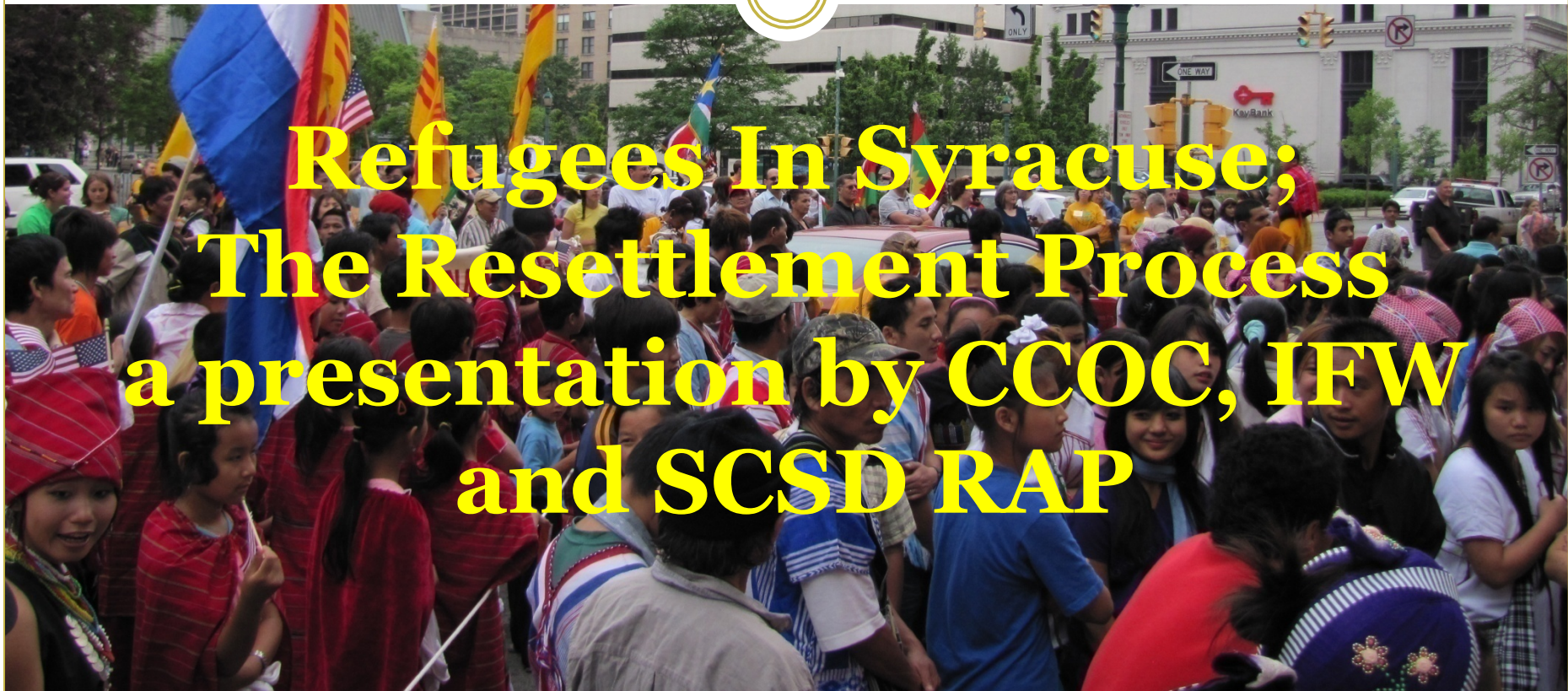




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# Refugees In Syracuse; The Resettlement Process a presentation by CCOC, IFW and SCSD RAP



# Presenters

2



**Felicia Castricone, Catholic Charities  
Refugee Resettlement Program**



**Helen Malina, InterFaith Works  
Center for New Americans**



**Stephanie Horton, SCSD Refugee  
Assistance Program**



# Who are refugees?

3

Refugees resettled in the USA are people who have fled their home country and proved to the UNHCR/US Department of Homeland Security that they have experienced life-threatening persecution prior to fleeing or have a credible fear of persecution if they return to their home country because of their religion, ethnicity, political views or membership in particular social groups.



# Refugee Processing begins with The UNHCR

4

Department of State  
Department of Homeland Security

IOM (International Office  
of Migration)

