

COMMUNITY ASYLUM SEEKERS PROJECT

2021 Annual Report





The mission of the Community Asylum Seekers Project is to cultivate a supportive community for those seeking asylum in the U.S., while offering basic needs and accompanying them on their journey towards building a life in this country.

REFLECTIONS

Kate & Francie

2021 ushered in hopes for national renewal and a reformed asylum system. As always, this work requires a persistent and unrelenting push, as we urge our leaders toward just immigration and asylum policies. While continuing to knock on the doors of our lawmakers, we at CASP welcomed several new neighbors to our own communities – in hopes that the government will follow our lead.

After a long wait in the Migrant Protection Protocols program, a Central American family of three arrived in April. The children enrolled in school and CASP began collaboration with the English Language Learning programs in the public schools. In the summer, we welcomed an asylum seeker from East Africa who moved in with a local host family. He was connected with a pro bono attorney and began volunteering, singing in local choirs, and enrolled in continuing education opportunities while awaiting his work permit.

In addition to the four asylum seekers we welcomed in 2021, CASP also helped resettle seven additional asylum seekers – a couple with an infant, a mom and two children, and a woman expecting a child – to host homes elsewhere in VT and NH to be supported by our partner organizations.

CASP was able to expand our staff and add a new full-time Outreach Coordinator, who has been providing resources and trainings to our wonderful community of volunteers.

We moved into a new office, along with the Ethiopian Community Development Council, in a space provided for us by Vermont Plank Flooring. And we continued a series of public webinars focused on issues relevant to seeking asylum in Vermont, including a workshop on a trauma-informed and anti-racist approach to mental health support; two webinars on cross-cultural communication; a Rapid Response ICE workshop co-hosted by two local partners; and a webinar on the experience of Afghan resettlement in the United States. We also co-hosted a visit from our partners at Migrant Justice on their Milk With Dignity Tour. Finally, CASP continued to participate in the Vermont-New Hampshire Asylum Support Network, a coalition of regional asylum support organizations, and assisted with the founding of a new asylum and refugee support organization in Bennington, VT called Bennington County Open Arms.

Not one of these accomplishments or collaborations would have been possible without the help of our supporters: our donors, our community partners, our pro bono attorneys, and our volunteers. Our deepest thanks for your ongoing partnership!



KATE PAARLBERG-KVAM

Executive Director



FRANCIE MARBURY

Chair of the Board

BUILDING A LIFE

Dora

The year 2021 was spent continuing to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. CASP continuously provided information and educational material in Spanish and English for asylum seekers, and through a collaboration with the Health Department and the NAACP, we were able to provide COVID tests as well. We also welcomed four new asylum seekers to the area in 2021 – a mother and two children from Central America, and a man from East Africa. Both moved into local housing and were connected with volunteer support teams upon arrival.

In 2021 CASP helped 9 asylum seekers find full time jobs, assisted 4 people with housing and material aid after the closure of the Vermont Bread Company, and assisted people whose work permits were delayed by federal backlogs. Asylum seekers who were not yet able to work in 2021 contributed in meaningful ways in the community: volunteering at local food banks, delivering meals to unhoused Vermonters, and other vital services. They also attended classes while waiting to be eligible for work, and we are grateful to Vermont Adult Learning and the Rotary Club for facilitating those. In 2021 we were able to apply for or provide medical and dental insurance, access to pro bono mental health care, and dedicated attorneys to accompany each asylum seeker's case.

There are always challenges in this work related to inadequate federal and state services, and we are happy at CASP to be able to accompany asylum seekers as they navigate those challenges and build lives in this country, supported by our communities!



DORA URUJENI

Case Manager



CULTIVATING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Cristy

Supporting asylum seekers takes a community of committed, welcoming, and informed people, and we are lucky to work with such a community! Much of the direct support CASP offers to asylum-seekers is carried out by our 300+ volunteers. Cultivating a welcoming environment starts with you, with the volunteers, with community conversations about privilege, power, and responsibility. It is so important that each volunteer who is interacting with asylum seekers is supported with the tools and information needed to offer their time and energy to others.

