



THE WESTERN WELCOME

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOL 01 ISSUE 2

NEW NAME FOR THE CWS CALIFORNIA & COLORADO QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER!

As we continue to expand CWS services and offices in the Western U.S., we wanted to give our newsletter a name that reflects the work we are doing -- *The Western Welcome*. Our goal is to welcome asylum seekers and refugees and provide services to vulnerable populations throughout the Western U.S. Supported by partner organizations, faith-based & other groups, and individuals like you, we can and will do even more. There are many ways for you to get involved:

- 1) Volunteer by contacting a CWS community engagement rep. (see pg 5)
- 2) Donate funds to be used where needed most in your community
- 3) Attend or underwrite one of our free events like the ones being offered on or around World Refugee Day on June 20, 2024.
- 4) Host a third-party event at your home, office or org. to benefit CWS.
- 5) Collect in-kind items to donate.

Our team is ready to receive your emails and calls. Please reach out to us. If you would like to share your thoughts and opinions, please click on our survey below!

[Take Survey.](#)

www.cwsorangecounty.org
www.cwsnorcal.org

VISION

CWS's vision is a world where everyone has food, voice and a safe place to call home.

MISSION

CWS's mission is to transform communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster.

EXPANSION TO COLORADO

Following the successful opening of our SoCal office in Garden Grove and our NorCal office in Walnut Creek, CWS opened the West Region's newest office in downtown Fort Collins, Colorado, this spring.

Please feel free to refer others you may know living in the Colorado area who are passionate about our mission to our new Fort Collins Office Director, Kristy Beachy-Quick, kbeachyquick@cwsglobal.org or 720-682-5723



ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINEE
DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM

20 DAYS IN MARIUPOL



CWS Invites You To Reserve Your Spot At Our World Refugee Day Events In June



Cultural Festival & Open House

Saturday, June 22

FREE CELEBRATION

2024 WORLD
REFUGEE DAY

CWS | Fort Collins

RSVP REQUESTED
NOT REQUIRED

NOON- 4 P.M.
For schedule SCAN



Register: Using QR Code
Contact: kbeachyquick@
cwsglobal.org
Call: 720-882-5723

THE
Cooking Studio
FORT COLLINS

FORT COLLINS, CO
LOCATION

✓ Opera Galleria
✓ 123 N College Ave

CWS offices across the Western U.S. are celebrating World Refugee Day 2024 with a **FREE** event. We invite you to attend or to support our events as an underwriter/sponsor. World Refugee Day is an international day organized every year on June 20th by the United Nations. It is designed to celebrate and honor refugees from around the world. The day was first established on June 20, 2021, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. These CWS cultural and educational events are part of our month-long June campaign to raise awareness and local funds.

6/20 - **SOCAL & NORCAL** - Will be hosting a free evening appetizer reception and movie screening of the Academy Award-Winning movie "20 Days in Mariupol" followed by a panel discussion. An RSVP is required. Reserve your free tickets using the QR Codes on the next page of this newsletter.

6/22 - **NORTHERN COLORADO** - Will host a free Cultural Festival and Open House in Ft. Collins. RSVP's are requested but not required. See the flyer.

For sponsor information, please contact Lori Butler:

lbutler@cwsglobal.org or 714-681-0447.



CWS

| Orange County



CWS

| Northern California

Movie Screenings

Winner Best Documentary

20 Days in Mariupol

A Free Educational Event with
Reception & Panel Discussion

For Underwriter, Table Display and
Sponsorship Information:
lbutler@cwsglobal.org

THE LOT

TWO CALIFORNIA

LOCATIONS

- ✓ Fashion Island – Newport Beach
- ✓ City Center – San Ramon

Thursday, June 20

**FREE
CELEBRATION**



2024 WORLD REFUGEE DAY

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Appetizer Reception
6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Movie & Discussion

RSVP NOW
SEATING LIMITED



So. Cal

No. Cal

714-681-0447



1575 Treat Blvd, Walnut
Creek, CA 94598

7441 Lincoln Way,
Garden Grove, CA 92841



www.cwsnorcal.org
www.cwsorangecounty.org

CWS NORCAL PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



CWS in Northern California has launched anti-human-trafficking services, the first of its kind for CWS. Led by staff member **Vanessa Velarde**, the program provides intensive case management and support to survivors of human trafficking. We also provide training, advocacy and outreach to increase aware-

ness of human trafficking. This type of training can increase the identification of those who may be victims. The goal is to help victims regain control of their lives and truly live as survivors. CWS seeks to help client's find their voices through a continuum of trauma-informed, culturally relevant, and gender responsive assistance. The program offers a fresh approach as our CWS's training and service model was developed based on the survivor perspective. Through survivor-led presentations and trainings, paired with technical assistance from CWS trainers, individuals and other agencies will gain the skills and expertise they need to work with the clients they serve.

