

Coalition of Refugee
Service Agencies

2020 Annual Report



REFUGEES

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About CRSA

The **Coalition of Refugee Service Agencies (CRSA)** was founded in 2012 by seven Atlanta refugee resettlement and service organizations to educate Georgia's policy makers and leaders on the positive contributions refugees and immigrants make to the state. The CRSA was founded in an environment where anti-immigrant sentiment and misinformation in the state contributed toward policies that negatively impacted Georgia's vibrant immigrant communities and endangered the economic growth and cultural diversity that had brought greater prosperity to all Georgians. As service organizations with limited resources, the CRSA's founders came together to share messaging, data and staff capacity in order to communicate a positive message and advocate for a more welcoming state.

Today the CRSA has grown to **20** members that include a broad coalition of refugee resettlement agencies, refugee and immigrant service providers, ethnic community organizations, educational institutions, community centers and health providers. This diverse coalition advocates for a more welcoming Georgia at the federal, state and local level.

The CRSA's key priorities for 2021 include:

- 1** Ensure effective and robust refugee resettlement in the United States on a federal, state, and local level
- 2** Promote a legislative agenda in Georgia that provides opportunities for the success of all

- 3** Expand CRSA's relationships across sectors and party lines

- 4** Provide leadership development, advocacy training, and engagement opportunities for refugees and immigrants in the work of CRSA

CRSA Member Organizations



Burmese Rohingya Community of Georgia
brcgrohingya.org



Catholic Charities Atlanta
catholiccharitiesatlanta.org



CDF: A Collective Action Initiative
cdfaction.org



Center for Pan Asian Community Services
cpacs.org



Center for Victims of Torture
cvt.org



Clarkston Community Center
clarkstoncommunitycenter.org



Eritrean-American Community Association of Georgia
atleritrea.org



Ethaar
ethaarusa.org



Friends of Refugees
friendsofrefugees.com



Global Village Project
globalvillageproject.org



Inspiritus
weinspirit.org



International Rescue Committee in Atlanta
rescue.org/atlanta



Jewish Family & Career Services
jfcsatl.org



Latin American Association
thelaa.org



New American Pathways
newamericanpathways.org



Refuge Coffee Co.
refugecoffeeco.com



Refugee Women's Network
refugeewomensnetworkinc.org



Re'Generation Movement
rgmovement.com



Somali American Community Center
facebook.com/somaliacc



Tapestri
tapestri.org

Economic Impact of GA Refugees & Immigrants

Refugees and immigrants are a vital part of Georgia's communities and economy.

1,064,448 (10.1% of population)
Immigrant residents in Georgia¹

\$9.8 billion
Taxes paid¹

\$36.1 billion
Immigrant household income¹

249,884
Immigrant homeowners¹

\$26.3 billion
Spending power¹

¹Visit *New American Economy* to learn more
newamericaneconomy.org/locations/georgia/

The Business & Immigration for Georgia (BIG) Partnership

Georgia's global workforce is vital to the state's economic success. In 2020, CRSA launched the [BIG Partnership](#), a statewide partnership of Georgia business and civic leaders committed to strengthening Georgia's economy by tapping the potential of the state's immigrant communities. With more than two dozen members already, the BIG Partnership continues to grow and carve a path toward greater prosperity for all Georgians.

Economic Impact of CRSA Members

The CRSA organizations serving Georgia's immigrant communities are bringing resources into Georgia and providing valuable services to immigrants and the communities that welcome them.

\$13,963,784

Amount raised in federal funding

\$7,659,828

Amount raised through private fundraising and fees for service

609

People whom were provided English language instruction

3,100

Hours of interpretation and translation services

285

Full time employees

239

Part time employees

52 Languages spoken by staff

American sign language, Amharic, Arabic, Arkenese, Bengali, Bosnian, Brawanese, Burmese, Cantonese, Chin, Ciluba, Creole, Croatian, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Fulani, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Karreni, Kazak, Khmer, Kifulero, Kinyabiwisha, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Korean, Kunama, Lingala, Mandarin, Maylay, Moro, Nepali, Oromo, Pashto, Portuguese, Rohingya, Russian, Scots, Serbian, Shona, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Tigre, Tigrinya, Vietnamese

44 Countries staff are from

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma (Myanmar), Burundi, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, England, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Scotland, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, United States, Uzbekistan

Refugees in Georgia

Georgia is home to four refugee resettlement agencies and has been a part of this life saving humanitarian program for over forty years. Georgia’s resettlement program has been one of the most successful in the country due to high early employment rates and welcoming communities.

