

# 2016 Annual Report



Making Kentucky  
Home for Refugees





## Mission

Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Inc. (KRM), a non-profit organization, is dedicated to providing resettlement services to refugees through faith- and agency-based co-sponsorship in order to promote self-sufficiency and successful integration into our community. KRM is committed to offering access to community resources and opportunities and to promoting awareness of diversity for the benefit of the whole community.

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## Vision

To compassionately welcome and serve the world's displaced people. To encourage the hope that lives within each human being by providing an atmosphere of hospitality, responsiveness, mutual respect, trust and tolerance. To be known for our reliability, resourcefulness, partnerships and comprehensive services.

## KRM Leadership

John A. Koehlinger, *Executive Director*  
Mary Cobb, *Lexington Office Director*

## Program Leaders

Adrienne Eisenmenger, *Family and Youth Services Manager*  
Semsudin Haseljic, *Wilson-Fish Case Manager*  
Dragana Zaimovic, *Employment Case Manager*

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## Board of Directors

Mike Puckett, *Board Chair*  
Jane Parker, *Board Vice Chair*  
Luke Elliott, *Board Financial Chair*  
Mary C. Garris, *Board Secretary*

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Jason Crosby  
Ashley Gray-Ziba  
Gary Guthrie  
Eric Hansen  
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Amy Real Coultas  
Jennifer Recktenwald  
Kathey Golightly Sanders  
Ann O'Malley Shake





Photo credit: Steve Pavey

# New Beginnings

The word “refugee” evokes images of bedraggled victims in dusty camps or desperate migrants journeying on foot or by boat.

Sadly, there is some truth to these associations, with the conditions and humanitarian support for the world’s 21 million refugees—half of whom are children—deteriorating markedly.

However, KRM’s 2016 Annual Report shows refugees in an entirely different context: the transformative experience of resettlement.

After arrival in Louisville and Lexington, the refugees KRM serves are immersed in a new environment of challenges and opportunities. The adjustment curve is steep. The timeframe to become self-sufficient is short. Sorrowful memories still haunt.

But as the following pages illustrate, with the encouragement of KRM

staff and community partners, those who have been persecuted and forced to flee are able to rebuild their lives in Kentucky—to find a sense of belonging, a place they and their children can call home.

The statistics included throughout this report underscore the comprehensive scale of KRM’s resettlement work, and its beneficial community impact. But our staff’s focus remains the individual care of each refugee family we pick up at the airport.

We could not do it without you. It is the compassionate involvement of community volunteers that creates the spirit of welcome KRM aspires to as an organization.

So to all of you who partnered with us in 2016, I offer the warmest appreciation from everyone in the KRM family. We hope for your continuing support.

Sincerely,

*John A. Koehlinger*  
Executive Director





Photo credit: Megan Resch

*KRM Offers*

## Safety & Welcome

Bus, car, train, boat, feet—various modes of transport carry refugees from one home to another. The journey to Kentucky is different for each person. Some face sudden departures with no time to gather important documents or mementos. Others may have warning, giving them precious time to assemble supplies, clothes, and food for the journey. The selection for resettlement comes after years of interviewing and waiting. Less than one half of one percent of the world's refugees receive third-country resettlement.

For KRM, the days before a family arrives are often hectic. Plans face last minute changes. Meals are cooked for when the hungry family lands. Caseworkers verify the flight status and prepare transportation.

Volunteers set up apartments with furniture and household goods.

The majority of newcomers resettled through KRM have friends or family already in Kentucky. These reunions may be years in the making. Spouses embrace in the airport terminal. Mothers now see their children before them as adults. Countless loved ones cross countries and oceans of uncertainty to find family and some solace in Kentucky.

Others arrive in an unknown world of strangers, but KRM will be there to greet them. Interpreters connect with the newest arrivals by sharing familiar words of welcome. Caseworkers bring families to their new home, and threads of their old and new lives start to weave together.



