



# HOW WE BUILD BELONGING

Envisioning a just world in which we each  
belong, prosper, and thrive in the place we  
now call home, no matter where we came from.

**2022 ANNUAL REPORT**



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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**The start of 2022** was marked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, prompting the displacement of millions of people. We saw the capacity of communities to welcome with resilience — a theme that was underscored again as communities continued to support Afghan arrivals, asylum seekers sent by bus from the U.S. southern border, and many others seeking safety and opportunity. At the same, this abundant welcoming spirit stood in contrast to narratives and policies rooted in an inequitable hierarchy of welcome that far too often makes factors of identity — race, class, origin, religion, and more — the basis for belonging, rather than our shared humanity.

It has never been more evident that our capacity to flourish depends on casting off these vestiges of racism, colonialism, and our propensity to demonize the “other,” and embracing a future in which our collective potential finds its basis in our inherent dignity and worth, and in the capacity of communities to be abundant in their welcome. As you'll read about in this report, this is a challenge that the welcoming movement is confronting head-on.

As mass migration prompted by climate change looms, we cannot afford to solve humanity's greatest challenge by drawing up the gates and enclosing ourselves in fortresses, especially ones that segregate our societies and limit our potential. Instead, we need to reimagine a future where we can live and thrive together at our greatest potential, regardless of birthplace, and build welcoming infrastructure that expands the capacity of communities to adapt to demographic shifts with abundance and equity as north stars.

As Mahatma Gandhi famously said, “The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.” Today, welcoming communities across the U.S. and globe are doing just that — demonstrating just what we are capable of. This report and our work at Welcoming America is a tribute to their leadership, and to the power of the growing welcoming movement. Together, we are not only building a more just, inclusive world but imagining that such a thing can be possible, and how we can all share in its potential.



**Rachel Perić**

Executive Director, Welcoming America



# OUR IMPACT: HOW WELCOMING BUILDS BELONGING

In local communities and at the broadest level, welcoming is the long-haul work of creating successful, multiracial democracies in which every person belongs. To us, welcoming is both a verb and an adjective — the “how” and the “what” of our work.

In 2022, we launched a [strategic plan](#) to guide our work for the next four years. We’re working to achieve three key goals:

- 1 Building local welcoming infrastructure:** Certify a total of 50 diverse archetypal places as welcoming, demonstrating measurable progress in **building public and multisector infrastructure for immigrant equity** at the local level.
- 2 Growing the field of welcoming:** Create a **bigger and more organized field of practice** that positions communities to achieve the Welcoming Standard.
- 3 Engaging new champions:** Create **access points for new champions** to offer their time, resources, and voices.

By 2026, Welcoming America will help address systemic discrimination and disparities encountered by immigrants by advancing a strong foundation of welcoming in local communities.





## 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Grew our network to

**287**  
NATIONAL  
MEMBERS

Expanded the Welcoming International Alliance to  
**6 GLOBAL PARTNERS:**

| BertelsmannStiftung



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



NEW ZEALAND  
IMMIGRATION

WELCOMING  
AMERICA



Welcoming  
Australia



WELCOMING  
WEEK

Celebrated **10 YEARS OF WELCOMING WEEK**  
with the theme “Where We Belong”



Reached  
milestone of  
**17 CERTIFIED  
WELCOMING  
COMMUNITIES**,  
putting us on track  
to certifying  
50 places



**GATHERED OVER  
450 PARTICIPANTS**

to learn and share  
best practices with  
peers at the 2022  
Welcoming  
Interactive

**OVER 3,300 GLOBAL  
PARTICIPANTS**

in 75+ hours of  
Welcoming America  
events, webinars,  
and training  
programs

## THE GROWING GLOBAL MOVEMENT OF WELCOMING

Welcoming is a core American value, but also a global one. Around the world, leaders are rethinking what it means to welcome those seeking safety or new opportunities to the places they call home. While one prevailing narrative may suggest that nations are becoming more insular, our work shows that welcoming is a value shared by many, no matter where in the world we are.

A world map with a teal background. Three callout boxes are overlaid on the map: one over Canada, one over the United States, and one over the United Kingdom. Each box contains text about a local welcoming movement and the number of members.

Canada: Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada

**80 MEMBERS**

United States:  
Welcoming America


**287 MEMBERS**

United Kingdom:  
Inclusive Cities (University  
of Oxford Centre on  
Migration, Policy & Society)

**12 MEMBERS**

Among our partners and members in 2022, we know that over 500 local governments and NGOs worldwide are implementing welcoming policies and practices in their communities. This is a snapshot of the growing global movement of welcoming led by our Welcoming Network members and Welcoming International Alliance partners.

*Note: Figures are based on membership in 2022.*



Germany:  
[Bertelsmann Stiftung](#)  
**35 MEMBERS**

Over 500 local governments  
and NGOs worldwide  
are implementing welcoming policies  
and practices in their communities

Australia:  
[Welcoming Australia](#)  
**72 MEMBERS**

New Zealand:  
[Welcoming Communities](#)  
(Immigration New Zealand)  
**27 MEMBERS**









# BUILDING LOCAL WELCOMING INFRASTRUCTURE

Welcoming America supports communities that are **building local welcoming infrastructure** with programs that enhance local capacity and strengthen multisector partnerships.

How do communities create equitable and inclusive infrastructure? Building welcoming infrastructure requires collaborative agenda setting, policies, and practices across government and the community that advance belonging and civic, social, and economic participation.

Our Welcoming Standard is a comprehensive roadmap for welcoming infrastructure in the United States. In 2022, we laid the groundwork for a new Welcoming Standard, and we look forward to seeing how the updates will continue to transform communities in 2023 and beyond.

## CERTIFIED WELCOMING: A PATHWAY TO DISTINGUISH LOCAL WELCOMING WORK

Many places call themselves welcoming, but how can they truly demonstrate how equity and inclusion work are happening in their community? **Certified Welcoming** is our answer.



The [Certified Welcoming](#) program makes the value of welcoming concrete. By using the Welcoming Standard to develop welcoming infrastructure, communities that become Certified Welcoming **exemplify the practices and policies that cultivate belonging** among immigrants and refugees.

### AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN CERTIFIED WELCOMING:



**73%** of Certified Welcoming places have improved language access in their local government.



**41%** have created or improved local government processes to regularly assess the needs and priorities of the local immigrant community



**55%** of certified local governments have begun providing training for public safety staff on working with diverse populations

Following our commitment in 2021 to update the Welcoming Standard, we dedicated time and resources to **revamping the Welcoming Standard and Certified Welcoming program this year**. This involved:

- Analyzing thousands of comments from partners and the public on ways to reflect current best practices in the Welcoming Standard,
- Piloting the new Certified Welcoming process and criteria in three communities, and
- Redesigning the program to create a clearer path for places to get started on their welcoming journey through a star designation system.