Refugee: a person who has fled their country of nationality and is unable to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular group.

16 Countries of origin

Afghanistan, Burma (Myanmar), Columbia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guatemala, India, Iran, Iraq, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela

10 Counties of placement

Chatham, Clayton, Cobb, Dade, Dekalb, Douglas, Forsythe, Fulton, Gwinnett, Jackson

Funds spent in community on behalf of new refugees:

\$15,501 **\$573,681** **\$143,766**

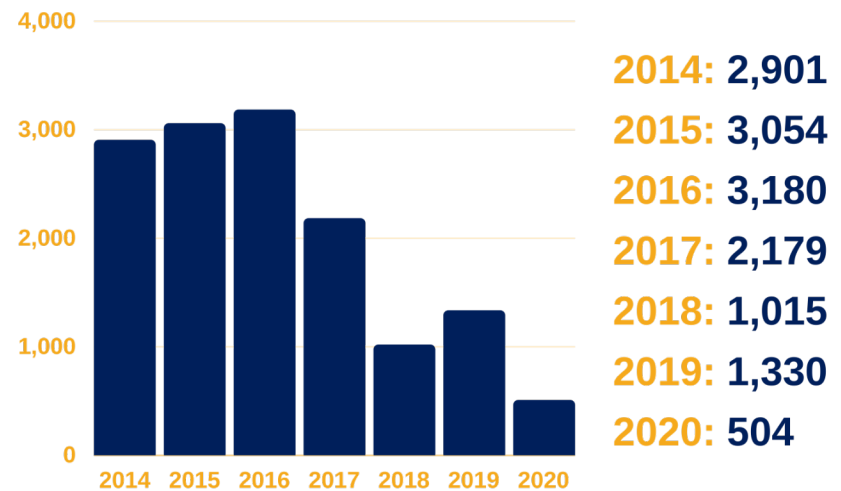
MARTA

Rent and Utilities

Other purchases

84.2% Early self-sufficiency rate (refugees working and covering own expenses within 180 days of arrival)

Refugee Arrivals in Georgia



504

Number of refugees resettled in FY20

172

(34%)

Number of Women Resettled

200

(40%)

Number of minors resettled (under age 18)

CRSA Response to COVID-19

CRSA organizations have rapidly responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing vital relief and recovery services to not only refugees and immigrants, but to the broader community as well.

\$1,426,807

Emergency funds distributed

11,875

COVID tests administered

6,137

PPE items distributed

230,000

Pounds of food distributed

10,090

People received COVID-19 safety information and training

1,596

Households receiving food through meal delivery, food distribution, gift cards, and Instacart orders

1,053

People received technological support

472

People received reemployment services

1,567

Essential items distributed, including tablets, laptops, and school supplies

1,069

People received stimulus and unemployment application assistance

Essential Workers

Refugees and immigrants, as part of the essential workforce in Georgia, have helped ensure that Georgians have the food, medical care, essential items and services they need during this pandemic.

Immigrants make up **13.9%** of the state's labor force and **12.2%** of jobs considered essential or frontline including:

- **29.1%** of building cleaning service workers
- **12.6%** of convenience, grocery and drug store workers
- **10.8%** of healthcare workers
- **10.6%** of trucking and warehouse workers
- **10.5%** of childcare and social service workers
- **6.9%** of transit workers

Visit *Georgia Budget & Policy Institute* to learn more
gbpi.org/immigration-primer/

Immigrants make up:

- **38.7%** of construction workers
- **33.4%** of meat processing workers
- **27.8%** of physicians and surgeons
- **22.3%** of STEM workers
- **18.3%** of health aids
- **10.9%** of nurses

Visit *New American Economy* to learn more
newamericaneconomy.org/locations/georgia/

CRSA organizations provide workforce development services that support Georgia's essential workforce:

