



## WEST VIRGINIA INTERFAITH REFUGEE MINISTRY

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Dear Friend of WV Interfaith Refugee Ministry:

What a year it has been! As the world continues to deal with this unprecedented pandemic, we at WVIRM find ourselves facing an unprecedented situation. The COVID-19 virus is affecting all of our families, and our way of life. We know that we are not alone in facing new challenges in our efforts to assist our two adopted families seeking asylum. Many individuals, businesses, and non profit organizations are facing the same difficulties.

Through determination, creative thinking and hard work, we have continued our ministry of “striving to improve the lives of refugees.”

This year, we were able to continue with our scholarship program in partnership with the Islamic Association of WV ("IAWV"). We saw two of our scholars graduate from Marshall University and gain employment to become contributing members to our Mountain State.

WVIRM, through the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), continued to help refugees in Turkey attending medical school. Even there, we saw two medical students graduate. They are now doing their residency. Due to a favorable exchange rate of the dollar, WVIRM and SAMS were able to add four more medical students to this program.

WVIRM continues to work with the Episcopal Migration Ministries on ways to help refugees who are trying desperately to make it here in the US.

WVIRM continues to meet with national, state and local leaders to speak up for refugees. With COVID limiting our exposure in person, WVIRM had a very successful week-long immigrant Welcome Week, where, using social media, we were able to successfully promote and showcase five immigrant owned businesses to celebrate their contributions to our city and state. These businesses help our local economy and make our community more vibrant and diverse.

With the new President-elect of this great United States, WVIRM has renewed hope of being able someday in the near future to engage in direct resettlement of refugees in our beautiful mountain state.

WVIRM recently joined forces with the City of Charleston, University of Charleston and ACLU-WV to create a great work of art in the form of a Mural which hangs now on Hale Street. This mural celebrates immigrants' contributions to our beloved city of Charleston and West Virginia. Swing by and take a look at it! It is truly a great piece of culture and beauty.

Our work has not ended. WVIRM is more committed than ever to ensure that our mission to help support immigrants and refugees continues and that no family goes hungry during these tragic times.

However, our financial situation is currently insufficient to fulfill that mission. In order for us to keep on going, we need your help. We ask you to consider a donation in any amount to help with our efforts on behalf of refugees who are here with us in West Virginia, and who are still in peril worldwide.

You can mail your donation check, payable to WVIRM [we are a 501(c)(3) organization so contributions are tax deductible] to the address at the top of this letter, or you can donate online through the "donate to WVIRM" button on the e-giving page of the website of the WV Episcopal Diocese <http://www.wvdiocese.org/pages/aa-egiving.html>.

**Thank you** for your commitment to WVIRM and the 65 million (one half are children) refugees worldwide.

Ibtisam Sue Barazi



Board President

WVIRM

B. A. Miskowicz



Executive Director

WVIRM