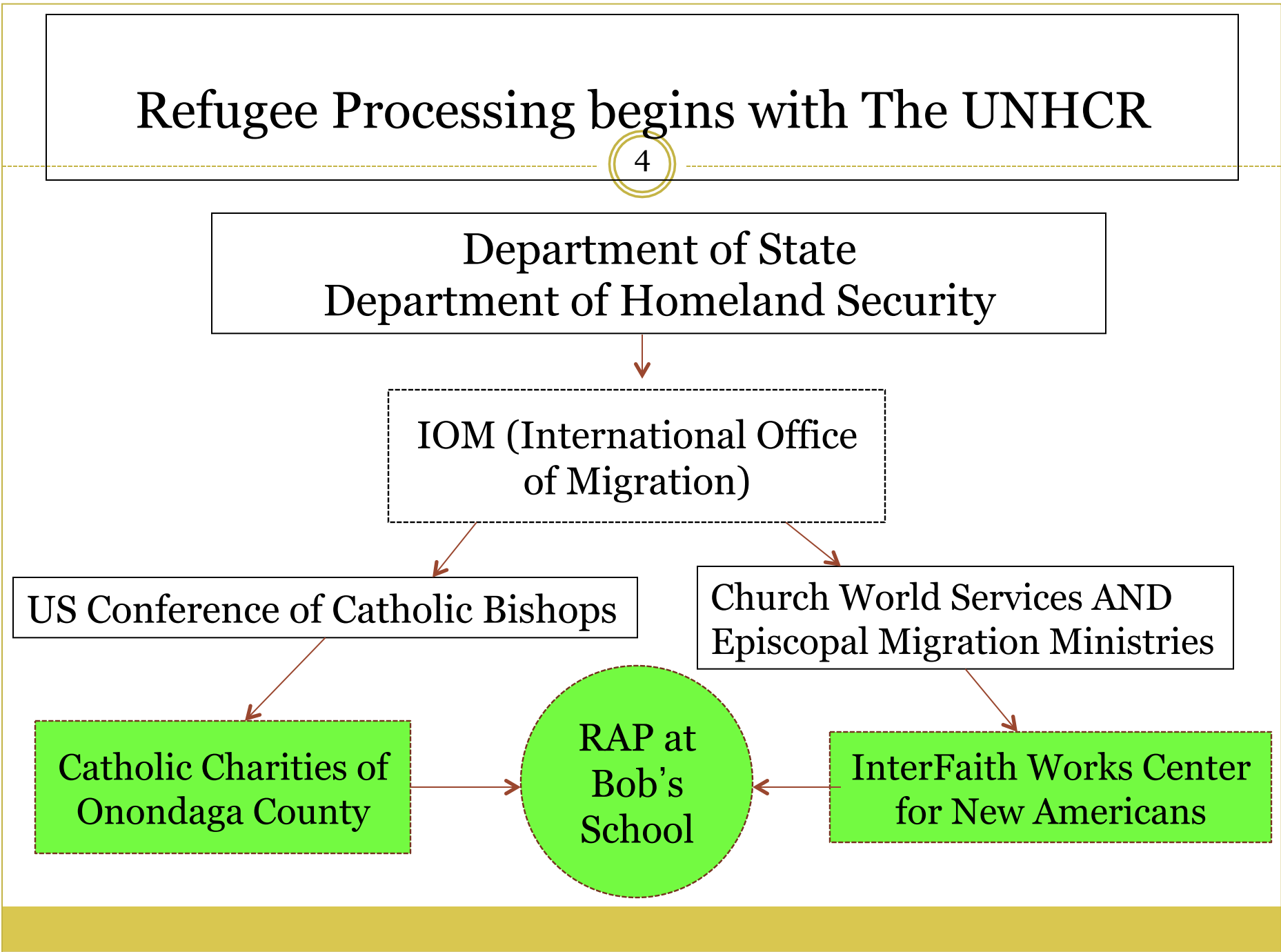
US Conference of Catholic Bishops

Church World Services AND  
Episcopal Migration Ministries

Catholic Charities of  
Onondaga County

RAP at  
Bob's  
School

InterFaith Works Center  
for New Americans



# Voluntary Agencies (VOLAGs)

5

State Department

**Church World Service (CWS)**

**Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM)**

**US Catholic Council of Bishops (USCCB)**

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS)

World Relief (WR)

Hebrew Immigration Aide Society

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Ethiopian Community Development Council