On the road to certifying 50 diverse Certified Welcoming places by 2026, we used our strategic plan to state our ongoing commitment to intentionally working with a broad range of communities — urban and rural, small and large, geographically and demographically diverse — that represent the variety of places where newcomers make their home when they come to the United States.



**Being Certified Welcoming strengthens and affirms [the welcoming work] you're doing. It is a very rigorous process because someone else was evaluating us, telling us what we were doing well and what could be improved. The Certified Welcoming process puts a name towards that work.**

—Jeannette Horwitz, Program Coordinator, City of Dayton, Ohio (Certified Welcoming since 2017)



Maintaining the status of Certified Welcoming requires localities to go through a recertification process to ensure compliance with the Welcoming Standard. The Louisville Metro Government in Kentucky became Certified Welcoming in 2018 and recertified in 2022. Over the last decade, Louisville's immigrant population has grown rapidly. To Amos Izerimana, director of Louisville's Office for Immigrant Affairs, Certified Welcoming is an important distinction for the city because it demonstrates the community's long-term efforts and pride in being an inclusive, welcoming community for newcomers. The recertification process offered an opportunity for the local government to reflect on how partnerships help the city engage with immigrant and refugee communities.

**This year we certified 6 new communities and recertified 3 places, raising the total number of Certified Welcoming places to 17.**

#### **NEW CERTIFICATIONS**

- Charlotte, North Carolina
- Detroit, Michigan
- Nashua, New Hampshire
- Portland, Maine
- San José, California
- Toledo, Ohio

#### **RECERTIFICATIONS**

- Lancaster, Pennsylvania
- Louisville, Kentucky
- Salt Lake County, Utah

**To view a full list of Certified Welcoming places, visit [CertifiedWelcoming.org](https://CertifiedWelcoming.org).**

## THE WELCOMING NETWORK: DEEPENING OUR COLLECTIVE POWER

Our Welcoming Network members represent nearly **300 communities in 46 U.S. states**. Each of our members is leading the important work of transforming their communities to be more inclusive, welcoming places for immigrants and non-immigrants alike.

### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

#### Advancing Language Access in Akron, Ohio

To welcome immigrants and refugees to Akron, the [International Institute of Akron](#) offers a variety of services, from education to employment and legal services. **Language interpretation and translation services are a critical resource** the organization offers their community.

Bhim P. Dhungana is a core certified healthcare interpreter and works as an interpreting coordinator at the International Institute of Akron. He has been an active participant in Welcoming America's language access workshops for several years.

"I want to be up to date with the latest rules and regulations affecting this profession," he shares. "By obtaining knowledge from this workshop, **I am educating myself as well as I am able to guide other contractor interpreters who are working with our agency** to the better direction and help them to learn more about this field."

In 2022, we offered two series of language access workshops to Welcoming Network members in partnership with [Global Wordsmiths](#). Through 12 virtual workshops, over 60 participants gained fundamental tools and resources to create more effective and equitable language access policies and procedures.

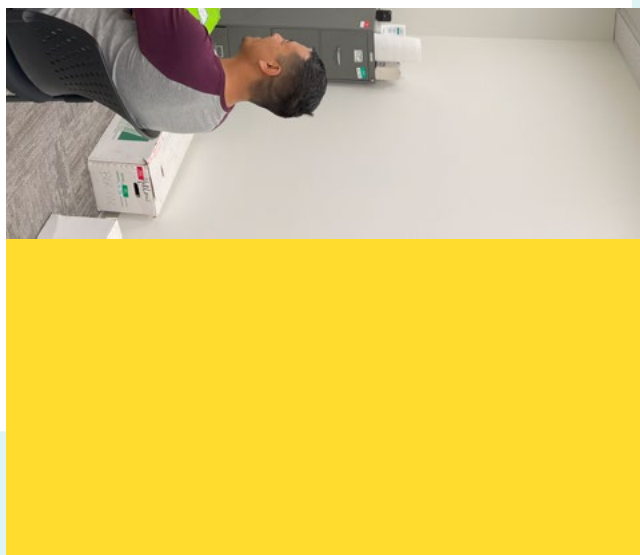


Photo courtesy of Bhim P. Dhungana



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### Facilitating Belonging: A Learning Lab for Leaders

Silos, both structural and interpersonal, prevent true belonging. Thanks to funding from the Walmart Foundation and others, we launched a new program — the Belonging Learning Lab — to equip leaders with the skills to tear down those silos in their communities.

Through peer learning and guest presenters from the field, 65 Welcoming Network members strengthened their understanding of contact theory, learned techniques to engage in difficult conversations, and walked away with practical methods to build bridges between groups that otherwise might not work together.

One participant described the impact of the program: “One of the thing[s] that the learning lab did for me was to **help me stay inspired... and to keep thinking beyond the bridge that we are building in our community**. Every month

was a new topic and hearing other members sharing resources...has been continuously very helpful.”

Participants were encouraged to utilize what they learned to engage residents in “do-it-together” activities that build bridges between different groups in their community. Another participant reflected, “**The Learning Lab equipped me with ways to connect individuals to their history and provided a positive approach to having difficult conversations.** It was beneficial as it taught us how to work together with diverse populations.”

The peer learners enjoyed the four sessions so much that they requested additional time to meet to take their conversations to a deeper level and continue to network with each other.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees visits San José, California

In May 2022, the Certified Welcoming City of San José was among [40+ local governments from around the world](#) that delivered actions at the United Nations during the first International Migration Review Forum in New York City. Welcoming America staff worked with our member, [the San José Office of Racial Equity](#), to submit a pledge to the Global Compact on Refugees that secured them an invitation to the forum.

**San José became the second city in the United States to sign a pledge to the Global Compact on Refugees.** The pledge complements the Welcoming San José Plan which outlines actions to establish equitable systems, improve access to services, advance educational and

economic opportunities, and foster trust and communication in the local community.

These efforts drew the attention of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi. Later in the year, Grandi visited San José to learn about local refugee support efforts from city staff, partner organizations, and local former refugees.

He [expressed](#), “**Cities play a critical role in facilitating civic, economic, and social inclusion for refugees.** The City of San José is a great example, showing leadership and working to ensure those who are forced to flee their homes have support and opportunities to reach their fullest potential.”

## BUILDING CAPACITY TO SUPPORT REFUGEES

### RESPONDING TO THE MOMENT: NETWORK MEMBERS WELCOME AFGHAN REFUGEES

Between August 2021 and September 2022, approximately 88,500 Afghan refugees arrived in communities across the United States.