741

Job placements

\$12.37

Average hourly wage

1,800

People received job readiness services

199

Received career advancement and placement services

34

Placed in healthcare professions



New American Essential Workers

Dr. Omar Aziz first came to Georgia through the US Refugee Admissions Program in 2013 with his wife and two children, after living in Dubai for more than 12 years. A dentist in his native Iraq, Dr. Aziz began working for a CRSA member organization as an Arabic interpreter in 2015, and began running their youth and parental support program for newly arrived refugee families at DeKalb International Student Center in 2017. Now a naturalized U.S. citizen, Omar is currently serving as the Program Manager for the IRC-CORE DeKalb County mobile COVID-19 testing project, where he oversees a team of testers who are all members of the refugee community—now naturalized US citizens and green card holders. **“I built a very unique team with a capacity of around 20 languages,”** shared Omar. **“We are reaching people in the Clarkston community by providing testing in their language and meeting them where they are—in apartment complexes.”**

This diverse team provided an incredible 10,275 free COVID-19 tests for Georgians in 2020, including many native-born Americans—from staff and residents of care homes to local police forces. **“By doing the tests, we’re trying to control the spread of the virus and make sure people know when they are positive so they can isolate and stay away from their beloved family. We’re sending a message to the community that luxury is being healthy, not wealthy.”** As of January 2021, the IRC-CORE testing project continues and the team is currently piloting mobile COVID-19 vaccine distribution in the community.

Entrepreneurs

The determination and entrepreneurial spirit of Georgia immigrants have made them a driving force in the state’s small business community, creating new jobs for Georgians across the state and producing billions in sales each year.

81,567

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Georgia¹

\$36.1 billion

In sales from immigrant-owned firms¹

205,962

Georgia workers employed at immigrant-owned firms¹

56

Immigrants whom CRSA organizations helped start new or expand existing businesses

¹Visit *New American Economy* for more Entrepreneur facts

newamericaneconomy.org/locations/georgia/

New American Entrepreneurs

Shaista Amani resettled in Clarkston, Georgia in 2017 with her husband and two children from Afghanistan. **“I made top grades in school and wanted to become a doctor. But when I was in 12th grade, the Taliban came and everything was so hard on the women,”** Shaista shared. In her village, everyone took turns cooking, and they would regularly have dinners for 60 to 80 guests. Soon after she arrived in the US, she began sharing her passion for food by preparing an Afghan dinner every Friday for friends and neighbors. Those dinners—and a gap in the Atlanta market for Afghan cuisine—inspired Shaista to start her own business, Amani Catering Company.

Shaista was selected for Emory University’s 2019 Start:ME program, which helps small businesses in local Atlanta communities and educates new business owners. Through her catering business, she was able to employ some of her neighbors. **“A lot of the women apply for jobs and are not accepted, including jobs at Walmart or cleaning jobs, because they don’t know enough English. By starting Amani Catering and giving other Afghan women the opportunity to work and earn money, I would be empowering them and helping them build confidence.”** As Shaista pivoted her business due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she began working with a CRSA member organization in community outreach and was able to connect more than 100 families in DeKalb and Gwinnett counties with essential rental and utility assistance.

(Some content courtesy of Emory University)



Youth

Refugee and immigrant youth are an important part of Georgia’s future. CRSA organizations support parents, students and schools to ensure that Georgia’s future workforce has the education and skills they need to thrive.

23,623

International students at GA colleges and universities¹

2,330

Youth served by 11 organizations providing youth services

\$850.6 million

Contribution to the economy by international students¹

10,259

Jobs supported by international students¹

Types of services:

Mentoring, tutoring, private day school, after school, summer camp, career services, Parents as Teachers early learning, virtual learning center, orientation, nutrition classes, gardening, internships

40,569

DACA eligible¹

507,595 (21.6%)

Children in Georgia have at least one foreign-born parent²

Student populations served:

- 2 organizations service birth to pre-k
- 9 orgs serving k-5 grade
- 8 orgs serving 6-8 grade
- 8 orgs serving 9-12 grade
- 3 orgs serving out of school youth
- 3 orgs serving college students

