



Annual Report



A 501(c)(3) organization devoted to helping Central Ohio refugees build a self-sufficient life in the U.S. by aiding in their transportation needs.

Year 1: September 2022 – August 2023

Driving towards a brighter future.



September 1, 2023

I am delighted to share Ride 4 Refugees' first Annual Report. We incorporated on August 31, 2022 and today marks the beginning of year two. Time certainly flies when you're doing something you're passionate about!

It's been a tremendous joy to work with the awesome volunteers here at R4R. We are all retired and nobody is paid. Getting off the ground always takes a lot of work – setting up processes, making connections, and just doing a million little things. But we're on-track to help 10 refugees get a vehicle this year, which is no small feat.

We've enjoyed getting to know some awesome refugees whose lives were uprooted in the process of coming to America. They've had to learn English and quickly absorb our many customs. They say communication is the key! We've seen firsthand how ambitious, hardworking and positive they are toward building a new life here.

We began our journey by applying for grants, with limited success. Without a track record, some of the foundations and companies we applied to couldn't support us yet. But we will continue to pursue a more sustainable income stream through grant funding.

On the other hand, we had very good results from our fundraising efforts and events. We're so thankful to those who made direct donations, participated in our events and bought items at our auctions. A special thanks goes out to the many companies who sponsored our events. You can see a breakdown of our finances in the report.

From all of us at Rides 4 Refugees, thank you for an incredible first year. We're already planning new activities so if you haven't done so already, please visit us at www.rides4refugees.us and sign-up for our newsletter. You might also want to follow us on Facebook or Instagram. That way you'll know about the refugees we've been helping and our next events. I personally hope to see you at our fundraisers later this fall. Stay tuned!

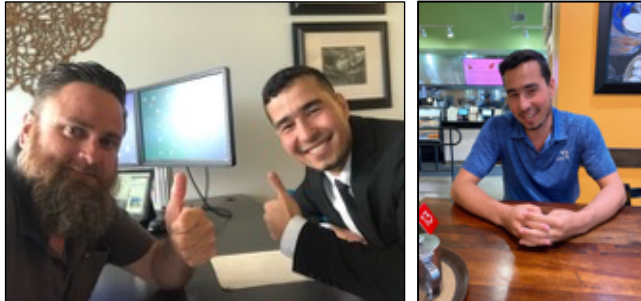
Driving Towards a Brighter Future,

Erik

President, Rides 4 Refugees, Inc.
A 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charity

How We Got Started

After Abdul Hamidi received his first car with donated funds from a couple of local families, he was able to quit his night shift position as a package handler and get a Civil Engineering job at OHM-Advisors.



Abdul with boss Tony Slanec

Proud employee

Feeling the pride of helping someone who narrowly escaped persecution and landed in the U.S. without the rest of his family, a group of Honda retirees came together and hatched the idea to form a charity. They applied for grants, and sought donations to help provide reliable used vehicles to the many refugees coming into our communities.

We met with resettlement agencies here in Central Ohio and received insights and encouragement that we were on the right track.



Directors signing

Honda retiree volunteers

After incorporating as a nonprofit, we applied for IRS 501(c)(3) tax exempt status and received it promptly. We created a brochure, a website, and launched an email fundraising campaign in Fall 2022. Our year-end *We're Rolling!* event held at OHM-Advisors downtown was covered by ABC6 TV and helped create awareness of our existence.

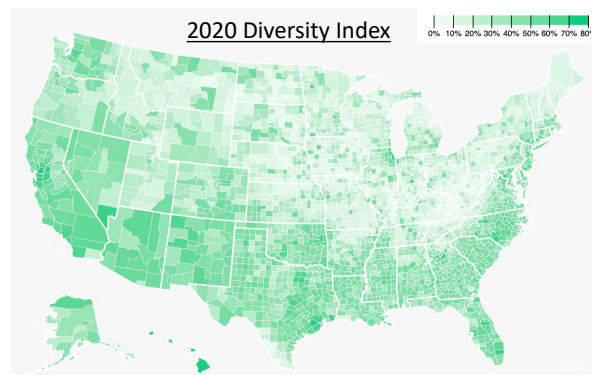
Why Support Refugees?

