

WYCOMBE REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2022

Young champions

This issue of the newsletter celebrates the achievements and generosity of some of our younger supporters and beneficiaries.

Starting university

Many congratulations to three of our young people who have started their university courses this autumn. Our volunteer Liz Sheppard recounts one journey:

“I first met this young lady when she arrived in High Wycombe, aged 16. Her English was elementary—not good enough to access our post-16 education system easily. I remember taking her to Bucks College to enrol her for an intensive English course for one year. Then she told me, ‘I want to be a lawyer!’ I have to admit, my heart sank. Many young refugees come here with such high expectations and many have to moderate their ambitions along the way. I smiled and made encouraging noises....

“After completing one year there, she transferred to Henley College, her English now being good enough to study for a level 3 qualification. This summer she passed her GCSE English—an immense achievement and essential for most university courses. She also was awarded distinction in all her other subjects and was one of two people to receive Student of the Year awards from Henley College, and now she is indeed studying Law at university!”

Youth Achievement Award

We had the privilege of helping the family of the Syrian chef Imad Alarnab when they first arrived in the UK and we are thrilled to share his account of the latest achievement of his eldest daughter:

“I am super proud to be the founder of Imad’s Syrian Kitchen, but my greatest achievement in life is my relationship with my amazing daughters. Some of you have probably met our waitress @dana_alarnab at Imad’s during the summer vacation. She left the restaurant to study Maths and Computer Science at the University of Warwick.

“In November, she won a Universal Peace Federation Youth Achievement Award at the House of Commons 2022! Thank you Dana for your inspiring speech, you made me tear!

“The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.”

Diogenes (412–323 BC)



Above: Student of the year award



Right: Dana and her family at the House of Commons.

Harvest festival

Pipers Corner School in Great Kingshill kindly offered to donate part of their harvest festival donations to WRP in October 2022. We were delighted to work with a sixth form student, Iman, who organised the collection of the grocery items.

Our volunteers collected and divided up the donations just before the half term holiday. The school children had also made greeting cards, which gave a more personal touch to the packages. Thanks to the school's generosity we were able to take bags of groceries to 15 families and individuals, who were very grateful to receive them.

Pedal power

Another wonderful young fundraiser doing amazing things and funding vital support for those in need!

After a talk that our volunteer Rhiannon gave at a local primary school, the fabulous Lucy set herself a challenge to cycle 40 miles. She rode from Beaconsfield to Oxford, where her cousin Daisy lives.

With support from family and friends, Lucy managed to raise £235. What an incredible achievement! Thank you so much Lucy, for spreading a positive message and putting refugees and asylum seekers first.

If you are interested in doing some fundraising for WRP, then let us know at fundraising@wycombe-refugees.org.uk.

Christmas presents

Those lovely pupils at Godstowe School are doing it again, enthusiastically buying, wrapping and donating nearly 300 Christmas presents for our 68 refugee and asylum-seeking children. Huge thanks to them and to their teachers Rosie and Natasha, who have been working with Trina to organise it all.

The charity monitors at Godstowe have been hard at work sorting and boxing up all the gifts. More arrive every day! Evie Smith is Head of Charities at the school. "It's so great that we're running the Christmas gifts for refugee children project at Godstowe for the third year running. We are a boarding school and girls come from all over the world, so we know refugee kids are just like us in lots of ways. We love giving them a little treat to open on Christmas morning."



Above: WRP volunteers Sandy and Julie, either side of sixth-former Iman
Below: Lucy navigates the highways and byways of Oxfordshire



Left: Godstowe charity monitors with some of the Christmas gifts

Vacancies at WRP

Paid Administrator (part-time)

Role includes:

- Administrative support to Team Leads in running the charity which will include being first responder for phone calls and emails directing callers to an appropriate colleague
- Complete safer recruitment paperwork for new volunteers
- Maintain the database of volunteers and beneficiaries of the charity
- Be an admin for the WRP Facebook page: Refugees Welcome in Wycombe

Employment package includes:

- Initial salary £21,000 pa pro rata
- One year contract, with renewal subject to funding
- Working mainly from home with occasional meetings in High Wycombe (All Saints Parish Office, 8 Castle Street, High Wycombe, HP13 6RF)
- 15 hours per week, ideally 3 hours each morning Monday to Friday
- Paid leave 18 days p.a. plus bank holidays
- Support from a line manager (a Trustee)

How to apply:

Send your CV to contactus@wycombe-refugees.org with a covering email telling us why you are interested in the post. Please include full details of two referees.