867

Parents served through parent support services

Undocumented Georgians pay tuition

2 to 4 times higher

than in-state residents²

85

Students confirmed to have been accepted to college

27

Students confirmed to have received scholarships

1. [New American Economy data](#) 2. [GBPI data](#)



In 2014, Selly Htoo and her family left a refugee camp in Thailand for a new life in Georgia. Members of the persecuted Karen ethnic group, the family were selected for resettlement in America through the US Refugee Admissions Program. Soon after she arrived, Selly was enrolled in youth programs provided by CRSA member organizations and would continue to attend throughout her high school journey. In junior and senior year, she participated in afterschool and summer programs focused on college readiness, where she diligently studied for her SAT/ACT tests, worked on college applications, and visited college campuses.

“My father was sick often when we were back in the refugee camp,” Selly shared. **“When he was sick and had to go to the hospital, I watched how kind the nurses were and how much they helped everyone, and I knew I wanted to help others in the same way.”** In 2020, Selly made it to the Top 10 of her graduating class at Clarkston High School and received the Asian and Pacific Islander Scholarship. She was accepted to Georgia State University and Berry College and decided to attend Georgia State, commencing her studies in Fall 2020 with plans to pursue Nursing. **“As a refugee, I understood too well the pain and struggle of not having access to medical attention, and this has shaped my dream to become a nurse so that I can help those who are in similar positions.”**

**Young
New Americans**

Civic Engagement

Refugees and immigrants contribute to Georgia’s communities and should be able to participate fully in community life. CRSA organizations work to ensure that immigrants and refugees can obtain the most secure immigration status for which they are eligible and have a voice in the decisions that impact their lives.

3
Organizations with accredited immigration programs

3,284
Total immigration applications submitted

603
Citizenship applications submitted

454,720
Immigrants eligible to vote in Georgia¹

6,818
Registered to vote by CRSA members

Get out the vote:

- **13,559** phone calls
- **821,265** texts
- **139,000** mailings
- **1,951** in-person conversations
- **100** free cups coffee at the polls

Census:

- **10,194** phone calls
- **425,922** texts
- **315,000** mailings
- **8,800** in-person conversations

1. [New American Economy data](#)



New American Civic Engagement

Originally from Afghanistan, Khadija Barati and her two daughters resettled in Atlanta through the Special Immigrant Visa program in 2014. Congress created the Afghan SIV program in 2009 to enable Afghan citizens who worked beside U.S. troops to immigrate to safety in America. **“Becoming a United States Citizen was important to me because I wanted to feel like I belong in America,”** Khadija shared. **“I served with the American military for over four years in Afghanistan because I believe in human rights. I was concerned about the situation with women’s rights in Afghanistan and wanted to make a difference. I am grateful for the opportunity, especially for my daughters, as I wanted them to have a better future and have the opportunity for an education.”**

“This year my oldest daughter and I became United States Citizens. For me, becoming a citizen was important so I would have the right to vote and participate in a greater way. As we studied for the citizenship exam, I learned so much about the United States and our history. I worked so hard and studied a lot so I could pass the test. As I learned about America, I learned how the country was built by refugees and immigrants. Years ago, people came here looking for a better life, much like my family did. I hope that before people judge, they build their knowledge on how and why refugees come to America.”

CRSA Partners

CRSA organizations work in partnership with faith communities, schools, businesses, civic organizations, and individuals to create a welcoming Georgia for everyone.

3,228

Number of volunteers serving

47,814

Hours of Service

8.5

The average number of **school partners** each CRSA organization engages

8.4

The average number of **faith partners** each CRSA organization engages

15.3

The average number of **civic partners** each CRSA organization engages

15.9

The average number of **business partners** each CRSA organization engages





Mission: To engage a broad coalition to highlight the cultural, social, and economic contributions of refugees and immigrants in Georgia.

Vision: We envision a future where every person who calls Georgia home is valued, respected, and able to build a successful life.

Contact Us: If you would like to learn more about CRSA or any of our partners, please contact CRSA Chair, Jim Neal, at: jimneal@friendsofrefugees.com

Join the conversation:



facebook.com/CRSAGeorgia



[@CRSA_Georgia](https://twitter.com/CRSA_Georgia)



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