Refugees are here legally. They've been granted a chance to escape persecution, war, famine, and other threats to their lives. Many refugees have spent years in refugee camps in other countries waiting for a chance to come to the U.S. Our government sets limits for how many refugees can be admitted in a given year. Many recent Afghan refugees were admitted as Humanitarian

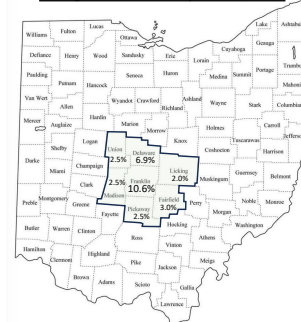
Parolees, since they had aided our military before the fall of Kabul, and would have been in danger for their lives.

America's Growing Diversity

We can expect more refugees and immigrants coming to central Ohio in the coming years. There was a big increase from 2010 to 2020. Ohio has less diversity than many other states currently.



Immigrant Share of Population, 2022



With unemployment low here in Central Ohio, there is a high demand for labor. Good jobs exist outside Franklin County that employers need to fill. Besides personal vehicles, there is an opportunity to provide commuting solutions between counties, such as ride sharing. We want to support refugees' transportation needs so they can help build a strong Central Ohio economy and communities.

The Process

Our process involves receiving refugee referrals from the three Central Ohio Resettlement Agencies who will receive approximately 800 new arrivals in 2023.



These local agencies receive funding from the government to help refugees get housing, jobs, legal support, etc. Transportation support is basically limited to bus route education and providing shuttles to appointments for a few months. Helping refugees acquire vehicles has been limited to the government's Individual Development Account program (RIDA).

Clients, who are not eligible for RIDA, are identified by these agencies as people we can help. A three-way meeting is then held with the client, agency and R4R to review the program and confirm they are able to afford vehicle ownership.

Client eligibility and processes are established for:

- Vehicle Ownership Cost Worksheet
- Vehicle Funding Match Grant
- 1-year Limited Warranty & Roadside Assistance
- Vehicle Search, Test Drive, & Inspection
- Name, Image, and Likeness release
- Insurance Explanation & Quotes
- Vehicle Repair Support
- Vehicle Donations

What We Have Accomplished

Driver Training - Personal instruction and group training has been provided for several clients.



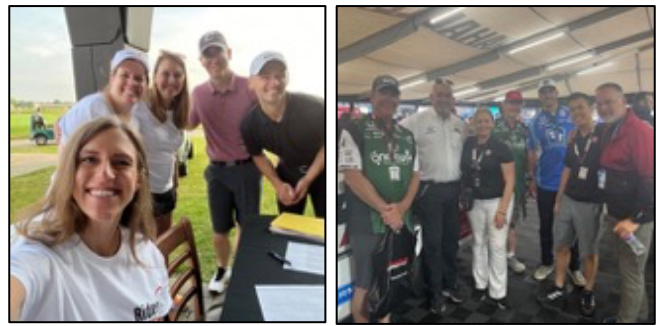
Transportation Research Center Advance Driver Training

Logo, Brochure, Website, Newsletter, Social Media -

As a professional organization, we continue to communicate directly to current and prospective donors, partners, sponsors, and other interested organizations and individuals.

Grant-a-thons - Multiple group sessions resulted in the submission of more than two dozen applications. We received some grant funding and will focus on additional grant writing efforts going forward.

Fundraising - In addition to the Fall 2022 email campaign, and on-going donation promotion in our newsletter and on our website, we held two summer fundraising events that were well supported. The golf scramble was held at the Golf Club of Dublin and the Indy 200 VIP Experience was at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio. Both took place on the weekend before July 4th, 2023.



