

# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Kansas

## REFUGEES IN KANSAS

The United States has been a leader in welcoming [refugees](#) who seek safety from persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Following World War II, the U.S. began welcoming refugees and over time the system has evolved to have a strong infrastructure centered on [public-private partnerships](#). Communities across the U.S. have recognized the important economic and social benefits of resettling refugees. Kansas residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Kansas communities. In 2013, organizations and communities across [Kansas](#) welcomed less than [1% of refugees arriving in the U.S. Of the 5066 newcomers to Kansas in 2013](#), 24 were asylees, 474 were resettled refugees, and 8 were Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients who served alongside U.S. troops.

Where are most refugees in Kansas from?

Bhutan  
Burma  
Sudan

## SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN KANSAS

In addition to [programming](#) to support refugees when they first arrive to the United States, the federal government provides monetary aid through grants to the state, Voluntary Agencies, and other refugee aid organizations for community and short-term refugee support. The [Kansas Department for Children and Families](#) serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state. Primary program services include cash and medical assistance, access to English as a second language classes, vocational and employment assistance. [Discretionary grants](#) are also awarded to private agencies for various other self-sufficiency programs.

FEDERAL FY14 ORR FUNDING TO KANSAS FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS (AS OF DECEMBER 2013)					
Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Matching Grant	Refugee Social Services	Preventive Health	Preferred Communities
\$1,960,528	\$835,000	\$418,000	\$ 385,276	\$97,252	\$225,000

Another service available to refugees in Kansas is the employment [Matching Grant Services](#), administered by Voluntary Agencies in the state. An alternative to public cash assistance, private agencies match federal contributions and provide intensive case management services to help refugees get employed and become self-sufficient within 120 days of arrival.

*[In Kansas City](#), a Kansas University graduate founded Harvest Hiring to help refugees find suitable employment.*

-Story appeared in the University Daily Kansan

## REFUGEES MAKE KANSAS STRONG

[Andrew Zarda](#) is the owner of Harvest Hiring and a 2009 School of Business graduate from Kansas University, and he is dedicated to helping refugees resettle in Kansas. He drives employees such as Shyam Khanal, a refugee from Bhutan, to and from temporary jobs in Kansas City, four to five days a week. Khanal has a daughter that is a senior in high school and interested in journalism. Bhutan is a small Buddhist country in between China and India. Many Bhutanese refugees are now in the United States after spending many years in Nepali displacement camps when trying to escape the government and conflict in the 1980s. Harvest Hiring is a contract labor company that trains and connects Bhutanese refugees with employers seeking additional labor. Zarda recognizes that

refugees in the United States have a hard time with challenges such as health care, education, and employment. Refugees in Bhutan are either born without citizenship in displacement camps or lost citizenship during the conflict in Bhutan. Coming from a country with a caste system, many are happy to receive their first wages in 20 years.

## LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN KANSAS

- EMM, Episcopal Wichita Area Refugee Ministry (EWARM), Central Kansas
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Wichita
- USCCB, Catholic Agency for Migration & Refugee Services, Garden City
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, Archdiocese of Kansas City, Northeastern Kansas

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees to aid in the resettlement of fellow refugees by providing a variety of direct services, increasing civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history.