

The Vision

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) aims to create *New American Cities*, inclusive communities that welcome refugees, not only to offer protection, but also to embrace their potential contributions and long-term economic integration. Participating refugees will be assigned to a Career Navigator to help identify professional pathways and access critical workforce development supports to enable long term success. New American Cities' public and private systems will celebrate the strength and potential of refugees. Above all, New American Cities will provide refugees with the hope that they came looking for when they first entered the US.

The Problem

When refugees arrive in the US, they receive a few months of basic services, such as legal protection and job placement, designed to help them acclimate to a new country, new culture, and often a new language. **These services are needed, but they are woefully inadequate.**

They do not sufficiently equip refugees to anticipate and navigate the systemic challenges to long-term economic and social inclusion that they will encounter in their new communities. Many refugees are far too often trapped in vicious cycles of poverty - their economic potential unrecognized, underestimated, and thus, under-tapped by the cities and country they now call home.

The New American Cities Model

Our Solution

- 1) **Individualized career navigation services** for refugees,
- 2) Connections to **pathway builders**, who forge relationships between refugees and employers, expose training opportunities, and aim to address systemic barriers to advancement; and,
- 3) **Coalitions and champions** who will challenge negative narratives about refugees and create opportunities for social connections at the workplace and in neighborhoods



Proven Outcomes & Anticipated Impact

In 2019, LIRS piloted the program: New American Pathways (NAP). Its success has helped to inform the design and expanded model of New American Cities.

- On average, wages increased from **\$8.81 to \$14.27 per hour**
- **81%** participants placed in jobs, started jobs in desired career pathway
- **84%** participants placed in jobs place in upskilled jobs

 **\$10,000**
per year, per participant

New American Cities will result in the following for refugees and their households and local communities:



Individuals

- Access to training & educational programs
- An upgraded job
- Improved job quality
- Improved wages & well-being



Households

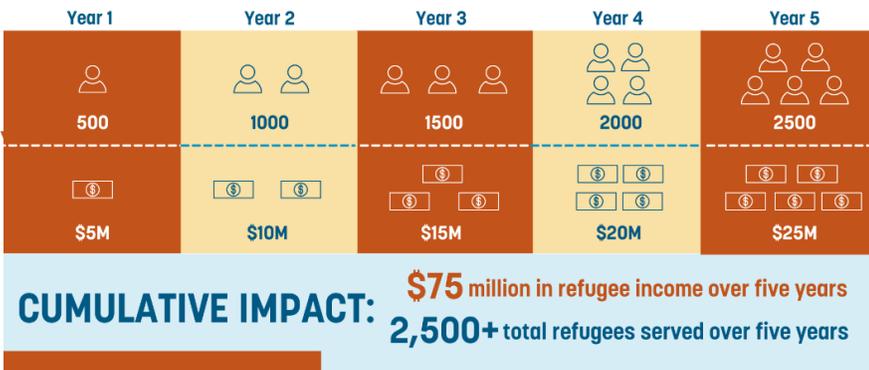
- Increased income
- Economic stability & mobility
- Heightened ability to plan long-term



Community & Economy

- Observed increase in tax revenue & spending
- Filled labor gaps
- Charted career pathways for future generations

The *New American Cities* model is not just a humanitarian program, **it's a smart financial investment.**



LIRS aims to serve 2,500 refugees over the next five years in target cities. With individuals having earned an average of \$10,000 more per year as a result of their participation in the pilot, LIRS anticipates that **New American Cities will collectively funnel an additional \$75 million in wages to refugee homes** over the program period.

Possibility for Scale

LIRS has successfully piloted **and we are ready to expand services** the program in:

- Albuquerque, NM
- Colorado Springs, CO
- Denver, CO
- Fayetteville, AR
- Jacksonville, FL
- Phoenix, AZ

and **to scale to four new cities:**

- Raleigh, NC
- Lancaster, PA
- Utica, NY
- Grand Rapids, MI



Partnership Opportunities - Call for Support

LIRS welcomes new partners who are ready to transform the U.S. resettlement system and communities across the country through New American Cities:

- **Employers** who will hire and create career advancement opportunities for refugee participants
- **Local Governments** who would like to advance refugee integration initiatives and learn how to allocate workforce development budgets to support refugee career pathways
- **Individuals** who are interested in financially supporting this initiative or serving as career mentors
- **Foundations** who are seeking to support program opportunities with proven return on investment

A gift of \$1 million supports 1 city and at least 250 refugee participants.

A gift of \$5 million supports 3 cities and at least 750 refugee participants.

A gift of \$10 million supports 5-6 cities and at least 2,500 refugee participants.

For more information, please contact us directly at giving@lirs.org