

June 2023



CITY OF GOOD NEIGHBORS...

Status Update on Asylum Seekers in Buffalo

Asylum seekers are in Buffalo. Here are my comments that [the Buffalo News recently published](#):

The time that Buffalo has been buzzing about for months is here. There are asylum seekers arriving from New York City.

Along with our partners, we will ensure they are safe, sheltered, and fed. In addition to helping them through their asylum process and, as part of humanitarian relief, we will screen them to see if they are survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, or torture.

With a 24-hour news cycle showing a seemingly endless stream of nameless faces on our TV screens, it may be difficult for some to remember that these are human beings—men, women, and children seeking help. They are in the unenviable position of having been uprooted from their home countries. They likely don't speak English and cannot legally work here; the only thing many have is uncertainty looming.

As we have seen from some politicians, a few people might try to vilify these migrants and abuse them for their political gain. I am confident that most Western New Yorkers will rise to the occasion and not give in to a blatant and craven attempt to exploit these already suffering asylum seekers.

We can do more than shovel people out during snowstorms and root for the Bills. I look forward to the City of Good Neighbors showing the rest of the world how welcoming is done.

Seeing more welcoming messages on social media than nasty and negative ones heartens me.

Note that asylum seekers cannot work to support themselves until they wait through the government-mandated 180-day period after filing for asylum.

This arrival is not something we anticipated, so if you are inclined and want to help us in this effort, please contribute today and [support our general fund](#).

Jennifer Pizzo-Choi

I Want to Make a Donation to Help Asylum Seekers

IIB in the News



Before the asylum seekers arrived from New York City, I had the chance to elaborate on the issues at play on [a few media outlets over the last few weeks](#). If you want to understand these issues better, [please listen to my interview with Penny Wolfgang on her program, On Target](#).

World Refugee Day 2023!



On June 20, we commemorated World Refugee Day, which is not a day of celebration but rather a somber day of reflection and re-dedication to help the millions of refugees worldwide whose lives are in limbo.

We joined Mayor Byron, Common Council Majority Leader David Rivera, and other city officials [for a flag raising in front of Buffalo City Hall](#).

Support Our Work in Resettling Refugees

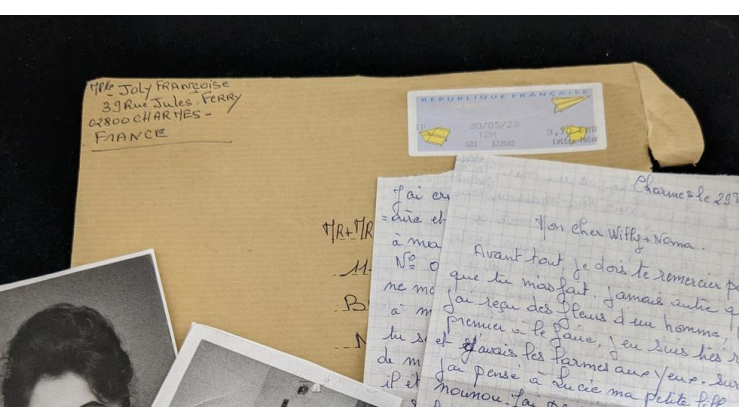
IIB Included in Explore Buffalo's Twilight Tour of Mansions



Recently, Explore Buffalo showcased the historic mansions on Delaware Avenue. Our headquarters is located in one of those homes and was part of the tour! What a fantastic opportunity to meet new friends and showcase our historic building.

[Learn more about our history.](#)

The Refugee Partnership



Also on June 20, [local refugee agencies announced the newly formed Refugee Partnership of Western New York](#), which includes the International Institute of Buffalo and four other agencies—Catholic Charities of Buffalo, Jericho Road Community Health Center, Jewish Family Services of WNY, and Journey's End Refugee Services.

We are glad to contribute our unique programs to the overall effort and collaborate when it makes sense so that we all can effectively and efficiently serve the people who need our help.

I Want to Make a Donation to Support the International Institute of Buffalo!

Interpreting & Translation



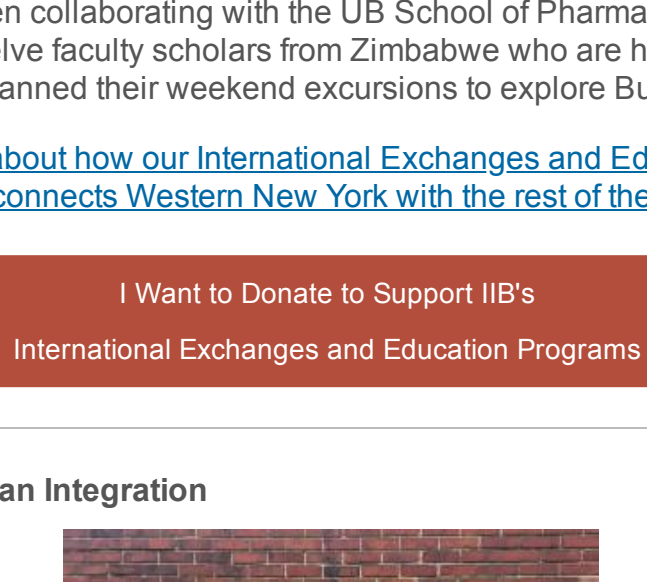
Our Interpreting & Translation Department has helped many businesses, educational institutions, and other organizations do interpreting over the years. So too, we have translated and certified reams of import documents, including legal papers and medical records. However, you should know that we also translate family and other records, memorabilia, and things with a more personal meaning.

