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Refugee Assistance

RAMP

*A Bridge to Assist People to
Cross From One Life to Another*

Morris Partners

Newsletter

February 2020



Community Foundation of New Jersey CEO addresses RAMP general meeting

Hans Dekker, president and CEO of the Community Foundation of New Jersey (CFNJ), was the featured speaker at the general meeting of Refugee Assistance Morris Partners (RAMP) at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on January 28, 2020.

The Community Foundation, started in 1979, currently holds about \$500 million in charitable assets and CFNJ granted more than \$66 million in 2018 to charitable work in New Jersey and beyond. RAMP is a special project fund of CFNJ, which manages and administers RAMP funds, and donations made to RAMP through CFNJ qualify for 501(c)3 status.

"Thanks for the work you do in RAMP," Dekker said. "It's important work. One-fifth of New Jerseyans are immigrants. And New Jersey was fourth in the country in undocumented juveniles, or DACA kids (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), living in our state. So the work you are doing is incredibly pressing and we are pleased to host what you do." Dekker gave the history

of community funds in the U.S. and explained how CFNJ operates.

Treasurer Leo Rogers reported that RAMP currently has about \$50,000 in its account, including more than \$20,000 from recent fundraising. He said it costs about \$30,000-35,000 to support each family.

RAMP members gave reports on those supported by RAMP. (See below Family Updates.)

RAMP Chair Gerry Gannon closed the meeting with brief remarks and answered questions from the crowd of more than two dozen. In response to a question about how long support is provided, he said, “Our goal is to have people not need us anymore.” Another questioner wondered if refugees would still be coming in spite of stricter government controls. Gannon responded: “IRC (International Rescue Committee) told us don’t worry, you’ll have families. In fact, we have a family right now. We can’t guarantee the new families will be from Iraq or Syria; they might be Kurds.”

Family Updates

RAMP's first two families (the Adnan T's and Akhtar M's), arrived in 2016 and 2017. Both families have “graduated” and are independent of RAMP. The Adnan T's, from Syria, are a family of five, and the Akhtar M's, from Afghanistan, are a family of three. The two children in the first family are doing well in school, and the older brother is improving his language skills and preparing for his GED. The father in the second family has an excellent job with a utility company, and his wife has her hands full with their two toddlers.

The Fahim M. family arrived from Afghanistan in 2018. They are a family of three. The father worked a number of part-time jobs such as Lyft and UPS. He has enlisted in the US Army and is in basic training. In Afghanistan, he served as a translator and cultural

advisor to U.S. forces. Following his training the family should be independent. Their daughter is doing well and is being lovingly supported by all her new friends.

Ali F. and Fariba M., a married Afghan couple, arrived in 2019. They just celebrated the birth of their first child. He has an extensive IT background and is seeking employment in that field.

Hashmatulallah D., a single man from Afghanistan, arrived in 2019. He has worked part-time jobs since then and has just secured a job in a water utility. He too should soon be independent.

Currently, RAMP is providing assistance for another family of five. They arrived from Afghanistan in late 2019.

Four years ago RAMP held its first meeting ...

February 12, 2020

Dear RAMP Members and Friends,

Four years ago, in April of 2016, RAMP held its first meeting to ask if there were members of the community who wanted to do something to help refugee families from the Middle East. These families were being uprooted from their homes, due to the devastating wars raging in Syria and Afghanistan.

The response was amazing. Over the following months numerous people in the community came forward to take part in this effort. These folks provided many hours of their time and talents to help. The generosity of so many donors was outstanding.

RAMP was able to assist these families in finding decent housing, providing financial assistance, connecting them with good health services, helping in locating needed social services and giving them assistance in finding employment.

The mission of RAMP, and one measure of its success, is to assist our families to transition to productive lives of dignity and hope. Its goal is that all our families become independent, on their own, and no longer in need of RAMP's assistance.

As reported above, our first two families are now independent and on their own.

RAMP's third and fourth families to arrive are well on their way to being so.

The fact that the families are on their own does not mean that we will no longer be involved with them. Not at all. The friendships that have been forged during these years will hopefully continue for years to come,

None of this could ever have happened were it not for you.

Thank you for all that you have done.

[Gerry Gannon](#)

RAMP Coordinator



**DIVERSITY COALITION
OF MORRIS COUNTY**

Connecting People to Celebrate Diversity

Save the date:

Diversity Day 2020

Sunday, July 12

11 AM: Interfaith Service

Noon - 4PM: Festival

Plan to meet us on the Morristown Green!