Golf Scramble & Indy 200 VIP Experience Fundraisers

Our Goal for 2023

Help 10 refugees get vehicles in calendar 2023.

Who We've Helped

We don't use photos or full names of our clients without their permission. Retaliation or persecution of family members in their home countries is a concern we take very seriously. However, several clients have allowed their stories to be profiled in our monthly newsletter - and on the News page of www.rides4refugees.us.

- Client 1 Driver training, donated car
- Client 2 Match Grant, warranty, AAA
- Client 3 Car repair cost split 50/50
- Client 4 Match Grant, warranty/AAA
- Client 5 Match Grant, warranty/AAA
- Client 6 Car shopping, inspection
- Client 7 Car repair cost split 50/50
- Client 8 Car shopping, inspection

Now In-Process:

- Client 9 Match Grant, warranty, AAA
- Client 10 Match Grant, warranty, AAA
- Client 11 Match Grant, warranty, AAA
- Client 12 Match Grant, warranty, AAA
- Client 13 Match Grant, warranty/AAA
- Client 14 Match Grant, warranty/AAA



Shokria Muhandis



Abdul Tokhi

Our clients are hardworking, smart people that want to integrate into our society. They appreciate the helping hand we provide as they secure the mobility they need. It is truly gratifying to see how this new found mobility can change their situations for the better.

Vehicle ownership requires a budget that will allow not only the initial purchase, but the ongoing costs that include fuel, insurance, maintenance, expenses like tires, and a rainy-day fund for unforeseen repairs. We provide a Vehicle Ownership Cost Worksheet to help our clients have confidence in their budget.



Shekib & Rashed



Abdul Hamidi

Testimonials

"After arriving in Columbus and before I got a car, I worked nights in a warehouse. I rode a bicycle to work. It was so dangerous and cold - but I had to do it. Getting the car saved my life - and helped me get this great job at OHM in my technical field." Abdul Hamidi

"It is very difficult to live in Columbus, Ohio and not have access to a car. Those who can drive and have a car have opportunities to find a job that better suits their skills, have better access to healthier food and can meet people to build a stronger community."

Elena Nussbaum - ETSS

"When I first came to this country, I didn't know the language, the customs or any people. But I was able to learn the language and find friends. Having Rides 4 Refugees help me find a car, was like having two healthy legs ... I felt I could go anywhere. I found a job far from my home, but I didn't have a problem with the distance, because I owned a car and could drive safely. Rides 4 Refugees provides the greatest help to people who are in need. When my problems were solved with the help of this group, my life became easier. I know the problems of dozens of other families with children will be solved too. I am very happy that I met this group and found a sense of friendship with these kind people." Shokria Muhandis

"Owning a car is often a determining factor in a family's ability to obtain or maintain a steady job. Thanks to Rides 4 Refugees, several of our clients are able to transport themselves (and others!) to work and are able to pursue job upgrades at locations that they could not previously access without a car of their own."

Brian Zimmerman - CRIS

"Rides 4 Refugees brought a big impact in my life because I remember last year during winter season, I was working a night shift at Walmart and every single night walking without Uber or taxi because I couldn't afford it. It is so difficult to express my feelings that I had last year. Thank you, Rides 4 Refugees." SF

"Rides 4 Refugees is addressing one of the biggest challenges faced by refugee families in Central Ohio: Transportation. Our team at Jewish Family Services appreciates the range of transportation support R4R provides and your willingness to partner with us to explore new transportation solutions."

Karen Mozenter - JFS CEO

"When I got my drivers permit, ETSS resettlement agency introduced a respectful and experienced man from Rides 4 Refugees. Jim Erickson was coming to train me. We started from empty parking lots to drive in the city and I got my license in first try. And our family and kids had a lot of good times with him." Rashed

"The Ohio State University is honored to share our passion and goals of mobility equity for the refugee community in central Ohio with our partners from Honda's 99P Labs and Rides 4 Refugees. The students in our OnRamp program in the Center for Innovation Strategies have had diverse opportunities to uniquely impact lives of the refugee population here."