We recently helped rekindle a friendship after 60 years. We assisted a local man in translating letters written in French by an old friend he met while serving in the military in the 1960s. [Learn more about how Willie Roberson connected with his friend, Françoise.](#)

Translated let us help you calling family letters or other personal things translated by [emailing us](#) or calling 716-883-1900 Ext. 378.

Do You Need Interpreting or Translation Done?

International Exchanges and Education



In June, the International Exchanges and Education Department planned for future programming!

We've met with potential partners to plan the revamp of our annual speaker series. We've also been in discussion with the Buffalo Teacher Resource Center to offer professional development credit to teachers who attend.

We're planning new education programs for language and culture exploration for grades K-12, including homeschool and scouting groups.

We are also starting to accept applications from middle and high schools and colleges to virtually host an alum from the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)! These English-speaking professionals from around the world and from different backgrounds can meet with your students to speak about their work in their own countries and internationally, free of charge. Topics include environmental issues, democracy, human rights, civic engagement, and promoting world language learning and cultural exchange.

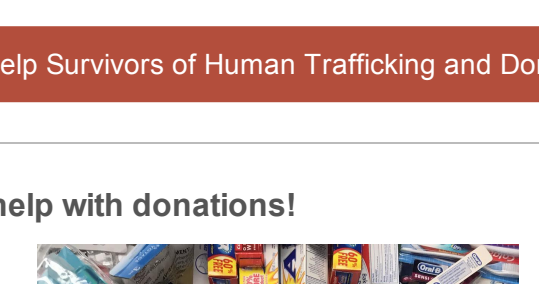
We've met with the local Fulbright chapter to discuss opportunities for their alumni to speak at local schools to discuss the possibilities of this scholarship for all high school students. The Fulbright Program is a cultural and educational exchange program for students and scholars "to study, teach, conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to mutual understanding." We will be approaching local schools about this program in the fall.

We have been collaborating with the UB School of Pharmacy to welcome twelve faculty scholars from Zimbabwe who are here through July 8. We planned their weekend excursions to explore Buffalo.

[Learn more about how our International Exchanges and Education Department connects Western New York with the rest of the world.](#)

I Want to Donate to Support IIB's International Exchanges and Education Programs

New American Integration



Our Professional Pathways program helps immigrants, refugees, and asylees return to former professional careers or to continue higher education to attain the credentials they need to ply their trade in the USA. We've helped people in many occupations, including accountants, pharmacists, and architects.

Our team held a special presentation for the newly arrived Ukrainian community at Dnipro Ukrainian Center. The event was very successful, with 35 attendees, and spread the word about the program. We are working to repeat this same success with other communities!

[Learn more about all the work our New American Integration Department does](#) in addition to the Professional Pathways program that helps New Americans reestablish their careers and lives.

Donate to help immigrants and refugees in WNY!

Survivor Support



Child and Family Services

[Recently, IIB announced that it is partnering with Child and Family Services \(C&FS\)](#). IIB will work with C&FS to provide technical training and support, and C&FS will begin to work with the local youth at risk of sex trafficking and those who have been subjected to labor trafficking.

This is work that IIB started under grants from the DOJ and Erie County's Safe Harbor program, and this expansion will help to increase important services in our community.

Donate to Help Survivors of Human Trafficking and Domestic Abuse

We need your help with donations!



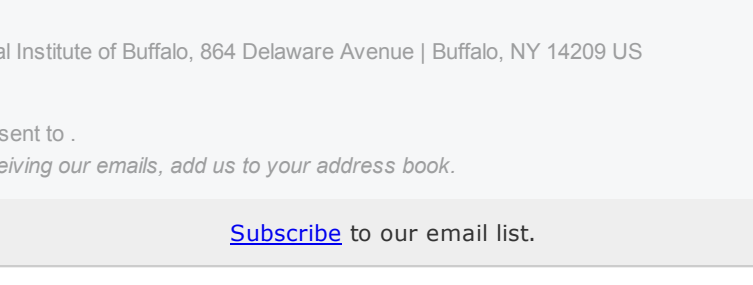
Five new refugee families, including 17 children, will be arriving in Buffalo in June and through July. They come from Jordan, Syria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Donated items help these New American families settle into the community quickly and seamlessly.

In addition to new and used household items, please consider donating soccer balls and games like chess, checkers, backgammon, and playing cards to help pass the time in the summer since our families have no TV or internet when they first arrive.

You can drop off items at the carriage house behind our building at 864 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

[Here is a list of the other things that they need.](#)

Volunteer for IIB!



We recently had 16 people attend an information session on how they might volunteer to help New Americans learn basic English. This was the first in-person session since COVID, and it also had attendees via Zoom.

The HELLO (Home English Language Learners Outreach) Program is an at-home English learning program. It helps New Americans who can't easily leave their homes because of a disability or family care issues. Volunteers will be trained, and they don't need any experience.

If you're interested in volunteering for the HELLO program, the next info session is Tuesday, July 25, at 6 p.m. The meeting will be in-person at our International Institute of Buffalo headquarters at 864 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo and via Zoom. For more information, email volunteers@iibuff.org.

Careers

If you or someone you know wants to make Western New York a better place for, and because of, immigrants and refugees, there are a few open positions at IIB. [Check them out!](#)

Find a Career Opportunity with IIB!

"The International Institute of Buffalo makes Western New York a better place for, and because of, immigrants and refugees."

Make a donation to support the International Institute of Buffalo!

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