# Story Spotlight

“People smile in our faces,” says Azzo Alchabo, 36, of his family’s new Louisville community. “When we put our heads on the pillow, we’re comfortable. We sleep.” Over four years ago, he and his wife Amina, 29, and their four sons, 10, 7, 3, and 10 months, fled the war in Syria. Azzo had been blinded in both eyes by an explosion. “We crossed seas and oceans, and our destiny is unknown,” he says of their journey. When they landed in Kentucky, they knew no one.

Meanwhile, a team of co-sponsors from St. Agnes Catholic Church in Louisville was busy welcoming a family from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As co-sponsors, they raised funds, gathered furniture and goods, and partnered with KRM to help the family rebuild. Most co-sponsor groups are faith-based, but businesses and civic groups have also co-sponsored. Some are small cohorts of volunteers; St. Agnes’ group was teeming with support.

*Continued*

\*Total  
Refugees  
Welcomed



1,190

1,010



Total  
Cubans  
Welcomed

\*All figures are from the Fiscal Year 2016, unless otherwise noted (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016)



“It’s something big when someone who is an American tells you this is your home. This feels so good.”

- Azzo Alchabo

Photo credit: Portia Watson



The Louisville parish has over 2,000 families, says team member Ken Stammerman. The Catholic community was stirred to action last year. Over 70 parishioners joined their first meeting, eager to welcome refugee families. The group formed teams with focus areas, such as the meet-and-greet at the airport,

transportation for appointments, furniture and household supplies, food, and social support. Sue Green, another member of the team, explains, “People stepped up and said, ‘I can do this.’” Even kids began creating artwork for the families’ apartments.

Continued



Photo credit: Portia Watson

41

Total \*co-sponsor  
partner groups



\*An organized group (typically faith communities, civic groups, or businesses) that collaborates with KRM to welcome a family.



Photo credit: Karissa Porter

826  
Total Active  
Volunteers

After their formal commitment with the Congolese family ended, the St. Agnes team wanted to do more. KRM paired them with Azzo and Amina’s family. After meeting each other, Amina says, “We felt that we have

*“My kids have futures.  
Their future is not lost”*

- Azzo Alchabo

somebody. We have help.” The co-sponsors practiced bus routes with the family and visited the library

and the zoo. They brought donated furniture to their home, guiding Azzo’s hand to tables and chairs so he could understand his new surroundings.

Now, Azzo and Amina’s kids are in school and caseworkers help them access services to build their independence. “My kids have futures. Their future is not lost,” Azzo says.

He recalls how someone on the co-sponsor team said to him, “This is your home.” Azzo adds, “It’s something big when someone who is an American tells you this is your home. This feels so good.”





Photo credit: Steve Pavey

*KRM Creates*

# Opportunities to Rebuild

By the time families land in Kentucky, they may have been on the move for years. Others may have been in camps, waiting in one place long enough to marry, have kids, and see their children grow. Some refugees find that their country of asylum prohibits work or school so they scrape by, peddling goods on street corners or working where they can.

They wait. For their refugee status to be approved. For resettlement in the United States or another country. For the news that conflicts at home have resolved so they can return. Or, for the news that home is gone—destroyed by war and violence.

Resettlement offers a new stability. Families can make the most of this new life, because in the United States, refugees can legally work. To prepare for this, the first few months are a hustle of appointments, English classes

for the adults, and a new school for the kids. First-day anxieties for all. Families ride the bus in a new city, exploring parks, grocery stores, and markets, getting lost and finding the way again. Back and forth between home and KRM, they create routines. Their old and new lives weave together—both joyfully and painfully. Although they are here and safe, more family members may still be in another country. They may be in danger or also waiting for their chance to start anew.

Throughout this uncertainty, KRM is there to empower families. This begins with work: connecting refugees with employer partners based on their skills and dreams. Whether they are farmers, carpenters, engineers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, or cooks, refugees blend together their old and new skills in order to rebuild.