In response, Welcoming America partnered with Open Society Foundations to co-lead [a grant program](#) to support 12 communities across the U.S. in welcoming Afghan arrivals. The grantees participated in a community of practice where they could share challenges and troubleshoot with a cohort of local leaders working to build collaborative welcoming infrastructure.

Over the last few years, over 1,800 Afghan asylum seekers arrived in Michigan. The [Office of Global Michigan](#) was awarded a grant through our program

to coordinate pro bono outreach, support interpretation services, and provide a network of legal service providers to support Afghan refugees.

“As we learned early on of the need for asylum application supports, **we wanted to ensure a coordinated statewide process for legal service providers and partners**,” says Ben Cabanaw, deputy director of the Office of Global Michigan. “One thing I have been excited about is the connection and further collaboration we have created with a network of legal service providers. **We hope that given the many needs across additional populations arriving to Michigan, we have created a replicable standard in response.**”

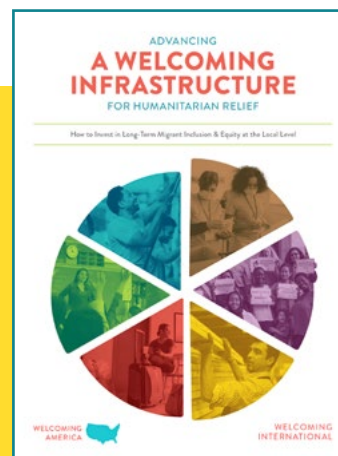


Local government leaders are playing a critical role in welcoming Afghans and helping them to settle into new communities. We are proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with them in welcoming these newcomers. In making these grants and others like it we recognize that partnerships between local governments and community groups are essential in building inclusive communities and are contributing to a growing movement of ‘welcome’ across the country.”

— Laleh Ispahani, co-director of Open Society-U.S

### ADVANCING A WELCOMING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

As local communities prepare to welcome refugees displaced by war, conflict, and climate disasters, **creating the long-term infrastructure** needed to support and engage migrants and non-migrants will **ensure that everyone belongs and thrives** in these communities. Published in late 2022, this tool outlines five approaches to creating equitable welcoming infrastructure for humanitarian relief.





# GROWING THE FIELD OF WELCOMING

2022 was a year of reimagining how welcomers can work together, taking what we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to our in-person gatherings where we celebrated and advanced a global narrative of welcoming.

Every year, we strive to create a bigger and more organized field of welcoming practice. **Growing the field of welcoming** means we are continually learning, collaborating, refining, and communicating *what* it means to be welcoming and *who* is building a more welcoming society. Developing more strategic partnerships and programs is expanding the number of our member communities who can achieve the Welcoming Standard.

Late in the year, the White House reestablished the Task Force on New Americans, which was the result of many years of advocacy and leadership from our partners and network. We are encouraged to see more immigrant equity infrastructure developing at all levels of government.



*The participants of the Welcoming International Alliance Convening gather for a group photo at the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Lilburn, GA.*

## LEARNING FROM INTERNATIONAL WELCOMING PRACTICE

Sixteen people from our Welcoming International Alliance partners [gathered virtually](#) in early 2022 to discuss how programming can evolve to meet the needs of local members within each country. Leaders from the Alliance partner organizations came away with several **key practices for virtual and hybrid engagement** that they learned throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Later in the year, the group came together in person for the annual Welcoming International Alliance Convening at Welcoming America's headquarters in Decatur, Georgia for **discussions of good practice related to immigrant leadership, climate migration, and more**. Alliance partners spent time networking with local officials and visiting local municipalities.

## LOCAL RESPONSES TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Both the U.S. and Italy experienced renewed efforts to welcome refugees migrating from Afghanistan and Ukraine in 2021 and 2022. How did local communities manage a welcome response?

Welcoming America organized the [U.S.-Italy Welcoming Communities Exchange](#) in cooperation with the International Rescue Committee and Refugees Welcome Italia and with support from the U.S. Mission to Italy. Fifty participants from

the U.S. and Italy discussed local examples, best practices, and **suggestions for implementing a mentoring or community navigator model** as part of welcoming strategies.

A participant reflected on the impact of the exchange, **"We now have even more trusted resources of knowledge to keep improving the figure of mentors and their impact in migrant integration projects."**



# FUND TO FOSTER BELONGING

## WELCOMING REFUGEES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Colleges and universities have the power to influence welcoming. Students from across town, across the country, and across the globe converge on college campuses, making vibrant and diverse micro-communities within a city or state. Institutions of higher education have an opportunity to welcome not only students, but refugees and other newcomers, to create more inclusive communities for all.

[Every Campus A Refuge](#) (ECAR) at Guilford College is modeling **what's possible when higher education's influence and resources are used to support incoming refugees**. ECAR at Guilford College, a member of the Welcoming Network, supports colleges and universities to partner with their local refugee resettlement agencies to house refugees on campus grounds and assist them in resettlement while transforming their students' educational experiences.

With support from a \$40,000 grant from Welcoming America's [Fund to Foster Belonging](#), ECAR hosted 200 participants at its first annual ECAR Gathering on Guilford College's campus in September 2022. The conference focused on "do-it-together" activities between refugees and non-refugees and offered space for people to share challenges and experiences related to becoming refugee resettlement campuses.

The Gathering was co-designed by a stakeholder committee representing all of the groups who



*Photo credit: Every Campus A Refuge*

attended: including folks from K-12 schools, higher education, refugee resettlement advocates and organizations, refugee community members, and more.

ECAR's innovative model demonstrates **how contact theory and intergroup bridging activities can bring together newcomers and long-time neighbors**. A forthcoming manual from ECAR will share what they learned from bringing together higher education, refugee communities, and refugee resettlement organizations at the Gathering. The manual provides campus and community leaders with best practices and strategies to establish resettlement campuses.

In addition to ECAR, five other Fund to Foster Belonging grantees developed innovative projects that bring people from all walks of life together to foster belonging.



**We hope this project will contribute to system change in how higher education supports refugee families and imagines its role as a central actor [and] integral stakeholder in the advancement of newcomers' welcome, belonging, and inclusion.**

— Diya Abdo, Ph.D., founder and director of Every Campus A Refuge



## CONVENING IN PERSON AT THE WELCOMING INTERACTIVE

Every year, we are thrilled to bring welcomers across the country and globe together to share best practices at our conference, the [Welcoming Interactive](#). In May 2022, over **450 people gathered in Charlotte, North Carolina** — our first in-person Welcoming Interactive since 2019.

