ABOUT PANA

PANA was founded in the recognition that the unique needs of California’s growing refugee communities cannot be addressed by simple adjustments to existing ways of doing business.

Instead, PANA uses an integrated advocacy approach to its research, public policy, and community organizing in order to build and leverage deep community networks, develop community leaders, and establish a civic engagement infrastructure for the refugee community. In just the first year since its founding PANA has:

* Grown its membership to 1,000 individuals from eight countries of origin who speak over 13 languages.
* Conducted 50 house meetings, engaged over 600 people, and published a detailed report of survey results.
* Increased voter turnout among new and low-propensity voters who are of likely refugee background by almost 11% (40.4% of the people we contacted voted compared to 29.8% of those we did not contact).
* Launched a countywide campaign effort to develop policy proposals and models that improve and restructure resettlement to ensure the long-term stability and inclusion of refugee families.

Why We #ShowUp4Refugees

We envision a world where refugees are connected global citizens leading transcontinental movement work to advance deep freedom for all.

Refugees are people forcibly displaced due to violence or persecution. The United States has resettled over 3 million refugees since 1975. Since 2010, San Diego has resettled approximately 2,400 refugees a year. Eighty percent of those refugees are women and children. In fact, San Diego County is home to nearly half of all adult refugees and more than half of all refugee children in California. As a result, the refugee population in San Diego County comprises 2.54 percent of the total population.

While government and philanthropy have invested in services for refugees, there have not been commensurate investments in building agency, voice and power for refugee communities. Investment in power-building is an important complement to service funding if refugees are to achieve full inclusion in their new home. Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA) is dedicated to advancing the full economic, civic, and social inclusion of refugees to have a powerful voice in shaping the public policies that affect their lives.

“I want to help the community and ensure everyone is heard. It’s our job to work together to make this a better place to live. I called people and asked them questions, and went knocking doors to remind people to vote.

Before I did this, I didn’t really care for voting or really anything that has to do with the larger community, but once I got involved I saw how important it was to vote, and how much it matters for our community for all of us to ensure that we speak out if we want something to get done.”

Ilhan
PANA leader
Social Change Strategies

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT »

To increase civic engagement, PANA utilizes a statewide voter database management system (Political Database Inc.), leadership development and training, traditional and social media messaging, and community organizing. PANA has a regional approach to refugee civic engagement during and in between elections to build a visible and powerful refugee electorate. In our first civic engagement effort for the June 2016 primary, PANA:

- Contacted over 2,490 refugee voters.
- Identified 1,463 pledged voters.
- Turned out 695 voters.
- Trained 16 refugee leaders to become precinct leads and organize in their communities.

Additionally, PANA is working with California Calls on the African American Civic Engagement Project to strengthen Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE) as a core component of our social change strategy. IVE is a year-round effort that includes elements such as voter registration, education, Get-Out-The-Vote, voter protection, leadership development, advocacy and policy change. California Calls strengthens PANA’s organizational capacity by providing a three-year core support grant, support for canvass teams, voter data/information, trainings, and other supports.

PROACTIVE NARRATIVES »

PANA is working to counter anti-refugee and anti-Muslim rhetoric by developing a messaging campaign on newcomer contributions and exchanges that appeals to the public’s sense of justice, fairness and equity to influence important conversations and catalyze action.

The Newcomer.life platform will host a curated series of short video stories, a toolkit, and calls to action designed to educate the wider public on pre-migration and resettlement challenges facing refugees.

POLICY ADVOCACY »

Once resettled, refugees have up to eight months of support to find employment and rebuild their financial lives from scratch. Rather than supporting refugees in finding long-term, family-sustaining employment, the Refugee Resettlement Act of 1980 instead named “immediate employment” the prime objective. Unfortunately, refugees’ advanced degrees and other education achievements are rarely seen as valid here in the United States. As a result, an untold number of refugees and families are trapped into poverty and isolation.

Our goal is to leverage resources to create more realistic resettlement strategies for newcomer families that support investment in their long-term economic self-sufficiency. We will achieve this by:

- Developing and steering long-term campaign plans that advocate for critical changes to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, refugee employment social services funds, and funds received pursuant to the Refugee Targeted Assistance Program.
- Facilitating direct community input into the state and regional refugee plan.

CAPACITY BUILDING

PANA’s organizing model, research, and leadership development positions us for more advanced policy advocacy at the local, state, and national level. PANA expects to work on the 2020 US Census to capture a more representative picture of our large and diverse refugee community. This will enhance our Integrated Voter Engagement work and will afford PANA the opportunity to plug into national conversations around immigration and refugee resettlement.

EVALUATION AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

PANA is committed to evaluation as a core component of our work, utilizing best practice evaluation methods. We publish a biennial report that evaluates community progress, identifies community priorities, and informs campaign and policy priorities.