# Story Spotlight

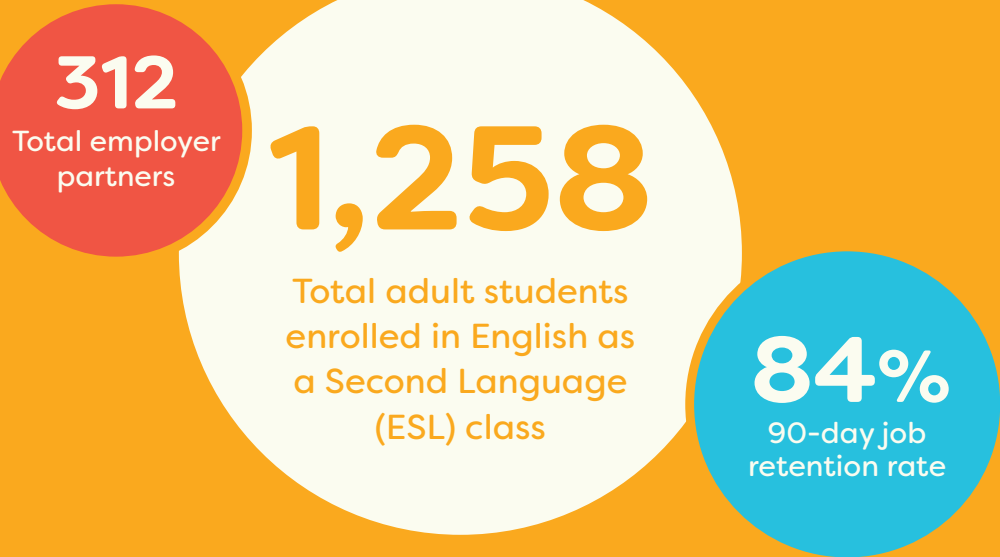
“The first day after work, I went to the bank and they said, ‘You smell so good!’” Mohamad Al Turk, 26, shares. The fragrance came from his work as a mixer at Hydra, an independent retailer of bath products that hired Mohamad about six months after he and his sister Ranim, 23, arrived in Lexington. They fled the war in Syria in 2012; their mother and brothers are still in Jordan awaiting their approvals.

Mohamad recalls arriving at the airport and meeting their KRM caseworker and an Arabic interpreter. At their home, he was surprised to

see furniture and food. “The first few days,” he says, “I was so happy. The nature was so beautiful. I wished my family was here so they could enjoy what we were seeing.”

Balancing learning English and finding work was a challenge, Mohamad explains. “We’ll be working in two directions—study and job,” he says. “I understand it’s going to be several steps before I reach all my wishes: to have my own career and my own business, to get married and to establish a life, to have all my family members join me.”

*Continued*



*“I understand it’s going to be several steps before I reach all my wishes.”*

*- Mohamad Al Turk*



In Syria, Mohamad worked at a cell phone company, but when they fled to Jordan, he was not allowed to obtain work as a refugee. After months of looking for work, Hydra hired him for a full-time, first-shift position, incorporating him into a diverse workplace comprised of other refugees and immigrants. “They are doing the job perfectly,” Mohamad says of his peers. “We show the manager we are so committed to our work and so proud of our activity and production.”

With income from this job, Mohamad can support himself and his sister. “Now, I have a car and I am able to pay my car installments,” he says. “After a while, I am looking forward to getting a job for my sister.” He hopes that his other family members will join him, that he can help find jobs for them, and that they can buy a house together. These dreams start small, he says.



Photo credit: Megan Resch

122 mothers  
165 children

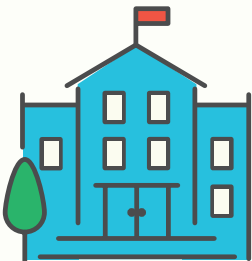
Total Family Center  
mothers & children  
served

\*(Calendar Year 2016)



Photo credit: Karissa Porter

1,112 Total job placements



Total children enrolled  
in Jefferson & Fayette  
County public schools

\*(Calendar Year 2016)





Photo credit: Gary Guthrie

*KRM Continues*

## Encouraging Hope

*When will my children start school?* is often one of the first questions parents ask after arriving in Kentucky. Half of all refugees are children, many of whom have experienced interruptions in their education. Before coming to the US, some refugee children lived in camps that didn't have schools. Others may have fled to nearby countries that allowed them to study while they lived in crowded camps or dense cities.