Contact: cwsantitrafficking@cwsglobal.org for training opportunities or to provide referrals.

We also want to thank President David Kimball and the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** for generously providing \$40,000 in grant funding to support direct case management for victims of human trafficking. Among the services this grant will provide are help with housing, mental, dental and medical healthcare, legal support, and a host of other necessary services. We are also grateful for their \$7,500 in in-kind support for vouchers that these clients can use to receive important necessities such as clothing.

CWS ORANGE COUNTY PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

The CWS office in Garden Grove has been offering vital resettlement services to refugees throughout Southern California. Over the past 6 months, staff have worked to welcome new families through hosting special events. In November, Afghan and Ukrainian families were hosted by an enthusiastic group of local Vietnamese Catholics and attended their first Thanksgiving meal in the US. Staff translators were on hand to assist with communications and explain the importance of the tradition. Additionally, more than 100 children served by CWS (including HSPRS, a program for unaccompanied minors) received holiday presents in December. In March, more than twenty families attended our Spring Celebration, where the CWS office was transformed into a beautiful setting where children painted wooden toys donated by a CWS volunteer. They also enjoyed playing games, eating treats, taking photos with a costumed giant bunny, and collecting prizes in an egg hunt. One highlight of the day was a special art class led by staff members and volunteers. Parents and children were led through the process of making "Pysanky," Ukrainian Easter eggs decorated using the wax-resist (batik) method. A Slavic folk art, you'll also find these stunningly decorated eggs in many parts of eastern Europe. (cont. next page)





May 1st is #CWSGivingDay!

Each office is raising funds for CWS' Emergency Response Fund.

Every donation is matched that day, doubling your impact!

Please donate to a fundraising page of the office closest to you:

SO CAL: <https://bit.ly/3wazgG7>

NOR CAL: <https://bit.ly/44krp5m>

FORT COLLINS: <https://bit.ly/3UBmhqz>

(continued from last page)

The CWS Orange County office also recently joined the 18th federally funded Afghan Support Center in Anaheim, CA. Over 70 governmental agencies including USCIS and DMV, and nonprofit organizations served over 2000 individuals, providing information, services, and resources. CWS OC provided information on various programs and services including refugee case management, immigration legal services, home study and post-release services to unaccompanied children, and community referrals. CWS OC serves asylees, internally displaced persons, refugees, women, and children. We were pleased to highlight our programming for women, as well as to provide information regarding volunteer opportunities in our office. For additional info. about CWS OC programs : www.cwsorangecounty.org

WANT TO GIVE TIME OR TREASURE?

Contact us:

Colorado - Jason M. : 720-813-7841

So Cal - Rujah : 714-293-7631

Nor Cal - Jason W.: 925-878-1730

West Region - Lori : 714-681-0447

LIFE CHANGING STORIES



CWS NorCal leader Attorney Liat Romick, pictured above.

Our NorCal legal services team led by Liat Romick is making a difference in the lives of refugees like Romina. A married woman and mother of a young girl, Romina found herself in a dire situation when the Taliban took over Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrew. Having worked for a contractor from the U.S. to the embassy in Kabul as a screener, she faced the risk of being targeted by the Taliban as she might have been considered a threat under their laws. She also was facing the dangers all Afghani women face; a gender apartheid where women are segregated from all forms of public life. Afghanistan today faces a constant flow of new restrictions against women and girls. She wanted to ensure her family's safety and future, and made the decision to seek refuge in the U.S. as a parolee. She would not qualify for the SIV program since her embassy employment hadn't reached the one-year requirement. She applied for asylum, and after a 3-hour long interview at the Asylum Office in San Francisco, she was granted asylum.