Sessions focused on topics including:

- **Language justice** as a framework to ensure that people have the rights to language, culture, self-expression, and equal participation no matter which languages they speak
- “Reclaiming Blackness in the Immigrant Experience,” drawing awareness to the importance of **Black voices in decision-making spaces**
- Strategies for **rural welcoming**, featuring perspectives from U.S.-based members in Colorado and practitioners from Australia
- **Weaving arts into welcoming efforts** to build community
- The growing need to consider **climate migration** in conversations about immigrant equity and inclusion

*The 2022 Welcoming Interactive was sponsored by the Hispanic Federation, Walmart, Western Union, Bitwise Industries, Norsan Media, Aldersgate, and EnGen.*



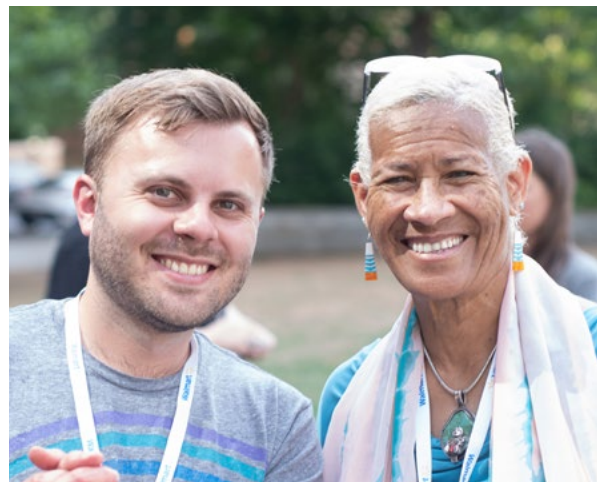


Participants of our global [Rural Communities Welcoming Exchange](#) program came together to learn from each other at the Welcoming Interactive. From Gunnison, Colorado, Ricardo Esqueda and Yazmin Molina (on the left) gave examples of community engagement efforts that increased COVID-19 vaccination uptake and local government responsiveness. Kylie Lee and Natalia Muszkat from Gladstone in Queensland, Australia (on the right) discussed their local government's Indigenous reconciliation action plan and how efforts from [Welcoming Cities Australia](#) build upon it.



**At the Welcoming Interactive, I see the uphill journey ahead of us more clearly but I also have a team to walk with, and that means the world. We must continue to be in-the-know (even on the hard stuff) and lean on one another in this work.**

— 2022 Welcoming Interactive participant



## BUILDING SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC INCLUSION

For over five years, Welcoming America and Global Detroit have worked together to support economic development opportunities created for and by immigrants. One core product of this partnership is the Welcoming Economies program.

Through Welcoming Economies, our Welcoming Network members and their local economic development partners access skill-building resources, discussions with content area experts, and tailored coaching.

In 2022, Welcoming America hosted a series of **eight webinars** to showcase the impactful strategies, initiatives, and partnerships that support **inclusive economic development in localities across the network**. The Welcoming Economies webinars featured 23 guest speakers who spoke on topics ranging from workforce development for working-class immigrants to assisting immigrant women in economic inclusion. Over 200 participants engaged across 11.5 hours of inclusive economic development training.

### **BRIDGING LANGUAGE AND WORK: SOLUTIONS TO INVEST IN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE TALENT**

A collaboration between the Tent Partnership for Refugees and JFF (Jobs for the Future), this resource outlines how companies can implement solutions to overcome language barriers to help refugees and immigrants get into jobs faster as they work towards local language proficiency. Welcoming America shared insights and examples from the Welcoming Network and the Welcoming International Alliance with the report authors to inform the content.







# ENGAGING

# NEW CHAMPIONS

To create a truly welcoming world, we need as many people in the movement as possible. To that end, Welcoming America is working to create **access points for new champions** to offer their time, resources, and voices.

Often, that means that we seek out individuals and organizations building welcoming in unexpected places. Rural towns and counties, local community foundations, and members of the local school board all can be leaders and have opportunities to demonstrate welcoming values in their work.

By making resources that are accessible, such as through Welcoming Week, we reach millions of people who have the potential to become welcomers.

## **“WHERE WE BELONG:” CELEBRATING THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF WELCOMING WEEK**

For the past decade, Welcoming Week has taken root in communities through events, ceremonies, and other actions to commemorate the values that make places welcoming for all who live there. What started as just a handful of events in the U.S. has evolved into over 450 gatherings, webinars, and workshops held across 32 states and seven countries.

The 2022 theme **“Where We Belong”** aimed to go deeper and spark individual reflection on how and why belonging occurs, and ways we can break barriers so that places can foster belonging for all, including immigrants and

refugees. Thank you to the communities that hosted events and brought people of all backgrounds together to celebrate the places and spaces where we belong.



**We’re thrilled to join Welcoming Week in its 10th year and expand this movement of communities where everyone can belong.**

— Aleem Ali, CEO, Welcoming Australia



*Special gratitude to our sponsors — Walmart, Western Union, Bitwise Industries, and Welcome.US — for their support of Welcoming Week.*

## WELCOMING WEEK 2022 BY THE NUMBERS:

**OVER  
450 EVENTS**  
took place  
worldwide



More than  
**6.5 MILLION**  
**PEOPLE REACHED**  
on social media



At least **25 COMMUNITIES**  
issued welcoming proclamations,  
resolutions, or messages

Reached  
communities in  
**7 COUNTRIES**  
**ACROSS THE GLOBE,**  
including Australia,  
Romania, Italy,  
and more



**34 PARTNERS** from nonprofits,  
private sector, universities, and beyond  
made Welcoming Week possible

*Photo credits from top to bottom, left to right: Gwinnett County Government (Georgia), Welcome Dayton (Ohio), Welcoming Australia, Graceful Willows Photography (Minnesota)*

## SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY ON SCHOOL BOARDS

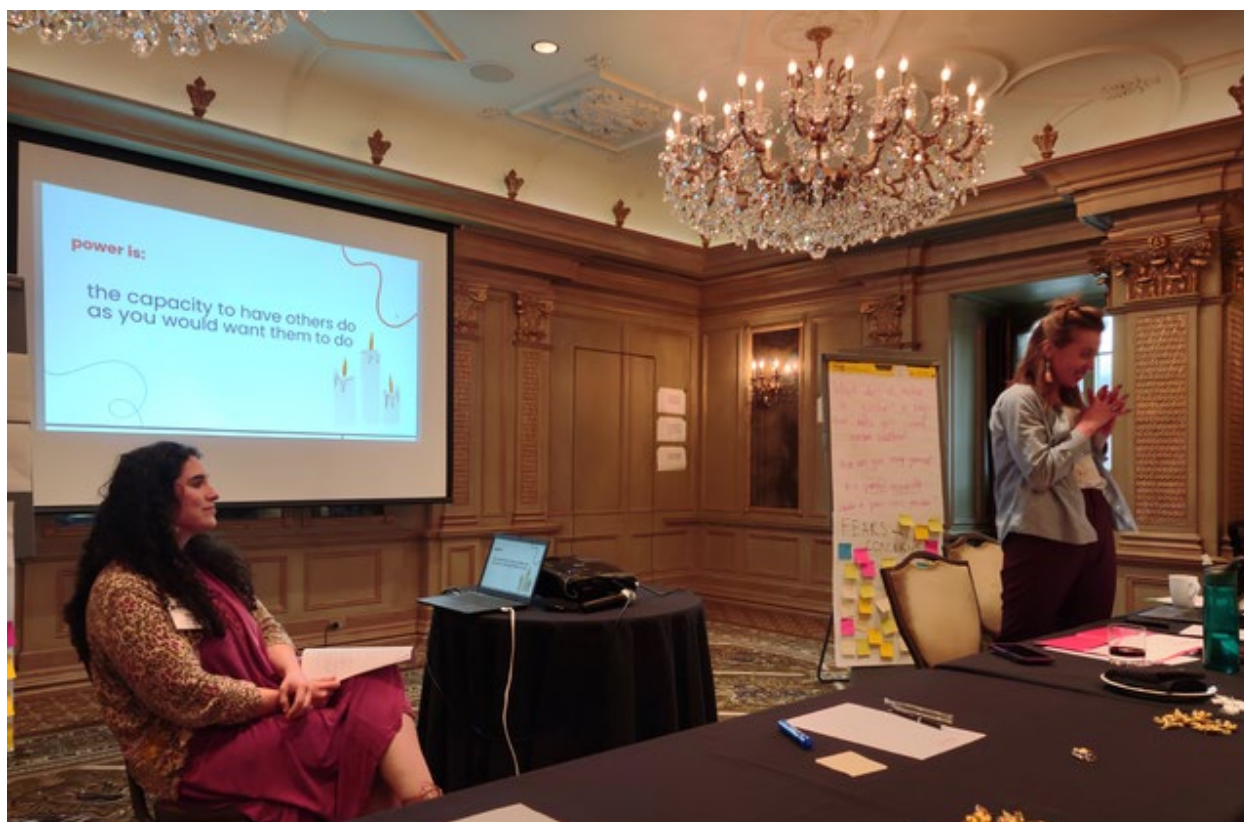
Schools and educational institutions are essential pillars of any community, but especially in places that consider themselves welcoming and inclusive.

In April 2022, Welcoming America partnered with fellow nonprofit organizations Faith Matters Network and Citizens University to host a retreat for school board members to discuss recent trends among school boards, address polarizing issues, and manage conflict.

With the support of the New Pluralists Collaborative, nine school board members from five states gathered with us in Asheville, North Carolina to connect with each other and learn how to continue this important work while sustaining themselves.

The ability to connect with people in similar roles in different states was a shared highlight among participants. **“I made lasting, meaningful connections that will support and sustain my public service,** and believe that I will maintain these relationships, both with the organizations and with the other school board members,” shared a school board member from North Carolina.

As school boards continue to face challenges in navigating partisan tensions and controversial topics, the retreat served as a reminder that community leaders are not alone in the broader struggle for democracy, pluralism, and ultimately, belonging for all.







## COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS ENGAGE IN WELCOMING WORK

How is community philanthropy currently engaging in welcoming work?  
What are the opportunities for community foundations to be champions  
of local immigrant inclusion?

These are questions we pondered in 2022 as **we invited over 20 community foundations to dialogue** about what it means to advance welcoming priorities and build local welcoming infrastructure in their communities.

Community foundations from the interview stage of this project were invited to a special deep-dive session at the 2022 Welcoming Interactive. Ten leaders joined this gathering where they heard a concrete and inspiring example from

a Welcoming Network member about their work to further welcoming efforts in partnership with their local community foundation. The foundations also discussed the Welcoming Standard and its alignment with the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals. These insights inform a white paper released in 2023. We are grateful for support from The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to engage community foundations as new champions of local welcoming work.

## RURAL COMMUNITIES AT THE FOREFRONT OF WELCOMING

Some of the most rapidly diversifying places in America are rural communities with populations under 50,000. We know a **growing number of rural places are looking to formally start or continue advancing in their welcoming journey**, which is why investing in these communities matters to us.

In 2022, as part of our ongoing **Rural Welcoming Initiative**, we selected 10 communities to receive support in building welcoming infrastructure. Participating communities received this support through monthly coaching calls, quarterly peer learning opportunities, and funding for Welcoming Week grants and travel to the Welcoming Interactive. Our 10 selected communities include:

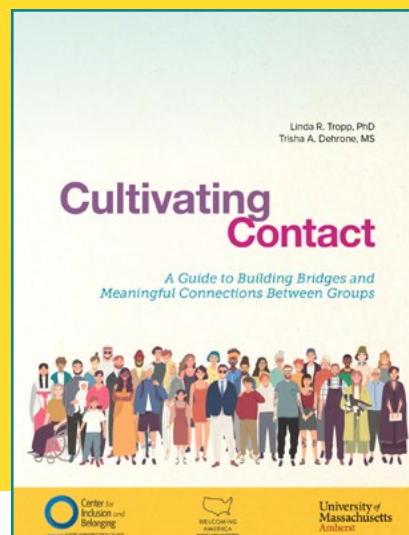
- West Central Initiative – Fergus Falls, Minnesota
- Immigrant Allies (Committee of Humans United for Equality) – Crawfordsville, Indiana
- City of North Liberty, Iowa

- YMCA at Virginia Tech – Blacksburg, Virginia
- City of Gunnison, Colorado
- Project FINE – Winona, Minnesota
- City of Owatonna, Minnesota
- Welcome BG – Bowling Green, Ohio
- Town of Mansfield, Connecticut
- Empowering Families – Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska

Carnegie Corporation of New York and other funders make it possible for us to continue supporting rural communities as welcoming leaders.

### **CULTIVATING CONTACT: A GUIDE TO BUILDING BRIDGES AND MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GROUPS**

Published in partnership with the Center for Inclusion and Belonging at the American Immigration Council and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, this guide harnesses the lessons drawn from decades of research on how to foster a sense of trust and belonging between people from different backgrounds through community-based programs and initiatives. We hope this guide helps set the stage for building meaningful and sustained contact in communities across the United States.



