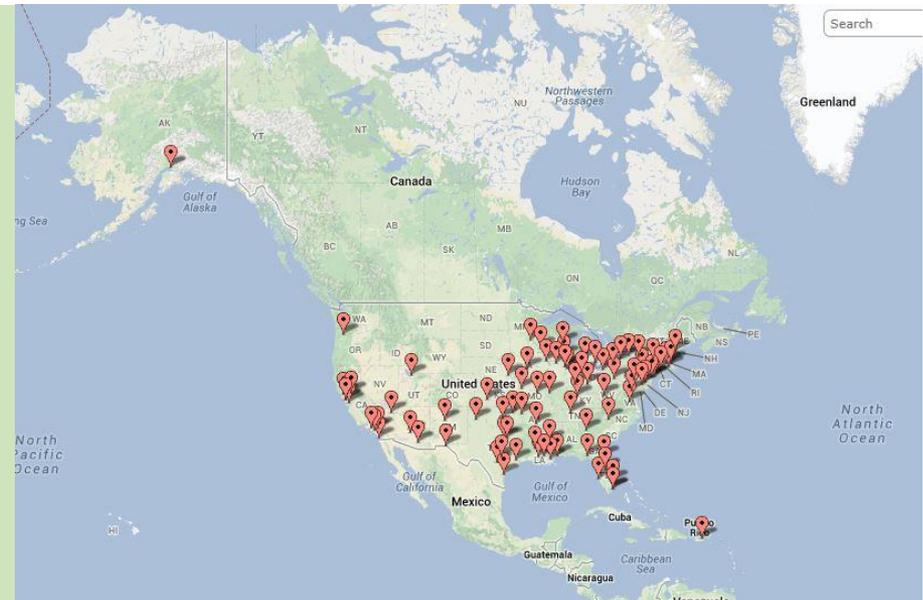


# Sustaining the Program

## Step 1: Tracking Outcomes

*Select POWR program accomplishments 2010-14:*

- Recruited **10,000 new volunteers.**
- Formed **more than 200 new parish and community partnerships.**
- Created **new social service and parish mentorship programs** tackling transportation, housing, jobs, food, language, legal and health care issues.



Map shows 2010-14 POWR Programs located in 43 dioceses.





# #2: Groups – Time –Interns

## 1. Volunteer Groups vs. Individuals

- Most people are more comfortable volunteering in groups.
- Rely on individual volunteers for specific contributions.
- Retirees offer wonderful contributions, but be prepared for more interaction.

## 2. Time Commitment

- Strive to involve long-term volunteers (> 6 months).
- Offer day-long volunteer events to engage individuals in service. On some occasions, these volunteers will decide to commit to long-term service.

## 3. Filling the Gaps with Interns

- Internships are a great way to utilize the talents of students while reaping the benefits of volunteer time.
- Interns are also more likely to complete their term of service when school credit is on the line.





# Volunteer Coordinator

## Re-thinking the Volunteer Coordinator (Anchorage, Alaska)

- “The volunteer coordinator has been appealing to individuals early in their career with an interest in global diversity. Unfortunately hard-working individuals such as these also end up joining the more international agencies. So we lost one coordinator to Teach for America and another to Peace Corps.”
- “We are re-thinking this position and wondering if it may be a better fit for an individual who comes to us from a church, for example a retiree. Or perhaps it is better for an individual with a service commitment such as an AmeriCorps member. Consequently, we are pursuing both directions.”

Program Manager in Anchorage, Alaska





# #3: Funding

## 1. Utilize [AmeriCorps Vista](#)

- AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. VISTA supports efforts to alleviate poverty by encouraging individuals from all walks of life to engage in a year of full-time service.
- Cost sharing is strongly encouraged. As a cost-share project, your organization contributes the living allowance – about \$10,690 – for a VISTA member.
- Richmond's POWR program utilized the grant as the cost share for one year. CCC had 6 VISTA members, and cost share covered the living allowance of one.

## 2. Community Foundations

- Find community foundations in your area by clicking on the [map](#).
- You can view a listing of all accredited community foundations on the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations [website](#).

## 3. [Corporate Foundations](#)





# Literature

## Further Reading

- Chmura Economics & Analytics: [\*The Economic Impact of Refugees in the Cleveland Area\*](#), 2013.
- Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, [\*Refugee Resettlement in the United States: An Examination of Challenges and Proposed Solutions\*](#), 2010.
- Georgetown University: [\*Refugee Crisis in America: Iraqis and Their Resettlement Experience\*](#), 2009.
- Peggy Halpern: [\*Refugee Economic Self-Sufficiency: An Exploratory Study of Approaches Used in Office of Refugee Resettlement Programs\*](#), 2008.
- Institute for Social and Economic Development: [\*Report of the Integration Working Group\*](#), 2007.
- Kristin Keller: [\*Refugee Resettlement in Oakland: Improving the Volunteer-Client Encounter\*](#), 2013.
- The Lewin Group: [\*The Evaluation of the Refugee Social Service \(RSS\) and Targeted Assistance Formula Grant \(TAG\) Programs\*](#). 2008.
- *The POWR Post Newsletter* (Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees E-Newsletter). MRS, 2010-14.
- Refugee Council USA: [\*Recommendations for U.S. Refugee Office of Resettlement\*](#), 2013.
- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: [\*Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity\*](#), 2000.
- Rita Thomson, [\*Experiences of Volunteers in Refugee Resettlement\*](#), 2014.





# A Parish Volunteer Toolkit

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