CWS NorCal HSPRS Case Worker Jessica Webb (bottom left, red shirt) sharing Guadalupe's story with CWS partners

Before the war in Ukraine, Olha lived joyfully with her husband and 10-year-old son in Lviv where she ran her own chocolate and pastry shop. Olha loved to travel and had learned how to make artisan chocolates from some of the world's finest chocolatiers. When Ukraine was invaded, Olha knew she had to protect her son at all costs. "When the war started, my brain started [thinking of] protection, and that was the first day of the end of my chocolate studio in Ukraine" Olha noted. She made the difficult decision to pack up with her son and leave the country fast. Once in Europe, Olha planned to travel to the U.S., flying first to Mexico and then crossing the border to Southern California where she lived with her brother for a few months. She cleaned houses and became a delivery driver to make ends meet. Olha connected with CWS' newest office in Garden Grove, CA to access support and legal services. Olha recalls how CWS helped her with rental assistance and helped her file for asylum with hopes of accessing permanent status. "When you have got nothing and after you get something you are so happy with the smallest things," Olha stated. One day while visiting the CWS office, Olha brought in some of her delicious chocolates. The CWS team, amazed and inspired, decided to support Olha in applying for a small business grant through CIELO, a local NPO that supports refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs. "I think if you are an immigrant and it's so hard, you have to be a little bit of a dreamer," said Olha. The team at CIELO was also amazed and inspired, and she was given funding to purchase professional equipment for her chocolate business and build a website. Her business is now rapidly growing, with partnerships with some local businesses. Olha is hopeful to one day move from her home kitchen to a commercial kitchen and have her own brick-and-mortar chocolate shop.

To view and hear Olha's story in her own words go online here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-Hj6K0mCs8>.

WELCOME JODI DE LA PEÑA NORCAL'S NEW OFFICE DIRECTOR

Jodi de la Peña is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with almost 30 years of direct social work and managerial experience in the U.S. and Latin America, focusing mainly on supporting newcomers (refugees, asylees, unaccompanied minors, trafficking survivors, etc.) and non-newcomer children and youth. Through her various experiences, she has developed expertise in government contracts, non-profit management, program development, and social services. She works to build effective collaborative partnerships in order to provide high-quality services which are person-centered, strengths-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive. Since 2021, Jodi has worked with *Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)* to manage a federal grant from the Office on Trafficking In Persons where she develops and facilitates human trafficking (HT) prevention education to staff, students and partners and responds to HT concerns. Prior to OUSD, Jodi served for 4+ years as the Director of *Burma Refugee Families & Newcomers (BRFN)*, an Ethnic Community-Based Org. in Oakland offering post-resettlement case management and support to newcomers; she now chairs the BRFN board. Jodi also chaired the steering committee of the *East Bay Refugee & Immigrant Forum* for 4+ years and stepped down recently in order to chair the *CA State Advisory Council for Refugee Assistance and Services* as the Refugee Program Bureau-appointed seat. In addition, she volunteers as a board member of *Association for a More Just Society* which works for structural justice in Honduras. Prior to BRFN, Jodi developed expertise on unaccompanied refugee and immigrant minors through her roles as a Social Work Supervisor and then Interim Senior Program Director of Refugee Foster Care at *Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County*, and as the Colorado Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program Specialist. She has also worked with children and youth as a child welfare worker for Alameda Co.; with newcomers in community-based, medical and school settings in Boston; as a remote clinical supervisor for an international NGO in Bolivia supporting youth who formerly lived on the streets; as a program development consultant for an international NGO in Costa Rica working to develop a foster care system; as an intern in Colombia and Venezuela accompanying youth living on the streets; and as the LLC Manager and former property manager for a 23-unit apartment complex in Denver, housing refugees and immigrants. She is proficient in Spanish after spending almost 5 years in Colombia, Venezuela and Costa Rica. Jodi lives in Berkeley with her husband and her two now-adult "children" who find it much more affordable to remain at home rent-free! Welcome Jodi.



**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT!**

Walking alongside our neighbors during times of crisis, emergency or disaster is at the heart of CWS' mission. Every day, faithful CWS friends and supporters give their time, energy and resources to ensure everyone has the tools they need to live today, thrive tomorrow and build a safe place to call home for years to come.