Once they attend Kentucky schools, refugee students share their cultures and languages, learn from their peers, and bring their lessons back home to family. Children become the bridge—connecting the old with the new and

preserving culture while creating their own. These new roles may impart both excitement and uncertainty as the family looks toward their next steps. High school, GED programs, community colleges, and four-year universities. Career questions, technical trainings, and long-term aspirations.

Over time, families' networks widen to schools, faith communities, and other circles. KRM connects families with local volunteers to foster friendship, continue practicing English, reach career goals, and more. After one year, a refugee's status changes when they become permanent residents. After five years, refugees can become United States citizens.



# Story Spotlight

On the way home from the Louisville airport, Moses Kirumba asked if he could start school the next day. At 18, he had just landed in Kentucky with his mother, three siblings, and niece. They left their home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after his father, a teacher, was killed by rebel forces. The family then lived in Uganda for eight years, awaiting their resettlement in the United States. Moses’ mother Mary, a tailor, quickly found work in Louisville. One of Moses’ sisters also started working, while another sister began attending the KRM Family Center with her young child and later taking GED classes in the evening. Moses’ younger sibling began school at ESL Newcomer Academy in Louisville.

Because Moses scored exceptionally well on his English exam at school

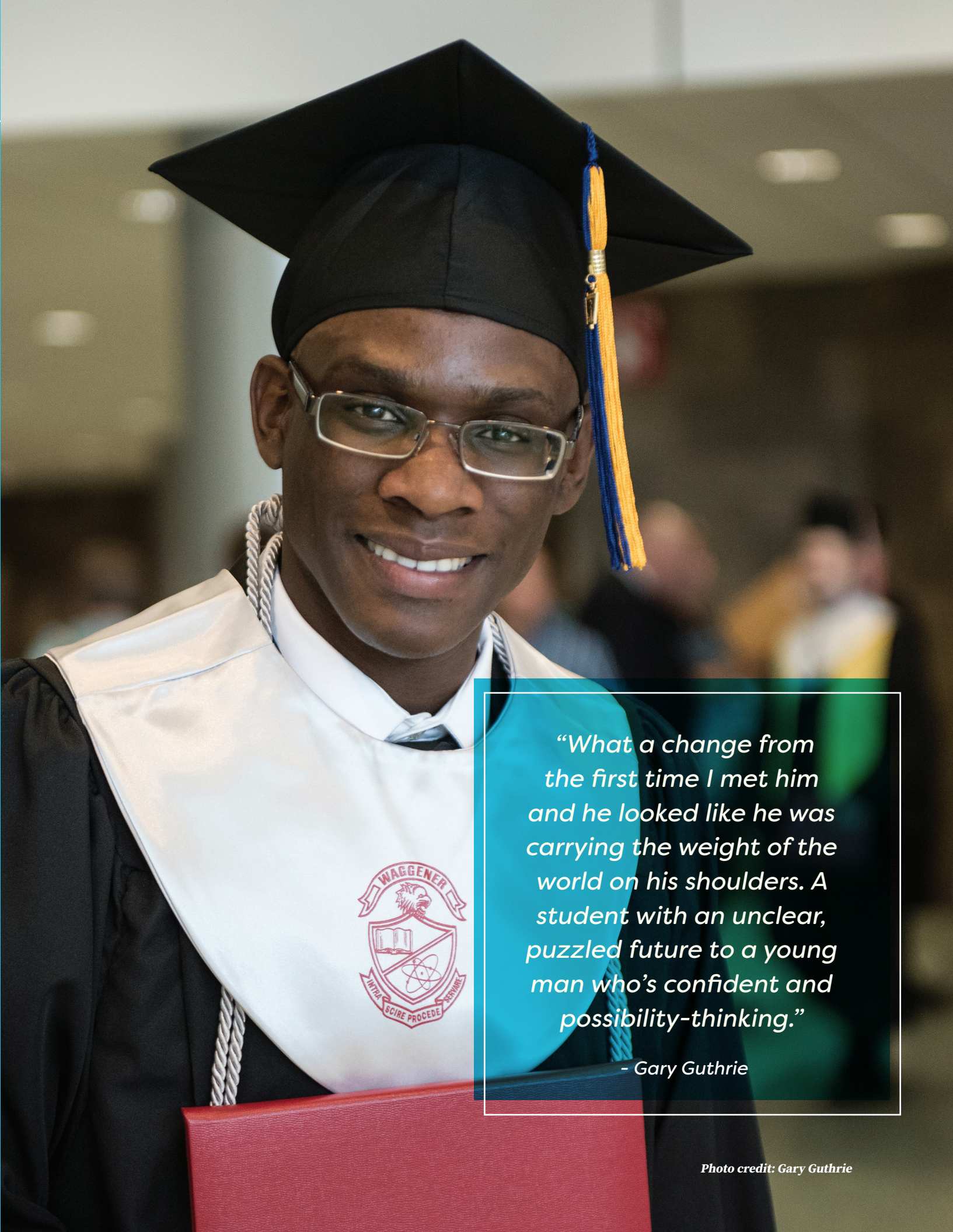
registration, he was able to waive Jefferson County Public Schools’ ESL services. His family also had school records from Uganda, so he was able to enroll in Waggener High School as a senior. A few weeks after starting, he came to KRM. “I need help,” he said, explaining that he knew nothing about college. “I’m taking the ACT soon and I don’t know what that is. What am I going to do?”