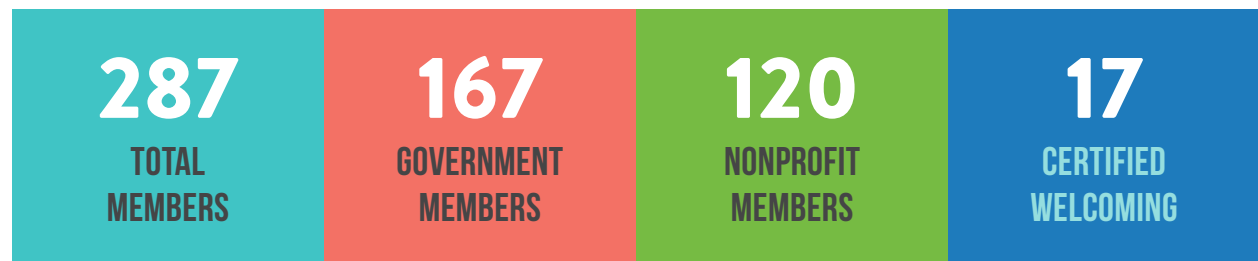






# OUR NETWORK IN 2022

Local governments and nonprofits in our Welcoming Network are committed to building belonging in their communities across the U.S. Across the globe, our Welcoming International Alliance partners are advancing and expanding the work of welcoming with us.



## ALABAMA

Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice ♥  
City of Huntsville Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion 🏠

## ALASKA

Municipality of Anchorage 🏠

## ARIZONA

Pima County Public Library ♥  
The Welcome to America Project ♥

## ARKANSAS

Northwest Arkansas Council ♥

## CALIFORNIA

Aztec Shops ♥  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC) ♥  
City of Anaheim 🏠

City of Chula Vista 🏠★  
City of Daly City 🏠  
City of LA Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs 🏠

City of Redwood City 🏠  
City of San Diego 🏠  
City of San José 🏠★  
City of Sunnyvale 🏠

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) ♥

Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services 🏠

County of San Mateo 🏠★

County of San Diego – Health & Human Services Agency 🏠

Filoli ♥

Pars Equality Center ♥

Santa Clara County (Office of Immigrant Relations) 🏠

YMCA of Greater Long Beach ♥

YMCA of Metro LA ♥

YMCA San Francisco ♥

YMCA of San Diego County ♥

## COLORADO

City of Aurora 🏠

City of Denver Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs 🏠

City of Gunnison 🏠

Hispanic Affairs Project ♥

Intercambio Uniting Communities ♥

One Morgan County 🏠

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning ♥

YMCA of Metropolitan Denver ♥

## CONNECTICUT

Building One Community ♥

City of Stamford 🏠

Hartford Public Library ♥

International Hartford ♥

Otis Library ♥

Town of Mansfield 🏠

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Many Languages  
One Voice (MLOV) ♥

## FLORIDA

Alachua County 🏠

City of Gainesville 🏠

First Coast YMCA ♥

Jewish Community Services South Florida ♥

Miami-Dade Office of New Americans ♥

Rural Women's Health Project ♥

Weave Tales  
Refugee Stories ♥

## GEORGIA

City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs/  
Welcoming Atlanta 🏠

City of Brookhaven 🏠

City of Clarkston 🏠

City of Decatur 🏠

City of Doraville 🏠

**LEGEND** | **ORG TYPE:** Nonprofit: ♥ Government: 🏠 | **CERTIFIED WELCOMING:** Certified: ★ In Progress: ☆

City of East Point 🏠  
 City of Norcross 🏠  
 City of Stockbridge 🏠  
 CivicGeorgia ♥  
 CDF Action ♥  
 Clinica Medicos –  
 Latino LinQ ♥  
 Corners Outreach ♥  
 Gwinnett County  
 Government 🏠  
 Welcoming Avondale  
 Estates 🏠

## HAWAII

Maui County Dept. of  
 Housing & Human  
 Concerns Immigrant  
 Services Division 🏠

## IDAHO

City of Boise 🏠★  
 Idaho Office for Refugees  
 at Jannus, Inc. ♥  
 Unity Alliance  
 of Southern Idaho ♥

## ILLINOIS

Champaign County  
 Economic Development  
 Corporation ♥  
 City of Bloomington 🏠  
 City of Champaign 🏠★  
 Syrian Community  
 Network ♥  
 The Immigration Project ♥  
 YMCA of the University  
 of Illinois ♥

## INDIANA

Amani Family Services, Inc.  
 (Welcoming Ft. Wayne) ♥  
 Center for  
 Healing & Hope ♥

City of Bloomington 🏠  
 City of Southbend 🏠  
 Immigrant Allies  
 (Committee of Humans  
 for Equality) ♥  
 Immigrant Welcome  
 Center ♥  
 Johnson County Public  
 Libraries, Adult  
 Learning Center ♥  
 Otis R Bowen Center  
 for Human Services ♥  
 Welcoming Michiana ♥

## IOWA

Centro Latino Iowa ♥  
 City of Cedar Rapids 🏠  
 City of North Liberty 🏠  
 City of Sioux City 🏠  
 Johnson County 🏠  
 Marshalltown  
 YMCA-YWCA ♥  
 One Siouxland ♥  
 Tapestry Farms ♥  
 West Des Moines  
 Community Schools ♥

## KANSAS

Catholic Charities of  
 Southwest Kansas ♥  
 City of Dodge City 🏠  
 International Rescue  
 Committee in Kansas ♥  
 Johnson County/Johnson  
 County Developments  
 Support ♥  
 Kansas Hispanic and  
 Latino American  
 Affairs Commission ♥  
 Vibrant Health KC ♥

## KENTUCKY

Catholic Charities  
 of Louisville ♥  
 City of Bowling Green 🏠  
 City of Lexington  
 (Global Lexington) 🏠  
 City of Louisville 🏠★  
 Northern Kentucky  
 Chamber ♥  
 YMCA of Greater  
 Louisville ♥

## LOUISIANA

Catholic Charities  
 of New Orleans ♥  
 City of New Orleans 🏠★  
 Home is Here  
 New Orleans ♥  
 Louisiana Organization  
 for Refugees and  
 Immigrants (LORI) ♥

## MAINE

City of Portland  
 Office of Economic  
 Opportunity 🏠★  
 Community Organizing  
 Alliance ♥  
 Maine Technology  
 Institute (MTI) ♥  
 New England Arab American  
 Organization (NEAAO) ♥  
 YMCA of Southern Maine ♥

## MARYLAND

City of Baltimore Mayor's  
 Office of Immigrant  
 Affairs 🏠★  
 City of Salisbury 🏠  
 Montgomery County  
 (Gilchrist Immigrant  
 Resource Center) 🏠★  
 Prince George's County 🏠  
 Solutions in Hometown  
 Connections ♥

## MASSACHUSETTS

City of Boston Mayor's  
 Office for Immigrant  
 Advancement 🏠  
 City of Cambridge 🏠  
 City of Salem 🏠★  
 Old Colony YMCA ♥  
 Re-Imagining Migration ♥  
 YMCA of Greater Boston ♥

