



# The Refugee Network News



A Publication of The Episcopal Refugee Network of San Diego

Winter 2011

## Wish List for 2011

We wish to provide support for:

- Newly arrived refugees
- Those who have lived here longer but for whom good fortune has not smiled.
- Tutoring for young people who need to learn English and the life values of U.S. Society.

*Most of all, The Episcopal Refugee Network wishes to thank all those wonderful donors and supporters who continue to be there for us.*



## Tutoring Highlights at The Episcopal Refugee Network

On Thursday afternoons our tutoring group is for junior and senior high school students. Each child is placed with a tutor, either individually or in small groups, according to the particular needs of the students. They bring questions about homework assignments and subject matter that has not been understood in the school classroom. If English skills are just developing, all subject matter in school classes needs going over for clarification. Word problems in math often involve vocabulary and concepts never encountered before. The excitement that comes with the feeling "Oh, now I understand!" appears on the faces of the students all around the room as they respond to the tutors' encouragement and prompting.

One tutor who is in high demand is Dr. Donmienne Leung, a research scientist at Applied Molecular Evolution. Donmienne's first contact with us, was

as a member of the work day that AME employees generously have given to assist us, in each of the last three years. When she participated, Donmienne was so moved by the needs of the refugees she saw, and by the commitment of the Network to the refugee families, that she volunteered to help as a tutor on a regular basis on Thursday afternoons. She is a wonderful role model for the teenage girls and is adept at reaching into the students' experience to find ways to advance understanding of concepts like velocity, or to help them practice emerging English skills without embarrassment.

The interrelationships that develop between tutor and student in the very personal style offered by the Network helps nurture self-confidence. This, in turn, speeds the learning process and makes both learning and coaching exciting.

***We are located at 4305 University Ave, Suite 630, San Diego, CA 92105***

***Please be sure to visit our Website to see what we do as a charitable organization:  
[episcopalrefugeenetwork.org](http://episcopalrefugeenetwork.org)***

# A Voice At Last

Three opportunities came in the early months of 2010, to include refugees with limited or no English in plans that affect their future and that of the communities where they live. A volunteer from the Network opened up each of these opportunities.



Census forms are available in 24 languages but they are not available in Karen, Karenni, Chin, Kachin, Shan, Bari or Bhutanese.

When our volunteer arrived at a local census office to pick up forms, the

census staff were surprised to hear that refugees in San Diego spoke those languages. Even if the form had been translated into one of the languages, most refugees would not be able to read them. Making it even more difficult, a census worker who knocked on the door of such a family would have no common language in which to communicate.

Our staff has contact with those families and the necessary language ability to communicate with them. They went out to the refugees apartments, explained how the census works and helped families fill out and mail forms to meet the deadline. Without this effort, these groups with major needs would have been left out of local government calculations, and their communities would not receive necessary funding.

The San Diego County Office of refugees invited organizations, who serve refugees and who provide health services, to provide input for state plans for future job needs.

To obtain information from the refugees themselves, the County distributed a survey to be filled out on a computer by as many refugees as possible. Our volunteer had hard copies of the survey made.



Our staff took the forms to families and helped them complete it. Then the volunteer delivered the forms to the County Office for Refugees, to scan for inclusion in their report. Again, formerly untapped voices were heard. This activity also made visible to planners the special needs of the large number of refugees, who:

- do not speak, read or write English
- may not be able to read in their own language
- do not have access to a computer.

The State ran five workshops in various parts of San Diego County in order to plan for health care needs of low-income residents over the next ten years. Health care and support service providers for refugees gathered to document current gaps in services and future needs. A Refugee Network volunteer attended three of the regional workshops. Both of the workshop organizers and most of the participants were surprised that a large number of refugees need help with transportation and translation services if they are to access medical treatment. They also did not know that many adult refugees do not have medical insurance. The recommendations that each workshop group formulated addressed these needs.

The Network provides important assistance for those who otherwise would “fall through the cracks” in social services. We were able to help refugees understand how to contribute to decisions and to alert planners to the needs of at least half of the thousands of refugees in San Diego County.

