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Refugee Assistance

RAMP
Morris Partners

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

Newsletter

November 2019



Thankful refugees in a welcoming land



On Nov. 8, 2016, eight-year-old Lona arrived at Newark Airport with her parents and two brothers. They came on a long flight from Turkey, having fled their war-ravaged home in Aleppo, Syria. Lona had no idea what to expect in her strange new land, but she was comforted by the warm welcome from volunteers from Refugee Assistance Morris Partners (RAMP), an interfaith organization in Morris County N.J.

Three years-ago Lona knew little English and not much about American ways. Fast forward to November 8, 2019. On her day off from school thanks to the New Jersey

teachers' convention, Lona spent the day riding a horse for the first time, taking a private lesson in painting snow-covered mountains, and going to a friend's house to watch "Anne of Green Gables" on TV. In the safety of Morris County, all Lona had to be frightened of was how high up she was on the back of her horse Lollipop. The fun day was the gift of an individual RAMP member.

Lona's story is just one of the many that can be told by the 15 people RAMP volunteers have welcomed and supported. The refugees have come from the horrors of wars in Syria and Afghanistan. Here, thanks to RAMP, Church World Service and the International Rescue Committee, they have found safe housing, good jobs, excellent schools and health care, and, most important, safety.

Gerry Gannon, RAMP coordinator, says the organization was started in spring of 2016 by a group of volunteers inspired to action by photos of the plight of refugees from Middle Eastern wars. "At our first meeting at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Morristown, we had more than 70 people who wanted to help. Now we have grown to more than 200 volunteers and more than 20 supporting churches, synagogues, mosques and religious orders. This is the best of America. Our folks support these people from day one until they reach self-sufficiency. Seeing our RAMP families safe, healthy and thriving is reward enough."

Gannon added that, in spite of the severe curtailment of refugee intake to the U.S., RAMP plans to continue to work with the International Rescue Committee to sponsor additional families in 2020. "We need to raise funds to help support the new

families we expect next year. They will be coming and we will be ready," he said. Donations may be made through the RAMP website at www.rampnj.org. They can also be made by sending checks to Treasurer, RAMP, P.O. Box 1544, Morristown, NJ 07960. Checks should be made payable to Community Foundation of New Jersey and RAMP should be listed in the memo line. Here are some reactions to life in their new land from the RAMP families:

What they are most thankful for:

- "The generous help and support we received from friends in RAMP, and we are also thankful for the safety that we have, having a roof over our head and for being healthy."
- "Assistance from RAMP along with my U.S. Embassy colleague (who also lives in Morris County) and my new Afghan friends in Morris County."
- "The opportunities available to me and my family. The freedom of choice,

where you want to work, what you want to do, etc.”

What they like most about America:

- “Ability to go places without fear. The security that is part of everyday life in the U.S.: peace, security and freedom that we have every day.”
- “The freedom in all its forms.”

What they like least about America:

- “Not being able to obtain an employment that will give a ‘living wage’ instead of a ‘minimum wage.’”
- “Paying bills!”
- “It is so far from Afghanistan where the rest of my family lives.”

Lona was thankful for her free day of horseback riding, painting, and movie-watching on November 8: “It was a very busy, tiring and fun-filled day. I am glad that I did not have to go to school. Maybe teachers need more conventions, so I can do more exciting and educational things on days when school is closed.”

RAMP’s mission is to assist vetted Middle Eastern and other refugee families to transition to productive lives of dignity, safety and hope in the Morris County area. For further information visit www.rampnj.org.

Help needed to locate jobs for two fathers

Dear Friends of RAMP,

First of all, let me thank you for all the support that you have provided for the refugee families of RAMP. Over the last three years the sacrifices that you have made through your endless hours as volunteers and your most generous contributions have been outstanding.

Right now, we could use your help in locating jobs for two of the fathers of our families. We would greatly appreciate any help, or leads, that you could provide. Send any such to info@rampnj.org.

Thank you for all you do,
[Gerry Gannon](#), RAMP Coordinator



*'Tis the
Season
of
Giving*

The wonderful work by more than 200 RAMP volunteers on behalf of our refugee families is made possible by donations from people like you. You can make a one-time or recurring donation by downloading your donation form [here](#) or give online [here](#). Together we can continue to welcome and assist refugee families in crossing from a life of turbulence and suffering to one of security and happiness.

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