Paul Reeder - OSU CIS Exec. Director

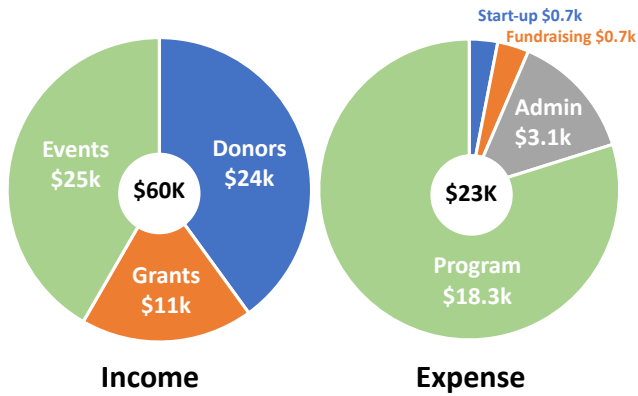
Finances

Although we started fundraising in 4Q 2022, we only had administrative set-up expenses until 2Q 2023, when we started the match grants and vehicle repair cost sharing. Each match grant is for up to \$4,000. A \$1,000 self-funded, 1-year warranty reserve is established for each match grant vehicle. A 1-year Roadside Assistance membership is also provided.

As we plan for additional match grant applications, beyond the six (6) that are currently in-process, a fundraising campaign aligned with the National Day of Giving on November 28th, and two (2) additional fundraising events later this year are planned. Revenue is difficult to forecast, but we will help as many refugees get quality used vehicles as we can, and support them with related services.

We are grateful to all the individual donors, event participants, and corporate grantors for their generous contributions. Without their support, we would not be able to help change the lives of these refugees. With funding in place, we will achieve our goal of 10 vehicles to refugees this year.

September 2022 through August 2023



Administrative expenses includes insurance, accounting/tax filing, website, printing, banking, etc. Event & other fundraising and one-time start-up expenses are also shown.

Program expenses included (3) vehicle funding match grants (including warranty reserves and roadside assistance memberships), and (2) vehicle repairs (50/50 cost sharing). Excluding the Warranty Reserve holdback, we have over \$35,000 set aside for the (6) In-Process Match Grants listed above.

Challenges

As an all-volunteer organization of retirees, we have limits to our time. We may have underestimated the workload in starting and running a charity! We will work to streamline activities and spread the work among more volunteers.

Fundraising is very important to any charity, but we see an opportunity to stretch our budget by focusing on a strategy to acquire donated vehicles, in addition to traditional fundraising.

Multi-language education materials need to be developed to help refugees better understand cost of ownership, vehicle operation and maintenance, insurance, etc.

What's Next

We will set our 2024 Business Plan in January. Whether or not we can support more than 10 Vehicle Match Grants will depend on our year-end fundraising events, and plans for the coming year.

We are pursuing an opportunity to partner with a ride sharing company to support refugees' transportation to jobs. This could be a crucial step toward vehicle ownership by allowing them to save for vehicle purchase and to afford the cost of vehicle ownership.

During this first year, our board of directors were all internal members of the charity. We think it's time to expand our board to include some external members in order to strengthen our planning in establishing a sustainable organization.

Partners



We are so thankful for the support provided by the organizations above, and will continue to look for opportunities to expand our network and affiliations.

Contact Us

Visit www.rides4refugees.us. Past issues of our monthly newsletter are available in the News section.

Don't forget to subscribe to our newsletter, and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Donate

If you know someone with a vehicle they want to donate, please direct them to our website.

You can always make financial donations there, too. Look for an invitation to our Year End Event coming later this year.

Volunteer

Our current openings are listed on our website.

- Driver Training
- Agency Interface
- HR Support
- Scheduling
- Vehicle Shopping/Shuttle Driver
- Vehicle Purchase
- Manual Writing, Grant Writing
- Digital & Graphics