Kurdish Human Rights Watch



# Overseas

6

**The USA has taken in over  
70,000 Burmese refugees since  
2004**

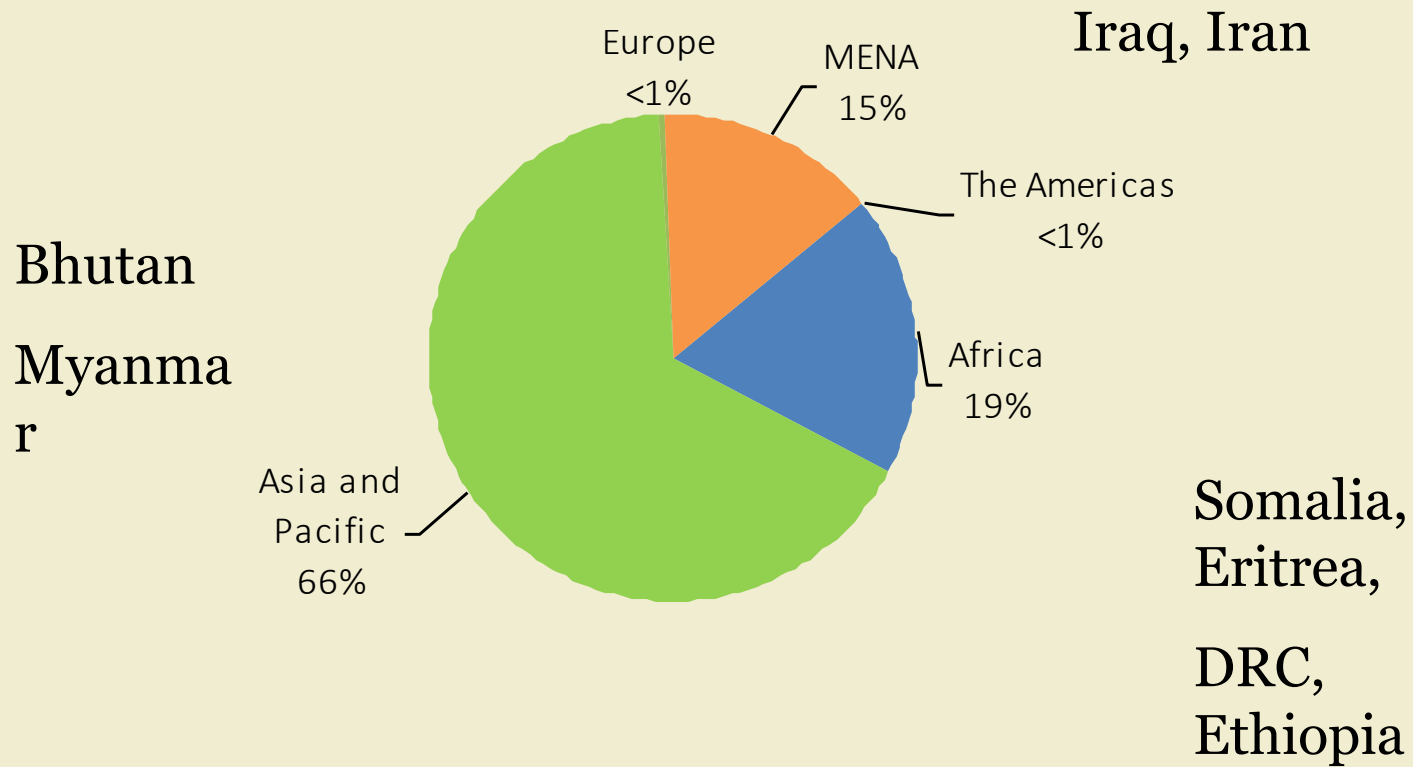


**Refugee camp in Nepal**



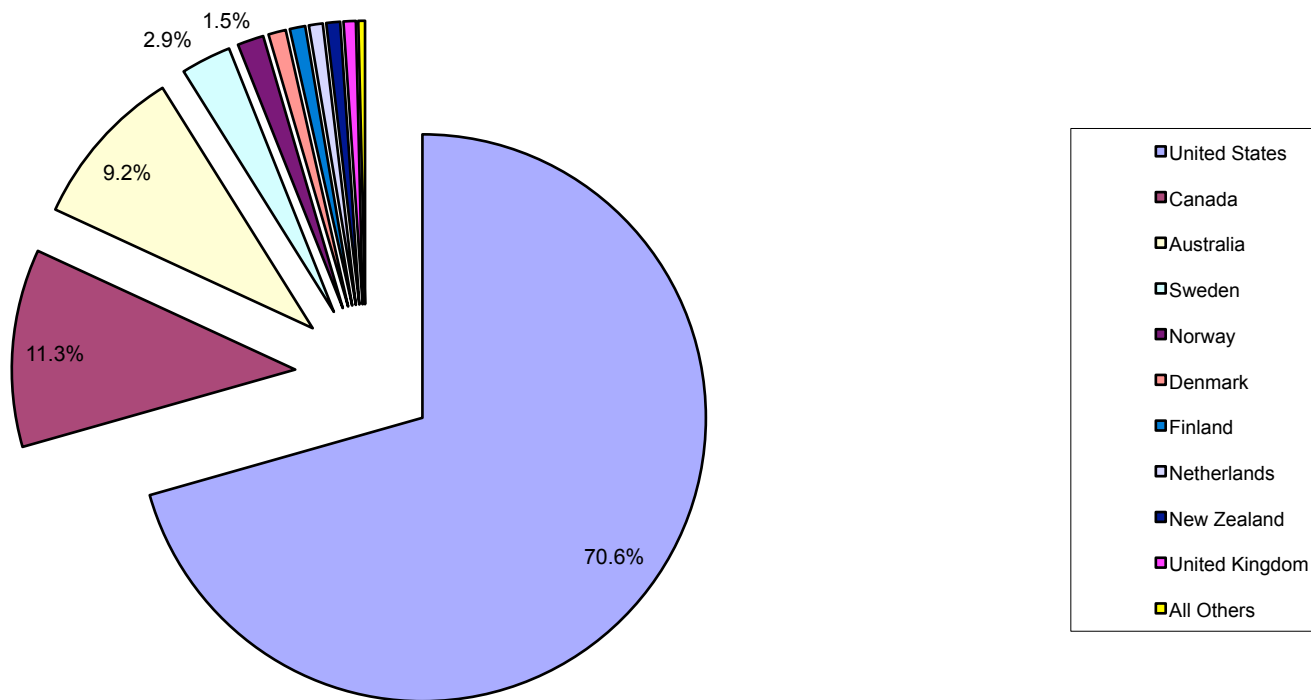
# Refugees by country of origin

7



# Departures by country of resettlement

8

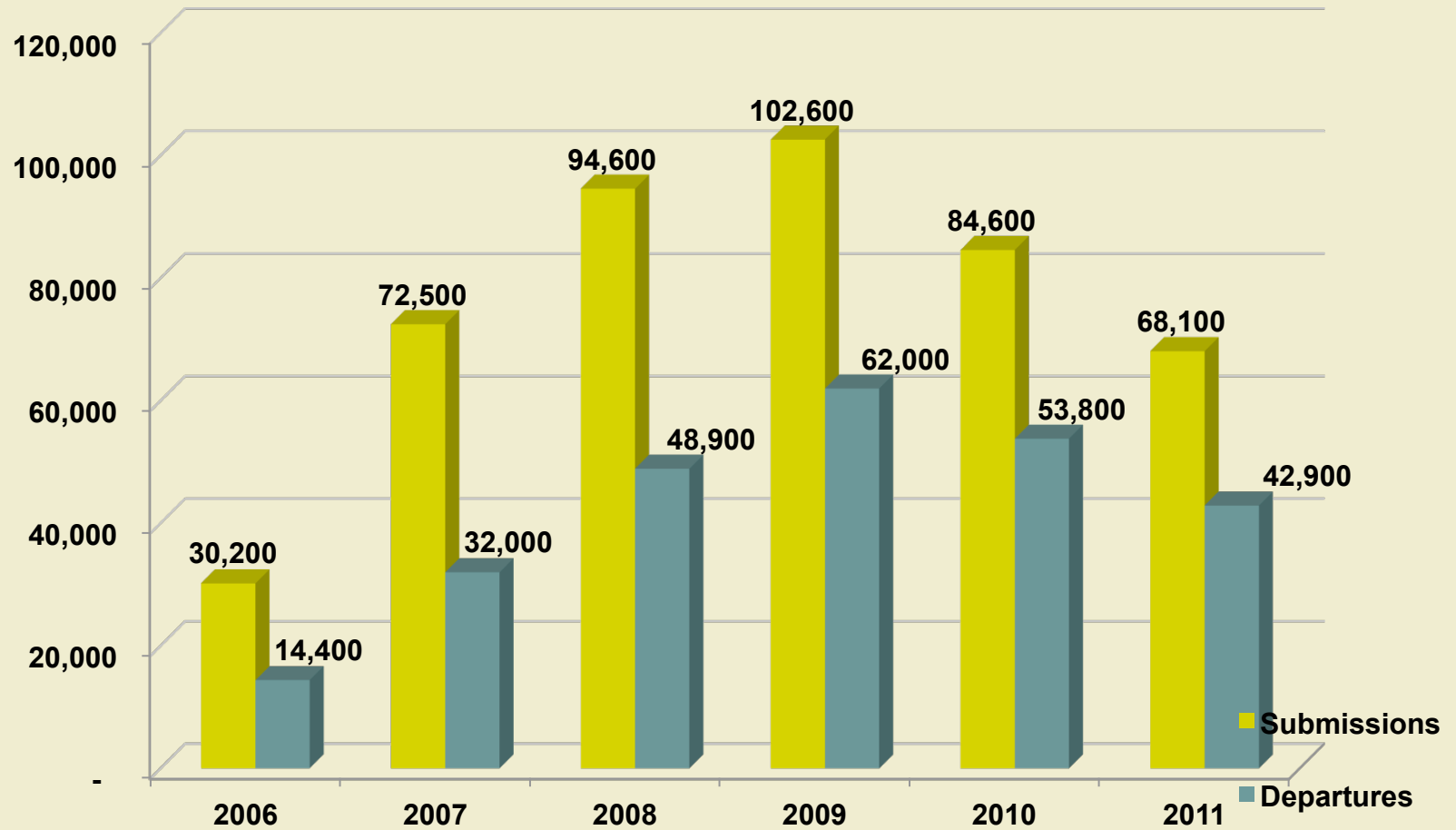




# US Resettlement Trends

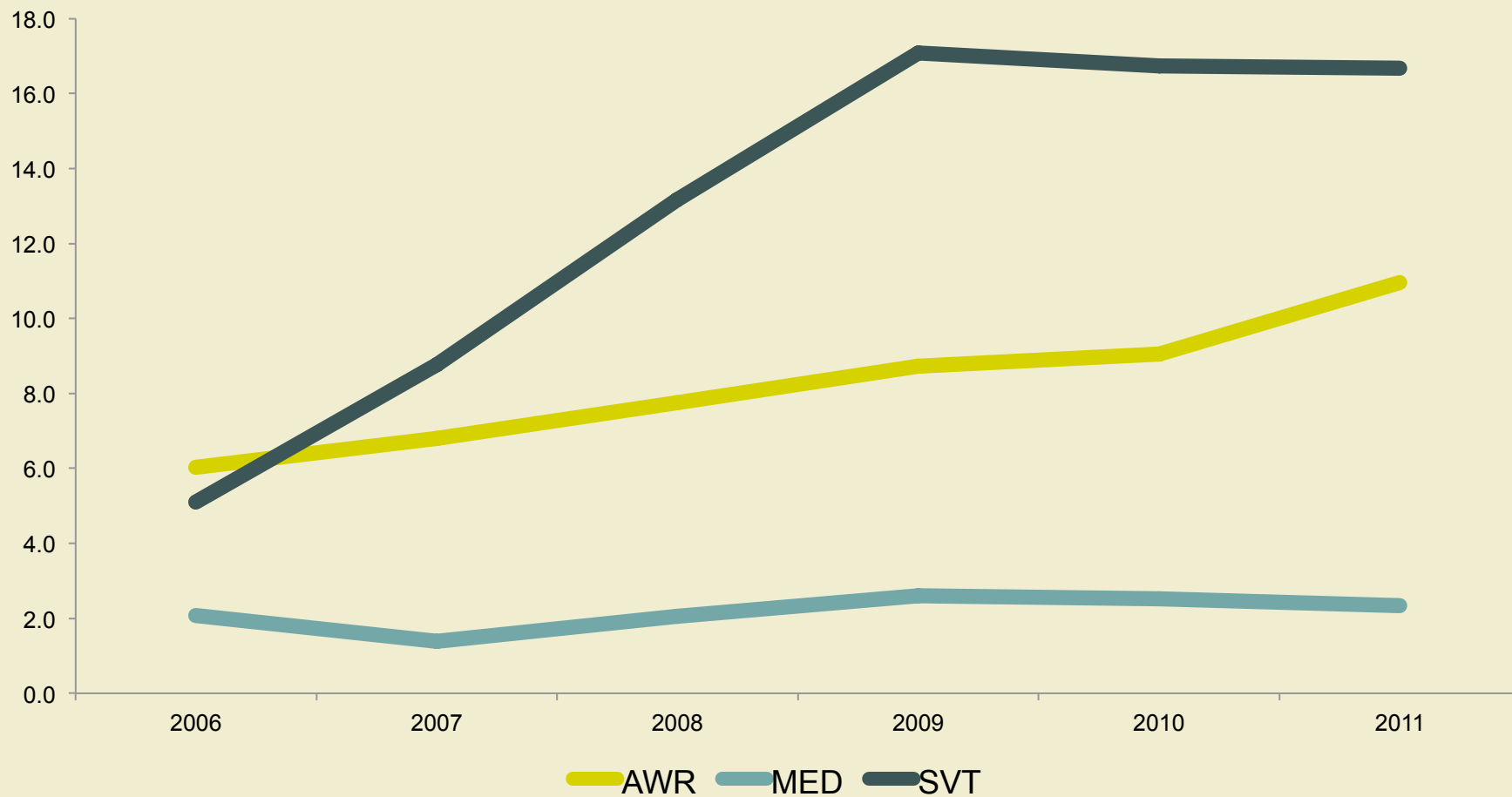
*UNHCR submissions vs. departures to the US 2006-2011*

9



# Changing Refugee Profiles

10



**There are an estimated 15.2 million people who are considered to be refugees**

**The President determines the limit each year, this year the USA will receive up to 76,000 refugees this fiscal year.**





# How do Refugees Get to the USA?

12

After fleeing their home country, they prove to the UNHCR and US that they are refugees, through an application and interview process and then apply for resettlement

They are screened and accepted by DHS (about 1 in 4 who apply are accepted)

# Pre-arrival

13

The resettlement programs receive two notices of a refugee's arrival. First notice typically comes 1 to 6 weeks before arrival. Second notice may be almost immediate or just before arrival. When first notice is received, the resettlement programs begin searching for and preparing an apartment. There are exceptions; and both agencies have resettled refugees on 24 hours notice!

# Pre-arrival continued...

14

Before a refugee comes to Syracuse, one of the resettlement programs is asked to "verify" that refugee; that is, accept the refugee as part of their caseload. The voluntary agency receives a brief "bio" on each person, including their birth date, gender, citizenship, ethnicity, religion, and some information on their education, employment history and health.