We seek to engage in conversations about the context of our work to empower help volunteers be invested in the work they do with CASP, and give them time to reflect on that work as it happens. This is how we cultivate the energy and patience we see in our communities. With the hope that we will continue to (un)learn together, here are some things we have started and will continue to build on:

1. We now hold regular volunteer orientations for people who want to engage with our work.
2. We host a monthly meeting with volunteers to talk about common challenges, support systems, and more.
3. We published a volunteer resource guide that dives into the definition of seeking asylum, what accompaniment looks like, local resources, and readings on asylum and immigration.
4. We have begun a study group for community members to discuss and dive into imperialism, class structures, and specific geographical contexts of the asylum seekers we support.

Cristy Carretero

CRISTY CARRETERO

Outreach Coordinator



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Susan

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF 12/31/2021

ASSETS

Total Current Assets \$88,785

Total Assets 88,785

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities \$12,926

Unrestricted Net Assets 80,251

Total Liabilities and Net Assets 88,785

INCOME & EXPENSES

JAN - DEC 2021

INCOME

Direct Public Support \$113,104

Grants (Unrestricted) 32,500

Grants (Restricted) 18,795

Other Income 400

Total Income 164,799

EXPENSES

Payroll Expenses \$93,879

Direct Asylum Seeker Support 47,534

Business Expenses 2,361

Contract Services 13,200

Facilities & Equipment 3,678

Operations 4,008

Travel, Meetings, & Professional Development 4,039

Total Expenses 170,004

NET INCOME (OR LOSS) (\$4,392)

Susan W. Brace

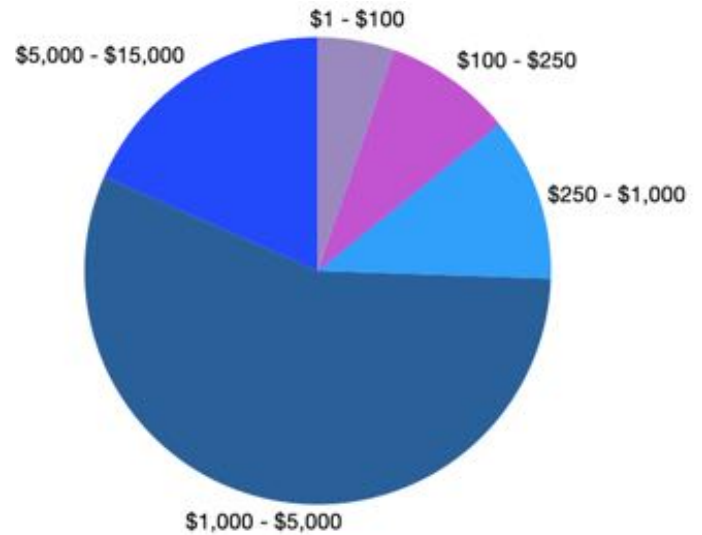
SUSAN BRACE

Treasurer

*unaudited

2021 DONATIONS TO CASP

The bulk of our work is funded by small and medium donations. This keeps us sustainable and accountable to our community, whether or not immigration and asylum are at the top of the agendas of major donors and foundations. We are honored by the ongoing support of our friends, neighbors, faith communities, and local businesses.



WE ARE GRATEFUL *to the people, congregations, foundations, and businesses whose generosity makes our work possible.*

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AND A VERY SPECIAL THANKS

to our 25 monthly sustaining donors!

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CASP IN 2022



We are eagerly looking forward to another year of accompanying asylum seekers in Southern Vermont. In 2022, we plan to welcome four new asylum seekers or asylum-seeking families, and hope to place them with local hosts. We look forward as well to continued partnerships with collaborating organizations, asylum attorneys, schools, summer camps, and local employers, and plan to continue working together to address the lack of legal aid for asylum seekers and refugees in the state; to address systemic barriers that confront immigrant communities, and to continue to offer trainings, workshops, and study groups to our community to better support the work of accompanying asylum seekers in this country!

To stay up to date with CASP, follow us on our social media channels:



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Our Staff & Board



KATE PAARLBERG-KVAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DORA URUJENI
CASE MANAGER



CRISTY CARRETERO
OUTREACH COORDINATOR



SUSAN BRACE



CHRISTINE COLASCIONE



RUBEN GARZA



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