Moses’ plea echoed other requests from refugee youth and young adults. He enrolled in a college and career readiness program at KRM called Rise Up and joined the next Super Saturday, a day when students visit regional colleges and universities. Moses had found a weekend job at Amazon and began balancing work, high school, and college preparation.

Continued



26  
Total students starting GED,  
college, or university programs  
*\*(Calendar Year 2016)*



*“What a change from the first time I met him and he looked like he was carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. A student with an unclear, puzzled future to a young man who’s confident and possibility-thinking.”*  
- Gary Guthrie



An active volunteer and member of the Board of Directors, Gary Guthrie was eager to work with young adults. KRM paired Gary and Moses together through a growing mentor program.

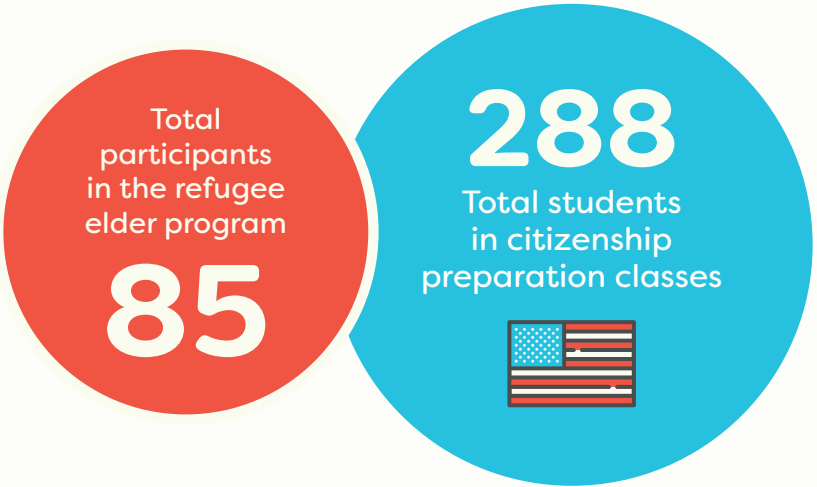
“He was at a crossroads,” Gary reflected. “He had excellent grades but was not as proactive in applying for college, taking the entrance exams, and looking for scholarships as most high school seniors would be. Nonetheless, he rose to the challenge and worked with me to find scholarship opportunities, study for the ACT, and visit colleges. Super Saturday at the University of Louisville was very impactful — straightforward, easy to understand, and a chance to feel part of a wider refugee community that was on the same positive track. Within less than three months, Moses had his college applications in and improved ACT test scores.”

In the same year, Moses was one of 12 students recognized at Waggener’s

Honors Day. With a 4.0 GPA at graduation, he received scholarship support from Spalding University in Louisville. He continues working part-time and is a sophomore at Spalding in the pre-pharmacy program.

Gary recalls the transformation he witnessed, “What a change from the first time I met him and he looked like he was carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. A student with an unclear, puzzled future to a young man who’s confident and possibility-thinking.”

