

## **International Welcome Center to Launch Refugee Resettlement Program in the City of Barberton**

**Barberton, Ohio - [April 18, 2024]** - The International Welcome Center in partnership with World Relief, is proud to announce the launch of a refugee resettlement program aimed at offering a new home and hope to individuals and families in need. This initiative, in partnership with the City of Barberton, Barberton City Schools, ASIA, Inc, County of Summit Executive Ilene Shapiro's Department of Job and Family Services and many others, underscores Barberton's commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and helping those in need.

The refugee resettlement program in Barberton is designed to provide a safe and supportive environment for those fleeing conflict, persecution, and hardship in their home countries. Through collaboration with various community organizations, local businesses, and volunteers, the program aims to facilitate the successful integration of refugees into the fabric of the Magic City.

Mayor William Judge expressed his enthusiasm for the refugee resettlement initiative, stating, "Barberton has a long history of welcoming new residents with open arms. We are thrilled to extend our hospitality to refugees seeking a better life and opportunities for a brighter future. By embracing diversity and promoting cultural exchange, we enrich the long history of strong ethnic neighborhoods in Barberton."

The International Welcome Center's Executive Director, Christina Hodgkinson, expressed her excitement for the City of Barberton and points to its long history of welcoming immigrants. "The Magic City is called the 'Magic City' for a reason. It is because of the residents, businesses, and a great sense of community. Refugees need help and Barberton was selected because of its deep tradition of embracing people from all different backgrounds — who better than Barberton to help."

"In my more than 30 years in education I have worked with many refugees and have always been impressed by how hard they work to learn our language and customs and excel in our schools and communities," said Jeff Ramnytz, Superintendent of Barberton City School District.

"We're excited to welcome and support more refugees as we open in new communities," said World Relief Senior Vice President of US Programs Aerlande Wontamo. "In the midst of an unprecedented global displacement crisis, we're eager to do more — in more places — to help refugees to rebuild their lives in the United States."

We are confident that the City of Barberton and its residents recognize the hardships faced by refugees and remain committed to providing essential services, housing assistance, employment opportunities, and educational support to help them rebuild their lives. Residents of Barberton are encouraged to extend a warm welcome to the newcomers, fostering a spirit of unity and solidarity within the community.

For more information on how to support the refugee resettlement program in Barberton or to get involved as a volunteer or sponsor, please contact the International Welcome Center at [info@theiwc.org](mailto:info@theiwc.org).

Together, let us build a more inclusive, compassionate, and vibrant Barberton for all its residents.

Contact:

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**International  
Welcome  
Center**

The International Welcome Center is a nonprofit 501c3 that empowers the foreign-born in the greater Akron area in their pursuit of happiness. As representatives of Christ, we partner with them to legally navigate the immigration system and integrate into the community through the power of love, service and friendship.

[www.theiwc.org](http://www.theiwc.org)

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