

Good Neighbor Teams

USCRI Albany Community Sponsorship Program

General community sponsorship program description: The program goal is to provide refugee families with a Good Neighbor Team (GNT) to help them transition to their new communities and achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. GNTs will consist of 3-10 members from a local community group, faith-based organization, or business.

GNT time commitment: Six months to one year. There will be an assessment at six months to determine if the family is ready to “graduate” or if another six months is recommended. A celebration will recognize family achievements and conclude the formal commitment while encouraging friendships to continue.

Service commitment: GNTs will choose a minimum of participating in three activities from among the following: apartment set-up, rental assistance, furnishing and home supplies, seasonal clothing, stocking the pantry, transportation to medical appointments and/or grocery stores, developing English skills, financial education, job development/employment preparation, transportation assistance, mentoring, tutoring, and serving as a community guide to orient families to their new community.

Preferred size of GNTs: 3-10 people per team. There may be multiple teams from the same organization.

Financial commitment: Each organization with a GNT will be asked to engage in local level fundraising and to commit to providing the equivalent of at least \$2,000 in financial, in-kind, and/or volunteer time contributions per team. Funds raised and in-kind contributions will go directly to the families served.

Types of cases matched with community sponsors: There will be two types of families served: newly arriving families and families who have already resettled in the area but are struggling to achieve self-sufficiency.

Community sponsorship training: The program will conduct an informal information session for all interested organizations, followed by formal training for teams that commit to the program. Training will include a presentation, guide, and cultural resources specific to the family they will be sponsoring. Program staff will check in bi-weekly with the team leader and conduct a follow up debriefing with the entire team after their sponsorship period has ended.