# Housing

15

Housing; The resettlement programs rent, furnish, and prepare an apartment for the newly arriving refugee. The Department of State mandates certain standards for housing, as well as certain items of furnishings and household goods. The housing must be affordable for both refugees who are receiving public assistance and refugees who are working. Most refugees prefer to be near members of their own ethnic groups.

# Who is coming now?

16

- ❏ NY is the third largest resettlement state in the USA
- ❏ In Syracuse, we will welcome ~800-850 refugees this year
- ❏ Syracuse is in the top 10 cities for resettlement of victims of torture, trafficking and violence against women
- ❏ Current groups include:
  - ❏ Burmese (Myanmar) (Karen, Chin, Karenni)
  - ❏ Bhutanese (ethnically Nepali)
  - ❏ Cubans (mostly Entrants, some are refugees)
  - ❏ Iraqis
  - ❏ People from various African countries (Congo, Sudan, Somalia)

# Arrival into Syracuse

17

Each refugee is greeted at the airport by a CCOC or IFW Case Manager. If the Case Manager does not speak the language of the refugee, resettlement guidelines dictate that an interpreter must be present. Most arrivals are at night.





## The First Hours in Syracuse

The Case Managers and Interpreters escort the refugees to their new apartment or to the home of their relatives. Their I-94s are compared to our records to ensure that we have received the correct people! Case Managers then provide a brief orientation to the apartment and the neighborhood. A hot ethnic meal is served. Most refugees are exhausted by the trip, so they are left to rest until the next day.



# The 24 Hour Home Visit

19

Resettlement Case Managers are required to visit the new refugees within 24 hours of arrival, even if this means a visit on Saturday or Sunday. At this visit, Case Managers ensure that everyone is healthy, go over the schedule for the next few days, and answer any questions that the new refugee may have. Further orientation to their new home and neighborhood is provided. Pocket cash is provided in the amount of \$20 per person. At this time, overseas medical reports are collected and copied, along with I-94s.

# Cuban PIP I-94

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office  
Washington, D.C. 20402



# Intake at DSS

21

Refugees are eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance for 8 months after arrival. In NYS, this is handled through the DSS office, which provides cash assistance and Medicaid using the same guidelines as these programs use for all clients. Case Managers are required to take new refugees to DSS within 7 days of arrival.

Refugees take a travel loan from IOM and are assigned to a Voluntary Agency to be resettled in the USA

They must begin paying back their travel loan by 6 months after arrival in the USA.

This is their first experience with the US credit system.

Repayment of this loan helps them to establish credit. Failure to pay this debt has a negative impact on their credit.





# Availability of Financial Resources

Each refugee is provided a minimum of \$925 for resettlement expenses. Both agencies are given \$1125 for distribution to the refugees, but the remaining \$200 is allocated based on need. Generally, single refugees have a greater need for the larger amount.

The resettlement funds are used to pay the first month's rent and security deposit for the apartment, and to purchase household and personal items.

# Refugee Resettlement Administrative Funds

24

Each refugee resettlement organization receives \$725 per refugee to pay for staffing and other administrative expenses.

To fully meet the service needs of the refugees, the organizations also use grant funding from the New York State Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, the United Way of Central New York, private grants, fundraising, and donations.

# Entering the American system

25

Refugees apply for their social security cards within 10 days of arrival. Case Managers assist with this process. They usually receive the card within 2-4 weeks of application.



Male refugees between the ages of 18 and 25 are required to register for the Selective Service within 30 days of arrival. Case Managers assist with this process.

# Case Management

26

Refugee Resettlement organizations are required to provide Case Management Services for 90 days after arrival. After this point, case management services often continue, but Reception and Placement funds cannot be used. CCOC and IFW and RAP use State and other funds to continue case management services on an as-needed basis. In addition, staff at RAP are able to assist with some case management needs.



# RAP Services

27

## **Inter-agency collaboration is key!**

Linkage to all services, for which RAP provides assistance, begins with a comprehensive intake for newly arrived families at which includes social adjustment and acculturation services.

This intake takes place at RAP aka Bob's School within 7 days of arrival into Syracuse with the case manager from the VOLAG, an interpreter (if needed) and a RAP staff member.



# Some of the countries and languages represented served by the three agencies over their history

28

- ☒ Afghanistan (Farsi)
- ☒ Bosnia (Bosnian/Serbo-Croatian)
- ☒ Bhutan (Nepali, Dzongkha)
- ☒ Burma (Burmese, Chin, Karen, Karenni)
- ☒ Burundi (Kirundi, Swahili)
- ☒ Cambodia (Khmer/Cambodian)
- ☒ Congo (French, Lingala, Kiswahili)
- ☒ Cuba (Spanish)
- ☒ Eritrea (Tigrinya)
- ☒ Ethiopia (Amharic)
- ☒ Former USSR (Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, etc.) (Russian, Ukrainian, Turkish)
- ☒ Haiti (Creole, French)

