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Lauren Carl

lauren.carl@pinkston.co

703-388-6734

World Relief Announces New Office in Western New York, Expands Services Available to Refugees in Region

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Today, World Relief announces a new office in Rochester, New York. The new office, named World Relief Western New York, will advance World Relief’s presence in the western New York region to best serve the refugee community.

World Relief Western New York is a continuation of the good work started by Refuge Rochester, a nonprofit launched in 2018 by Ken Pitcher to bridge the gap between Christians and their refugee neighbors. Refuge Rochester also acted as a platform for Christians participating in refugee ministry to connect with one another.

World Relief Western New York currently has two professional staff members: **Ken Pitcher, Office Director**, and **Tiffany Wood, Program Director**. The focus at present is on renovating the new office and developing programming for the fall, which will include World Relief [Good Neighbor Teams](#) and will likely have a focus on mental health and financial literacy courses. World Relief Western New York hopes to continue to expand its services in the years to come.

“The mission of educating the American church on the plight of refugees and on the Biblical mandate to welcome the stranger is close to our heart at World Relief Western New York,” said **Pitcher**. “We want to bring attention to the refugees in the western New York region and encourage the community to come alongside them as they navigate transitioning into a new country.”

Rochester, where the new office is located, first designated itself as a sanctuary city in 1986 and is still designated as such today. For decades, Rochester has resettled one percent of the refugees who enter the U.S. each year. Today, there still remains a significant need for services for immigrants from all walks of life. In the last 10 years, most refugees have come from Bhutan, Cuba, Burma, Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Congo.

“Over 10,000 refugees have been resettled in Rochester since 2000 from over 35 different countries. World Relief Western New York’s mission is to empower the church to embrace local refugees as a way of welcoming Jesus,” said **Tim Breene, CEO of World Relief**. “Our staff and volunteers aim to cultivate meaningful and mutually transformative relationships between Americans and refugees in the community.”

Refuge Rochester’s transition into World Relief Western New York will broaden the structure of work previously being done by the organization and increase its capacity to serve the refugee community and educate the American church.



“World Relief Western New York welcomes the opportunity to grow and expand our capacity to reach and assist the most vulnerable members of our region,” said **Wood**.

World Relief Western New York hosted a virtual town hall on June 16 for churches, partners and interested volunteers to receive information about the transition and get to know the new staff. An in-person gala fundraiser is scheduled for September 30, 2021, which will be an evening filled with multicultural food and music, as well as stories from both refugees and American community members who have been impacted by their relationships with refugees.

“We’re looking forward to collaborating and enhancing the great work already being done in the resettlement community in Rochester and the broader Western New York region. We want to work together to help refugees,” said **Wood**.

To learn more about World Relief’s work in Western New York, visit worldrelief.org/western-ny.

About World Relief

World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization that brings sustainable solutions to the world’s greatest problems – disasters, extreme poverty, violence, oppression, and mass displacement. For over 75 years, we’ve partnered with churches and community leaders in the U.S. and abroad to bring hope, healing and transformation to the most vulnerable.

Learn more at worldrelief.org.

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