



FAMILY MENTORING

What's my role?

Family mentors serve as a reliable friend who patiently teaches their new neighbors how to successfully navigate our society. You will become an integral part of a refugee's life and our program staff will be there to support you. Although refugees receive orientation classes, you, the family mentor, reinforce these lessons and help refugees become self-sufficient.

Assist family with getting established in Anchorage; for example, showing them around their neighborhood, taking them to free events, signing up for a library card.

Provide supplemental support for orientation activities; for example, practicing bus routes and how to buy groceries.

Visit the family and help practice English.

How does it work?

You'll be trained by RAIS staff and receive an informative handbook. You must be able to attend monthly family mentor meetings with the volunteer manager and RAIS staff.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

What's my role?

Provide additional Technology Center support.

Help clients write resumes and apply for jobs online. Help people practice for job interviews.

Tutor in computer skills and practice English.

Assist instructors in classroom activities.

Provide child care for parents attending class.

How does it work?

Training is provided by RAIS and classroom assistants will work closely with the education coordinator.

TRANSPORTATION VOLUNTEER

What's my role?

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.

As a member of the transportation team, you provide transportation for organized events like:

Outings for the Older Refugee Group to museums or meetings,

Presentations by the Youth Music Group, or

Personal transportation assistance for specific refugee needs.

How does it work?

When a need arises, RAIS staff will send out an e-mail soliciting help. You'll get a RAIS handbook outlining useful facts about refugees, communicating across language barriers as well as driving tips and requirements.

MEALS TEAM

What's my role?

By providing meals to refugees during their first weeks in Anchorage, you are not only ensuring that these newcomers have enough food on their table, you are also welcoming them into their new community.

The meals team cooks and delivers warm meals and groceries to newly arrived families.

How does it work?

RAIS notifies the meals team of new arrivals. Members sign up to bring meals and groceries to a family. You'll get a RAIS handbook outlining useful facts about refugees, communicating across language barriers, recipe ideas and a grocery list.



WHO ARE REFUGEES?

The term "refugee" is a United States government recognized immigration status. Refugees have fled their country because of a

well-founded fear of persecution due to political opinion, race, religion, nationality or their membership in a particular social group. They must leave everything behind, including family members, material possessions, and cultural identity for the chance to rebuild a life with personal safety, individual freedom, and peace.

WHAT IS RAIS?

Catholic Social Services' Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS) is the only state and federally funded resettlement program in Alaska. The primary goal of the program is to promote employment and self-sufficiency. With a diverse team of dedicated staff, RAIS provides a bridge for clients from their former life experiences to the new skills required for success in the United States.

Based in Anchorage, RAIS supports people from many countries throughout the world, such as Thailand, Laos, Burma, Bhutan, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Sudan, Somalia, Togo, Former Zaire, Gambia and Cuba.



VOLUNTEER WITH RAIS

Volunteers are essential in welcoming the newcomer. You put a human face on the United States and help the refugees connect with the community. Newcomers become self-sufficient more readily with a unified plan for resettlement between volunteers and RAIS staff.

Commit!

As a volunteer, you are a “lifeline” for refugees. You orient them to a new community and help ensure they have all the food and apartment items they need. You can tutor them in English and offer friendship. The most important gift you can give is kindness and a warm welcome. Depending on the type of volunteering you do, we may ask for up to a six-month commitment.

Volunteer!

To volunteer, please provide the following information:

- Volunteer application form, and a
- Release for a background check.
- If you will be driving clients, please also fill out a driving record release.

These documents are found on the Catholic Social Services website (cssalaska.org) under the “Volunteer” tab and must be completed and returned to the CSS volunteer manager.

Check in!

Family mentors are asked to complete brief monthly reports (on website) so that the volunteer manager can track both volunteer hours and the ongoing needs of the refugee families.

THANK YOU
for joining our team.



REFUGEE ASSISTANCE AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Anchorage

Catholic Social Services Center
3710 E. 20th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99508
907-222-7300 or 1-888-237-7376
907-276-5539 (fax)

Welcome Center – Education
on the St. Anthony Parish campus
907-339-0488
907-339-1988 (fax)

Delta Junction

P.O. Box 1541, Delta Junction, AK 99737
907-895-9830 or 1-800-895-9834
907-895-9832 (fax)

Online

www.cssalaska.org • e-mail: RAIS@cssalaska.org

Support special projects.

- Create materials for the RAIS program.
- Develop or conduct a training or educational session for refugee clients or staff.
- Organize a field trip for refugee families.
- Participate in Refugee Music Group, Garden Project, World Refugee Day and soccer team.

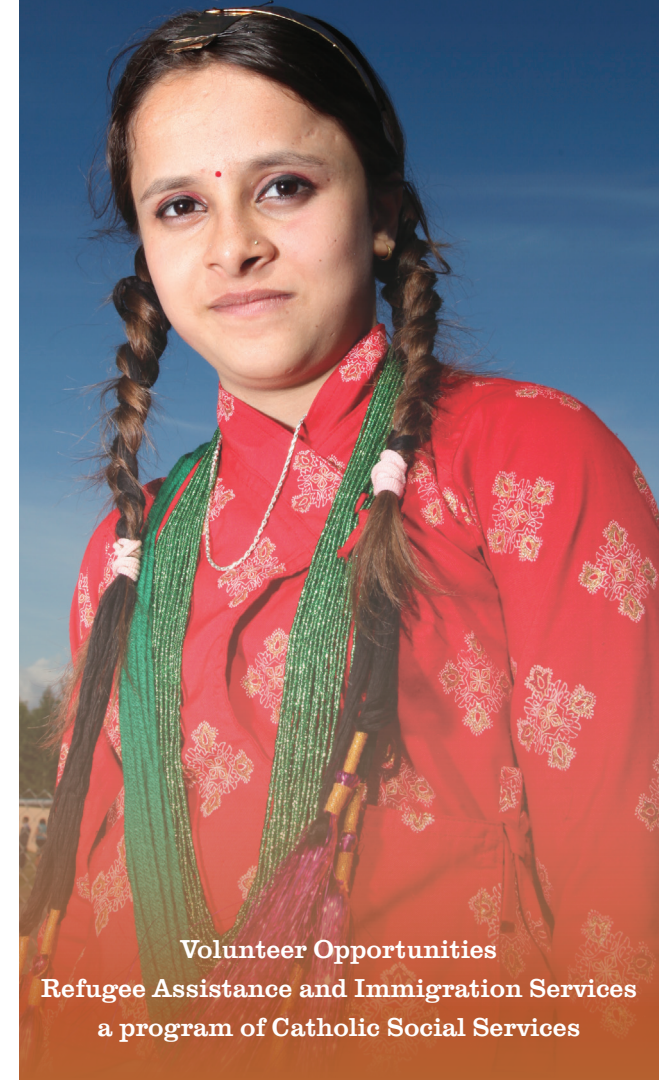
Support ongoing functions.

- Organize a donation drive – everything from winter clothing to household items.
- Provide cash donations to help the program support the needs of our refugees. Funds help pay for youth bus passes and needs such as medication costs. Visit cssalaska.org and click on “Donate.”
- Volunteer at our annual World Refugee Day in June or at other special events.

Think of something totally different?
Call us, we love new ideas! 907-222-7300

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

– Anne Frank



Volunteer Opportunities
Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services
a program of Catholic Social Services