- ☒ Iran (Farsi)
- ☒ Iraq (Arabic)
- ☒ Kosovo (Albanian)
- ☒ Kurdistan (Kurdish)
- ☒ Laos (Lao, Hmong)
- ☒ Liberia (English, Krahn, Grebo)
- ☒ Poland (Polish)
- ☒ Rwanda (Kinyarwanda, French)
- ☒ Somalia (Somali, Mai Mai, Mushunguli)
- ☒ Sudan (Dinka, Dadinga, Arabic, Fur)
- ☒ Vietnam (Vietnamese)

# Education

29

- ❧ **RAP is EPE funded** to provide ESOL Screening and ESOL classes  
SCSD RAP screens with the BEST Plus exam-a test based on oral proficiency
  - ❧ A written test is given only when there is a high score on the initial exam
  - ❧ The test score and educational background help to determine class placement
  - ❧ Refugees begin school after initial health screenings have been completed
- ❧ Assistance with K-12 registration and placement for children
- ❧ Liaison between K-12 system and health care providers \*especially for immunizations
- ❧ Interpretation for K-12 system as needed and often the link in the home-school connection (along with the VOLAGs)

# Health

30



- ❏ TB Clinic through OCHD held bi-monthly at RAP
  - ❏ Refugee Health Assessment through 2 local providers; UHCC and IMA  
RAP organizes and schedules these screenings but relies upon the  
VOLAGs for assistance with transportation and interpretation. The  
screening is required to occur within 30 days after arrival. These  
screenings include bloodwork, immunizations and a basic physical  
exam.
  - ❏ Connection to primary care providers is made by The RAP Health  
Connections Staff
  - ❏ Routine and sick appointments are made for all family members
  - ❏ Interpretation and Transportation for medical appointments are  
provided for a minimum of 1 year post arrival
- \*Emergency rooms and Urgent care facilities are utilized when there is  
a health care emergency and primary care has not been established