## A New Connection

During 2010, we were invited to apply for inclusion on the Website, Global Giving ([globalgiving.org](http://globalgiving.org)). This Washington, D.C.-based organization brings together non-profit groups and prospective donors. Once our new name **The Episcopal Refugee Network of San Diego** was officially posted in Sacramento, we submitted the required documentation to Global Giving. The next step was to respond and state our challenge, obtain more than 50 individual donors



globalgiving

of at least \$10 each, and raise a total of \$4,000. The donations had to be made via the Global Giving Website, and had to be received between November 29 and December 22, 2010.

The Network succeeded in meeting the challenge and we now have a project permanently on the Global Giving Website. This site gives us worldwide visibility and opportunities to connect to more individuals and corporations interested in our work.

We extend a huge “thank you” to those of you who spread the word and helped get us through the challenge! Check out our entry at [globalgiving.org/projects/refugee-self-reliance-california](http://globalgiving.org/projects/refugee-self-reliance-california).

## Crockpot Christmas

It's time to take out the presents! Crock-pots and blankets are stacked on a table ready to be loaded into the Refugee Network truck for delivery. They have just arrived from the Angel Tree at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Encinitas and they will be delivered to the apartments of the Karen, Karenni and Chin refugees from Myanmar and to Darfuri and Sudanese refugees. Christmas generosity provides a time to distribute essential items like cooking pots and blankets to those most in need.

Family Outreach staff member, Nadia Agori, and driver, Abdelhalim Mohammed, are standing in front. Nadia's sister Siama, is standing at the back and is a regular volunteer in food deliveries each week. Their first stops will be in apartment blocks in City Heights and later they will deliver other supplies to our El Cajon base.



*St. Andrew's Encinitas sent items from their angel tree for refugee families Here Staff members Nadia and Abdul'halim, and volunteer Seama prepare to distribute the gifts*


# Various Ways to Support The Episcopal Refugee Network


We want to remind our supporters about the various ways they can support the Refugee Network! The following list of donors contributes a percentage of your purchase to us, with no additional fees!

**Ralphs** If you shop at Ralph's you are in for a treat! Ralph's Community Contribution Program will donate a percentage (up to 4 percent) of your overall purchases to us every quarter. All you have to do is register your Ralph's REWARDS card with the Episcopal Refugee Network by taking the enclosed letter to Ralph's on your next shopping trip. The clerk will scan your REWARDS card and the letter once to link your card and the Refugee Network. Added bonus: you can pass your letter on to your friends, family and co-workers so more people can donate to our cause!



Alternatively, you can register your REWARDS card online with **The Episcopal Refugee Network** at [ralphs.com](http://ralphs.com). Click on Services, Community Contribution, then click on enroll and complete the information with the organization number: 92143.

 **causemunity** If you like to shop online, please use our personalized Causemunity Web site. Make [episcopalrefugeenetwork.causemunity.org](http://episcopalrefugeenetwork.causemunity.org) a favorite on your browser and use this link to do all of your shopping. There are hundreds of retailers including Target, Amazon, Office Depot, iTunes, Dell and many others who will donate a percentage of your purchase to the Refugee Network!

 **eScrip** The Episcopal Refugee Network earns cash rewards when you shop through eScrip vendors! All you have to do is register your grocery shopper cards and/or debit and credit cards. When you use registered cards and shop at participating merchants, a portion of your purchases are automatically donated to us! You can also use the eScrip Online Mall and eScrip Dining by Rewards Network. Go to [escrip.com/program/3ways/index.jsp](http://escrip.com/program/3ways/index.jsp) to learn more. You will need our Group ID Number to link your information to us: **500024338**.

If you know of any other organizations that have similar rewards programs, or if you have questions about those listed here, please email our Sheré Martinez, Development Coordinator at [smrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:smrefugeenetwork@gmail.com).

## I Want to Support The Episcopal Refugee Network

I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for this needful cause.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Network has its own 501(C) 3 tax exempt status.

*To donate, please include this form with a check and send to:*

*The Episcopal Refugee Network, 4305 University Ave, Suite 630, San Diego, CA 92105*

*Or you can donate by credit card online, through our website [episcopalrefugeenetwork.org](http://episcopalrefugeenetwork.org)*