You are welcome to email contactus@wycombe-refugees.org about any queries.

- Deadline for application 12 noon Thursday 15 December 2022
- Interviews for shortlisted candidates Friday 6 January 2023
- Start date as soon as possible



Photo by Oli Dale on Unsplash



Co-ordinator of Volunteers

We are looking for a volunteer to take over the job of overseeing all elements of volunteering within WRP. They need to have experience of working with small charities or managing volunteers. There will be support from an

administrator, but the person appointed will still need to do a fair amount of administrative work themselves.

The Co-ordinator of Volunteers will manage volunteers and their relationships with beneficiaries. We have an established volunteer recruitment pathway/checklist. If you think this might be the role for you, please email volunteering@wycombe-refugees.org and we can arrange to talk about what is involved.

Afghans and Ukrainians



WRP has been working with Buckinghamshire Council to help Afghan and Ukrainian refugees in particular need. We have so far been able to find decent long-term accommodation for five families, thanks to landlords who were willing to fix the rent at the level of the Local Housing Allowance. There are young stars there too: one of the Afghan families has children who are musically talented. Thanks to generous partners of WRP, they will soon be receiving free music lessons.

A Ukrainian family had spent a month in temporary housing with no hot water and were then moved by the Council to a third-floor flat, despite the mother's disability. She managed to make her way, very painfully, up the three flights of stairs, but then did not go out for the next month. We have found and furnished a ground-floor flat for them and are lending the mother a mobility scooter.

Sabbatical

A note from Stephanie Rybak, Vice-Chair of WRP and editor of the newsletter:

I have been volunteering more or less full-time for WRP for the last seven years. It has been a deeply enriching experience, working with wonderful colleagues and admirable refugees and asylum-seekers. However, I now feel the need for a break, so I am taking a sabbatical for the whole of 2023, starting on 1 January. My sabbatical project will be to rewrite my trilogy of novels for young adults – and to get it published!

Sheila Stevenson will take over editing the newsletter. My other jobs will be parcelled out. If you email contactus@wycombe-refugees.org, your enquiry will be passed on to the right person.

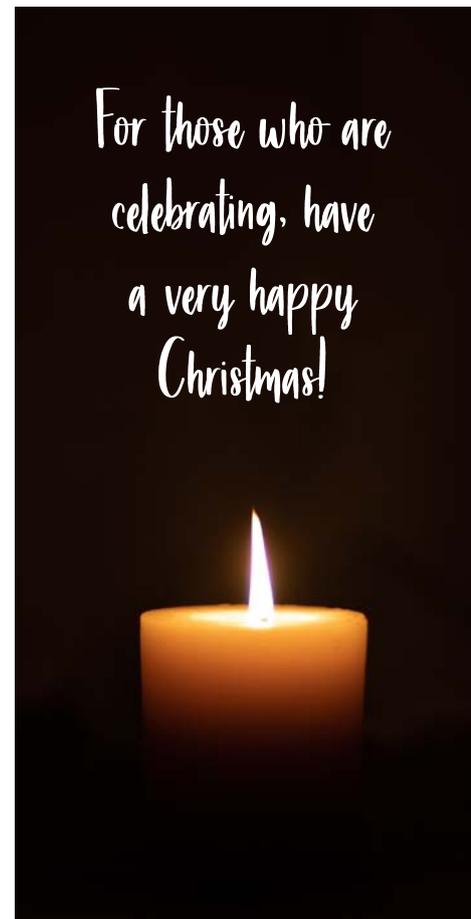


Photo by Sixteen Miles Out on Unsplash



Community Board
High Wycombe



Community Board
North West
Chilterns



Contact us

 www.wycombe-refugees.org

 0845 643 2873

 contactus@wycombe-refugees.org

 Refugees Welcome in Wycombe