# Employment

31

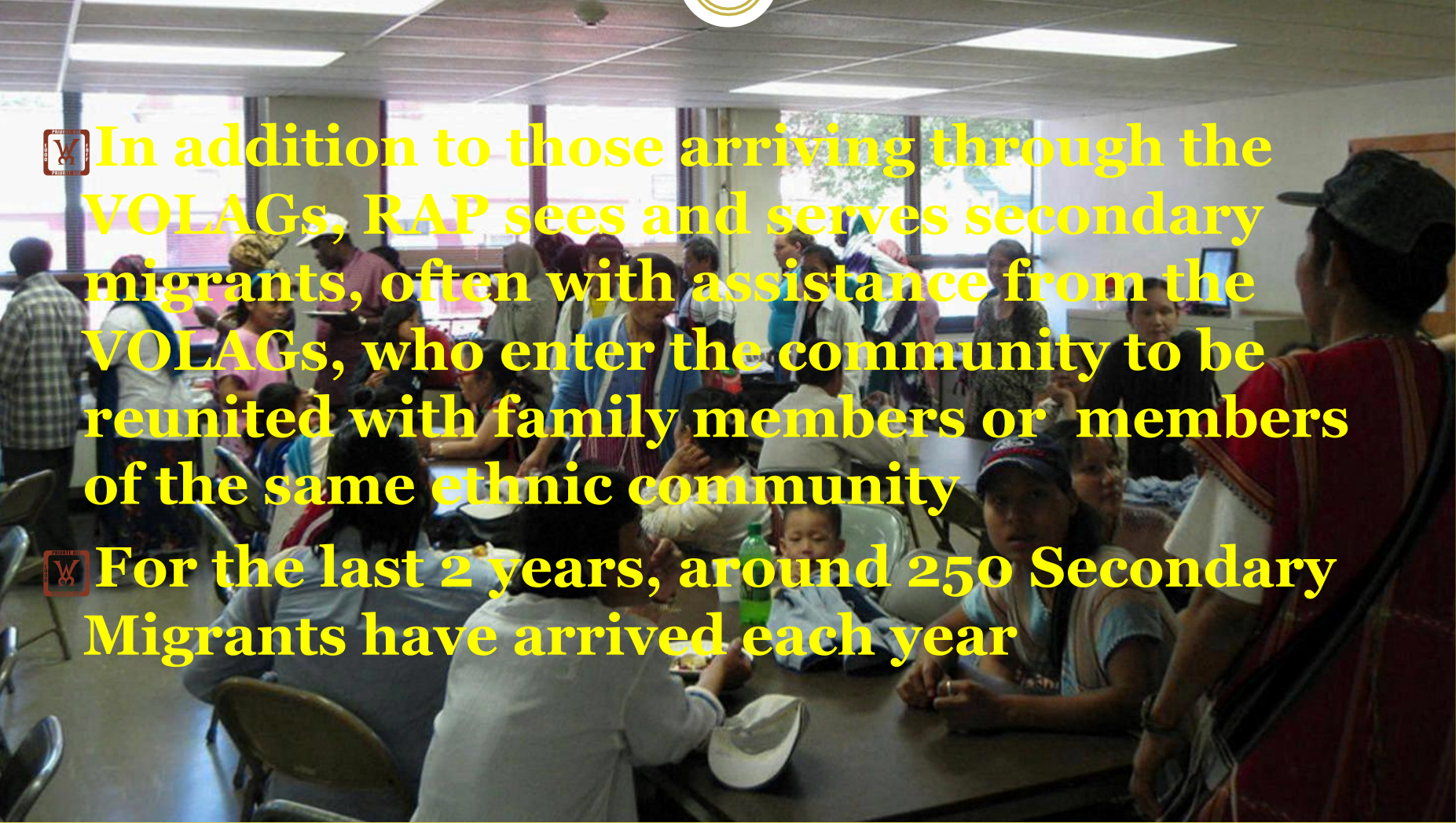



- ❏ **BRIA funded (RSSP and TAG)**
- ❏ Employment counseling
- ❏ Interview preparation and practice
- ❏ Resume preparation assistance
- ❏ Job Development
  - ❏ To develop and maintain good working relationships with area companies
- ❏ Transportation to companies
- ❏ Job placement services
- ❏ Employment Support
  - ❏ The main goal of self-sufficiency and is achieved by providing services both pre and post employment that will enable refugees to find and retain employment
- ❏ Vocational Training and referral in cooperation with companies and community agencies



# Secondary Migrants

32



 In addition to those arriving through the VOLAGs, RAP sees and serves secondary migrants, often with assistance from the VOLAGs, who enter the community to be reunited with family members or members of the same ethnic community

 For the last 2 years, around 250 Secondary Migrants have arrived each year



# Additional RAP Services








33

- ❏ Providing assistance for clients with JOBS Plus requirements so that our agencies' common goals might be more readily achieved
- ❏ Advocacy for clients as needed in cooperation with many community agencies (JOBS Plus, Public Assistance, Peace Inc., Aurora, Syracuse Police Department, etc.)
- ❏ Problem Solving on a case by case basis
- ❏ Mental Health Counseling
- ❏ Elderly support group
- ❏ Therapy group for African women (in cooperation with IFW)







# Additional VOLAG Programs and Services

34

## **CCOC “CYO”**

-  Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program contract with DOS
-  2 contracts with BRIA for Employment Services (NYSRAP and RSSP)
-  Subcontract with SCSD RAP for Targeted Assistance Grant
-  United Way funding for Resettlement and Refugee Youth Services
-  Contract with Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth
-  ONCARE funded Child and Youth Mental Health Services
-  Youth Programs

## **IFW CNA**

-  Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program resettlement contract with ORR
-  2 subcontracts with USCCB for NYSRAP and RSSP
-  Subcontract with SCSD RAP for Targeted Assistance Grant
-  United Way partial funding for Adult Mental Health Services
-  United Way funding for Housing Initiatives
-  City CSBG funding for Refugee Housing Services

# The US accepts refugees because...

35

- ❏ Tradition-we are a multicultural society
- ❏ Faith tradition calls us to assist those in need
- ❏ How a democracy responds to human rights violations
- ❏ There are many great benefits to diversity





# Refugees add value to our community

36

- ☒ Refugees are grateful and want to give back to the community
- ☒ They bring diversity; art, culture, food sports, languages, etc.
- ☒ They help us to improve our cultural awareness and competency
- ☒ They revitalize old houses and apartments



# With life and vitality!

37



They are willing to take minimum wage jobs and try to improve



They open small businesses



They end to stay in the area-help maintain our population base





# Permanent Residency and Citizenship

38



Refugees may apply for Permanent Residency (Green Cards) one year after arrival. Assistance with this process is offered through the Resettlement Organizations and The SCSD Americanization League

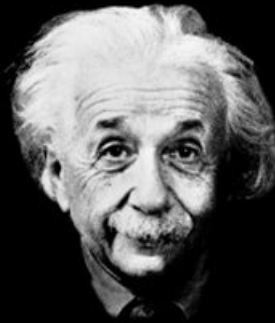
Refugees may naturalize five years after arrival. They must complete a naturalization application and pass English and Civics tests in Buffalo. Citizenship preparation classes are currently available through Catholic Charities.



# What do refugees bring to their new country?

39

**A bundle of belongings  
isn't the only thing a refugee  
brings to his new country.**



**Einstein was a refugee.**



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR is the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.  
Our job is to coordinate the world's efforts to solve refugee problems.  
We protect the basic human rights of refugees.  
The right to work, to education.

Refugees of all ages, from newborns to old people.  
We do not ask you help to support refugees for ever and ever.  
We need your help to make refugees self-supporting.  
Let me, a smiling, peaceful and happy life somewhere in the world.  
Fast as you do.

# The secret...

40

**The 3 primary agencies have always worked collaboratively together to provide services to newly arrived refugees. We are very proud of our collaboration and work extremely hard to maintain a supportive inter-agency relationship. We know that by being united and working toward our common goals together, we can better serve our refugees which leads to greater success for them!**