

2019/2020

Refugee Family Reunification Trust Newsletter



Refugee Family Reunification Trust

OUR SUCCESSES
together
SINCE 2001

Two Million Dollars Raised for Refugees!

On World Refugee Day 2019 the Refugee Family Reunification Trust reached a milestone worth celebrating when total donations reached two million dollars. Kate O'Malley, Senior Policy Advisor at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Canberra, gifted the Trust the symbolic 'two millionth dollar'.

In recognising the Trust's work, the Regional Representative of UNHCR, Louise Aubin, noted that family reunification is of fundamental importance to a refugee's ability to integrate into a new country.



"I congratulate the Refugee Family Reunification Trust on the important work it has achieved through its committed support to refugee family reunification. Restoring family unity is a fundamental aspect of bringing back normality to the lives of refugees."

It can ease the sense of loss felt by many who, in addition to family, have lost their country, networks and life as they knew it. Family reunification can fundamentally affect a refugee's ability to integrate in their new country and is often a crucial step in their settlement. The Global Compact on Refugees, affirmed by UN General Assembly in late 2018 underlines the need for countries to do more to facilitate solutions, including through family reunification. The important work of the Trust and the support of its partners and donors over 18 years is a great example of the collaboration and effort needed to ensure the global commitment of responsibility sharing for refugees can be realized."

The Trust is a pure charity – all donations go to refugees. We rely entirely on volunteers; we receive no government funding; and our few, unavoidable, administration costs are paid from separate grants.



OVER \$2M
raised for
REFUGEES

NEARLY 300
refugee families
REUNITED



OVER 740
applications for
HELP APPROVED

OVER 800
airfares to
NEW ZEALAND



Thanks to YOU!

thank you

FOR YOUR HELP

We remain extremely grateful to all our donors, without whom we could not have successfully reunited so many deserving families. The ongoing support of generous individuals and charities was critical to our success during the past year.

To each and every one of our donors, thank you. We hope that you are able to continue your support, as each donation – whether a regular donation or a one-off – is a vital contribution towards getting a family back together again.

Significant donors over the past year include: Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand; the Thomas George Macarthy Trust; Tai Shan Foundation; Hon Robert Smellie; Yvonne and Peter Cottier, and Queen Margaret College. Very generous donations have also been made by a number of individuals and private trusts, who prefer to remain anonymous. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Many volunteers have kindly given their time, skills and enthusiasm to help run the Trust, to organise fundraising or to help new families with their resettlement. Special thanks to our honorary accountant, Alison Dyer, and to the Trust's auditor, Kendons. Multicultural Learning and Support Services let us share their mailbox. We would also like to thank Phil Dyer for taking the photographs we use. Special thanks to Hannah and Thomas Schickedanz at Schickedanz Design Studio for designing and building our beautiful website pro bono, and also again generously donating time to format this newsletter. Thanks also to Michael Till and Jane Duncan for their willingness to help our families. Lesley Hooper kindly helps to manage the database. Simpson Grierson provides pro bono legal support. Your assistance is invaluable.

Thanks to New Zealand Red Cross for continuing the great programme providing volunteer support to our families on their arrival in Wellington, helping them with basic resettlement tasks and challenges. This is very practical and important work, and we hope Red Cross continues this wonderful support for family reunion refugees. Special thanks to volunteers John Kennedy-Good and Sherree Webster for their exceptional contribution.



Families we helped came from:

Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Algeria, Sudan, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Cambodia, Myanmar, Colombia, Sri Lanka and Banda Ache.

Sisters of St Joseph

With extraordinary generosity, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, a Catholic religious women's order, provided a refugee family with a fully furnished, four bedroom home at a subsidised rental. Providing the house was just the beginning - they also supported the family in so many other very generous and thoughtful ways, including providing goods to ensure the family were welcome, stocking the pantry, covering the first six weeks' rent, paying the power bill for a period, paying for one of the children to attend summer camp, and so many other acts of practical kindness.

When the house was sold, the Sisters wished to continue to support our work, and donated \$100,000 to be used to support the initial rental costs for housing refugee families. This donation enables the Trust to help refugee families overcome the accommodation hurdle imposed by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) as part of the immigration process. Housing affordability and availability are major issues facing refugees who have family members joining them here, and this funding will assist a number of refugee families in a very direct and practical way.

Our heartfelt thanks to the Sisters of Saint Joseph for their tangible example of charity and compassion in action in our community.

For privacy reasons, refugees' stories and photos are not included on our website. Please contact us if you would like to receive the complete version of our newsletter, which includes those stories and photos.

Ōtari Parish Film Fundraiser



For the eighth successive year, the Justice, Peace and Development Group of Ōtari Catholic Parish (which includes St Thomas More Church in Wilton/ Northland and St Teresa's Church in Karori) organised a fundraising movie - this year, *Jojo Rabbit*. A full house at the Penthouse Theatre raised \$3,313 – bringing the total raised over the eight years to a wonderful \$23,500. We truly appreciate the sustained and valuable commitment to helping refugees shown by this Parish, and we thank everyone for their support. In addition, the Trustees wish to thank the many sponsors who

generously donated vouchers and products for the raffles and spot prizes, including Antipodes New Zealand (\$500 of beauty products), The Interislander (\$100 travel voucher), Penthouse Theatre (movie tickets), New World Karori, Gipps St Deli and Café, Gipps St Butchery, One Fat Bird (Marsden Village), Marsden Books, Marsden Village Café, Streaks Ahead (Northland), Fab Hair Salon (Khandallah) and Melissa Jane Flower Studio (Ngāio). Special thanks also to Dame Fiona Kidman for a copy of her recent, award-winning, book *This Mortal Boy*, and Elspeth Sandys for a copy of her new book *A Communist in the Family: Searching for Rewi Alley*, and to Sam Neill and his Two Paddocks vineyard.

Words of thanks

“I am very happy and excited to come here and join my family after a long time. It is a dream come true to see my family and to have a bright future. Thank you for supporting my case – I wouldn't be here without your help. I can now enjoy freedom without fear.”

“We appreciate New Zealand offering our family a secure and peaceful life after so many years of fear, injustice and violence. They will be able to receive all the support they need. There are no words to express our appreciation for your support – many thanks to you.”

On behalf of my resettled family, and for myself, I would like to thank you for helping me bring my family from Afghanistan to New Zealand. Your help is truly appreciated and I am forever grateful.”

ABOUT us

The Refugee Family Reunification Trust financially assists refugees, primarily in the Wellington region, to bring immediate family members to join them here. Reuniting these families greatly improves the lives of those refugees already living in New Zealand, and is critical to their successful resettlement and integration.

All money raised is used exclusively to help refugees pay for the expenses directly related to bringing family members from refugee situations. This includes application fees charged by, and medical reports required by, INZ, and the cost of airfares to bring approved family members to New Zealand.

The Trust is a registered charity and donations of \$5 or more are tax deductible.

HOW you CAN HELP

Financial donations: You can donate money to us regularly, or as a one-off donation via post, bank transfer or a regular automatic payment. See details in the footer.

Other help: Call or email us if you are organising a fundraiser which might make a contribution to the Trust: acalder@xtra.co.nz or 04 475 7994

Please advise if your contact details are incorrect or if you do not wish to receive our newsletter.

PATRONS

Cardinal Thomas Williams
Dame Fiona Kidman
Niyorom Young
Kim Hill

TRUSTEES

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