## MICHIGAN

Centro Multicultural  
 La Familia ♥  
 City of Battle Creek 🏠  
 City of Detroit Mayor's  
 Office of Immigrant  
 Affairs & Economic  
 Inclusion 🏠★  
 City of Grand Rapids 🏠  
 City of Sterling Heights 🏠  
 City of Troy 🏠  
 Global Detroit ♥  
 Immigrant & Refugee  
 Resources  
 Collaborative ♥  
 Kent County Administration  
 (Welcoming Kent  
 County) 🏠  
 Michigan Immigrant  
 Rights Center ♥  
 Oakland County Executive 🏠  
 Office of Global Michigan 🏠  
 Ottawa County ♥  
 Washtenaw County 🏠

## MINNESOTA

Arts Midwest ♥  
 City of Austin 🏠  
 City of Minneapolis 🏠  
 City of Owatonna 🏠  
 City of Saint Paul 🏠  
 City of Saint Charles 🏠

**LEGEND** | **ORG TYPE:** Nonprofit: ♥ Government: 🏠 | **CERTIFIED WELCOMING:** Certified: ★ In Progress: ☆

City of Winona 🏠  
 Harold Mezile North  
 Community YMCA ♥  
 James H. Binger Center  
 for New Americans,  
 University of Minnesota  
 Law School ♥  
 Project FINE ♥  
 Region Five Development  
 Commission ♥  
 Southeast Minnesota  
 Together ♥  
 Southern Minnesota  
 Initiative Foundation ♥  
 Southwest Initiative  
 Foundation ♥  
 #UniteCloud ♥  
 Welcome Center, Austin ♥  
 West Central Initiative ♥  
 Worthington  
 Area YMCA ♥  
 YMCA of the North ♥

## MISSOURI

Catholic Charities of Central  
 and Northern Missouri ♥  
 Greater Kansas City  
 Chamber of Commerce 🏠  
 Interfaith Partnership  
 of Greater St. Louis ♥  
 International Institute  
 of St. Louis ♥  
 Kansas City Library Refugee  
 & Immigrant Services  
 & Empowerment ♥  
 Literacy KC ♥  
 Refugee and Immigrant  
 Services and Education  
 (RAISE) ♥  
 St. Louis  
 Mosaic Project ♥

Vitendo 4 Africa ♥  
 YMCA of North  
 Kansas City MO ♥

## NEBRASKA

Centro Hispano  
 Comunitario de  
 Nebraska ♥  
 City of Crete 🏠  
 City of Lincoln 🏠  
 City of South Sioux City 🏠  
 Empowering Families ♥  
 HOPE Esperanza ♥  
 Lancaster County 🏠  
 Nebraska Appleseed ♥  
 YMCA of Greater Omaha ♥

## NEVADA

Northern Nevada  
 International Center ♥

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

City of Nashua 🏠★  
 New Hampshire Alliance  
 of Immigrants &  
 Refugees / Welcoming  
 New Hampshire ♥  
 Welcoming Concord  
 (Second Start) ♥

## NEW JERSEY

Jersey City Division of  
 Immigrant Affairs –  
 Department of Health  
 and Human Services 🏠  
 Metropolitan YMCA of  
 the Oranges/Wayne ♥  
 Municipality  
 of Princeton 🏠

## NEW MEXICO

La Plaza de Encuentro  
 Gathering (Encuentro) ♥

## NEW YORK

African American  
 Institute ♥  
 Hearts and Homes  
 for Refugees ♥  
 International Institute  
 of Buffalo ♥  
 Ithaca Welcomes  
 Refugees ♥  
 Of All Trades ♥  
 RCC-ARA American  
 Russian-Speaking  
 Association for Civil  
 & Human Rights ♥  
 YMCA Of Greater  
 New York ♥  
 YMCA of Greater  
 Rochester ♥

## NORTH CAROLINA

City of Charlotte 🏠★  
 City of Durham 🏠  
 City of Greensboro 🏠  
 City of High Point 🏠  
 Episcopal Farmworker  
 Ministry ♥  
 Every Campus A Refuge  
 at Guilford College ♥  
 International House  
 of Metrolina ♥  
 Latino Community  
 Development Center ♥  
 Refugee Community  
 Partnership ♥  
 Town of Apex 🏠  
 Uniting NC ♥  
 Universal Institute for  
 Successful Aging  
 of Carolinas ♥  
 YMCA of Greater  
 Charlotte ♥

## NORTH DAKOTA

Bismarck Global  
 Neighbors ♥  
 City of Grand Forks 🏠  
 Global Friends Coalition ♥

## OHIO

Cincinnati Compass ♥  
 City of Akron 🏠  
 City of Columbus 🏠  
 City of Dayton 🏠★  
 City of Toledo  
 Human Relations  
 Commission 🏠★  
 Cuyahoga County 🏠★  
 Ebenezer Healthcare  
 Access ♥  
 Global Cleveland ♥  
 International Institute  
 of Akron ♥  
 Lucas County 🏠★  
 Norwood Together ♥  
 RefugeeConnect ♥  
 Summit County 🏠  
 Thrive Mahoning Valley ♥  
 Toledo Lucas County  
 Public Library ♥  
 Wave Pool ♥  
 Welcome BG ♥  
 YMCA of Central Ohio ♥

## OKLAHOMA

City of Tulsa 🏠★  
 YWCA Tulsa ♥

## OREGON

City of Beaverton 🏠  
 City of Bend 🏠  
 City of Portland Office of  
 Community & Civic Life 🏠

**LEGEND** | **ORG TYPE:** Nonprofit: ♥ Government: 🏠 | **CERTIFIED WELCOMING:** Certified: ★ In Progress: ☆



The Environmental Center ♥  
 The Latino Community Association ♥  
 Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District ♥

## PENNSYLVANIA

Allegheny County Department of Human Services 🏠  
 Borough of Dormont 🏠  
 Borough of State College 🏠  
 City of Erie 🏠 ★  
 City of Lancaster 🏠 ★  
 City of Philadelphia Office of Immigrant Affairs 🏠 ★  
 City of Pittsburgh Mayor's Office / Bureau of Neighborhood Empowerment (BNE) 🏠 ★  
 Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership ♥  
 Multicultural Community Resource Center (Erie, PA) ♥  
 Penn State Law Center for Immigrants' Rights Clinic ♥  
 The Global Switchboard ♥

The Welcoming Center ♥  
 Women's Opportunities Resource Center ♥  
 YMCA of the Roses ♥

## RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island Community Food Bank ♥

## SOUTH DAKOTA

Connecting Cultures – Yankton ♥

## TENNESSEE

Catholic Charities of East Tennessee ♥  
 City of Knoxville 🏠  
 Latino Memphis ♥  
 Nashville Food Project ♥  
 Tennessee Immigrant Welcome Center ♥

## TEXAS

Celebration Circle ♥  
 City of Austin 🏠  
 City of Dallas 🏠 ★  
 City of San Antonio 🏠  
 Culturingua ♥  
 YMCA of Greater Houston ♥

## UTAH

City of Draper City 🏠  
 Economic Development Corporation of Utah ♥  
 Glendale Community Council ♥  
 Salt Lake City Mayor's Office, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 🏠  
 Salt Lake County Mayor's Office for New Americans 🏠 ★

## VERMONT

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity ♥

## VIRGINIA

City of Charlottesville 🏠  
 City of Harrisonburg 🏠  
 City of Richmond & Reestablishing Richmond 🏠 ♥  
 City of Roanoke 🏠  
 Welcoming Charlottesville 🏠  
 YMCA of Greater Richmond VA ♥  
 YMCA at Virginia Tech ♥

## WASHINGTON

City of Burien ♥  
 City of Kirkland 🏠  
 City of Redmond 🏠  
 City of Spokane 🏠  
 City of Tacoma Office of Equity and Human Rights 🏠  
 Eastside for All ♥  
 Foundation for International Understanding Through Students (FIUTS) ♥  
 YMCA of Greater Seattle ♥

## WISCONSIN

International Institute of Wisconsin ♥  
 Open Doors for Refugees ♥  
 Racine Family YMCA ♥  
 YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee ♥

## WYOMING

Town of Jackson 🏠

# WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE PARTNERS

## AUSTRALIA

Welcoming Australia

## CANADA

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

## GERMANY

Bertelsmann Stiftung

## NEW ZEALAND

Welcoming Communities (Immigration New Zealand)

## UNITED KINGDOM

Inclusive Cities (University of Oxford Centre on Migration, Policy & Society)

**LEGEND** | **ORG TYPE:** Nonprofit: ♥ Government: 🏠 | **CERTIFIED WELCOMING:** Certified: ★ In Progress: ☆

# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Welcoming America's work would not be possible without the support of welcomers across the nation and world.

We are deeply grateful for our donors and institutional supporters who are building the foundations of welcoming in local communities around the globe. Together, we will develop greater social cohesion, well-being, and prosperity for all.

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Assefa Fund

*Welcoming America strives to list all names accurately. Please contact us for any corrections.*



Bringing people together across communities is essential to building belonging, understanding our shared challenges, and finding the way forward. By bridging new Americans with their neighbors, Welcoming America brings us closer to our vision of a more just, equitable, and connected country.

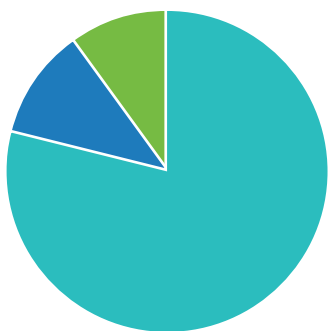
— Shayna Triebwasser, Advisory Team, Senior Program Officer at The Hearthland Foundation

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Welcoming America’s expenses are in three categories: administration, fundraising, and programs.

Administration expenses include all costs and fees associated with general business functions, including technology, accounting, benefits management, and operations. Fundraising expenses include all costs associated with securing and maintaining financial support for our mission and programs, including development staff. Program expenses include all costs necessary to develop, deliver, evaluate, and scale programming, including staff and supplemental partner resource costs.

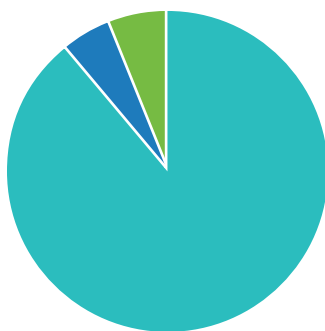
2022



REVENUE:  
\$2.86 MILLION

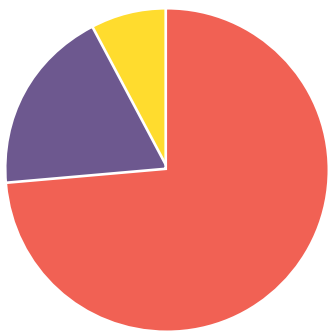
- Fundraising: 79%
- Programs: 11%
- Other income: 10%

2021



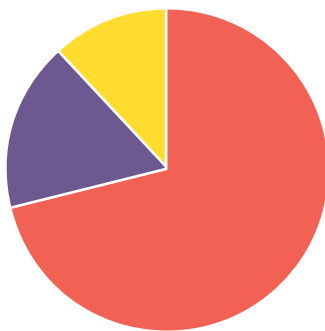
REVENUE:  
\$4.48 MILLION

- Fundraising: 89%
- Programs: 5%
- Other income: 6%



EXPENSES:

- Programs: 76%
- Administration: 17%
- Fundraising: 7%



EXPENSES:

- Programs: 72%
- Administration\*: 17%
- Fundraising: 12%

*\*Formerly “management”*



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Client Partner, Slalom

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### Liz Cedillo-Pereira

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### Feyisola Akintola

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, Welcoming Pittsburgh

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### Ze Min Xiao

Director, Center for Economic Opportunity and Belonging, Economic Development Corporation of Utah

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### Isha Lee

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### Meg Shoemaker Little

Chief Program Officer

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### Daniel Valdez

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Administration and Operations Associate

### Melissa Bertolo

Certified Welcoming Senior Director

### Briana L. Broberg

Welcoming Communities Coordinator

### Jenny Diaz

Certified Welcoming Manager

### Megan Gonzalez

Membership and Events Coordinator

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Development Coordinator

### Molly Hilligoss

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### Lola Pak

Communications Director

### Christina Pope

Senior Director, Welcoming International

### Anthony Salas

Senior Events and Membership Manager

### Samantha Weinberg

Development Director

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### Mafe Balthazar Henao

### Melinda Ellington Westly

### María Guerrieri-Maril

### Maya Smith-Custer

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Join the Welcoming Network:  
[welcomingamerica.org/welcoming-network/](http://welcomingamerica.org/welcoming-network/)

Become Certified Welcoming: [certifiedwelcoming.org](http://certifiedwelcoming.org)

Participate in Welcoming Week: [welcomingweek.org](http://welcomingweek.org)

Give: [welcomingamerica.kindful.com](http://welcomingamerica.kindful.com)

### CONNECT WITH US:

Visit our website: [welcomingamerica.org](http://welcomingamerica.org)

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Photo credit: Stephanie Williams