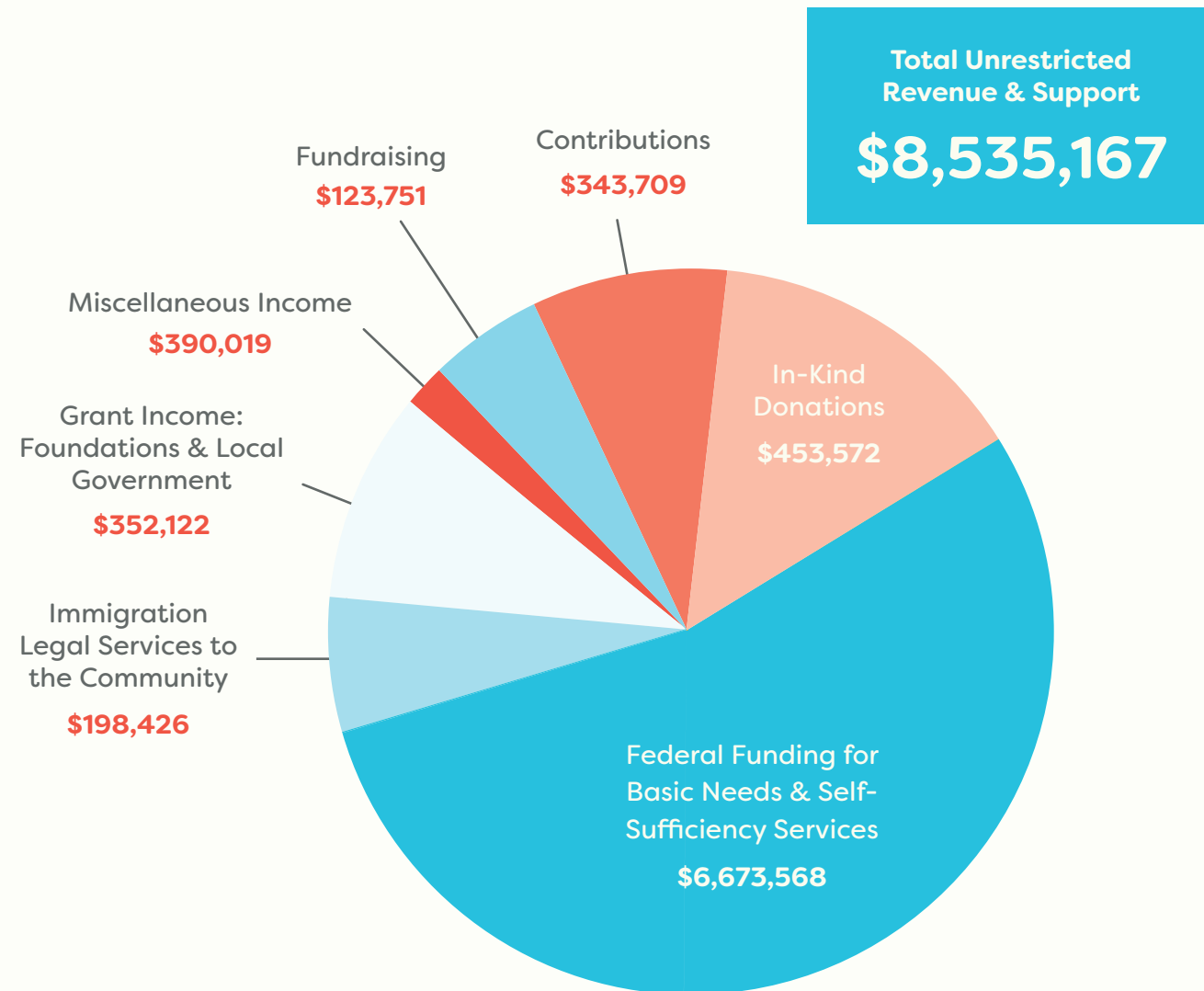
“Before I met with Gary, I was struggling a lot with my future and I did not know which path to take,” Moses said. “Gary helped to answer my questions and has always been there, encouraging me to pursue future education, to work hard, and to never give up.”



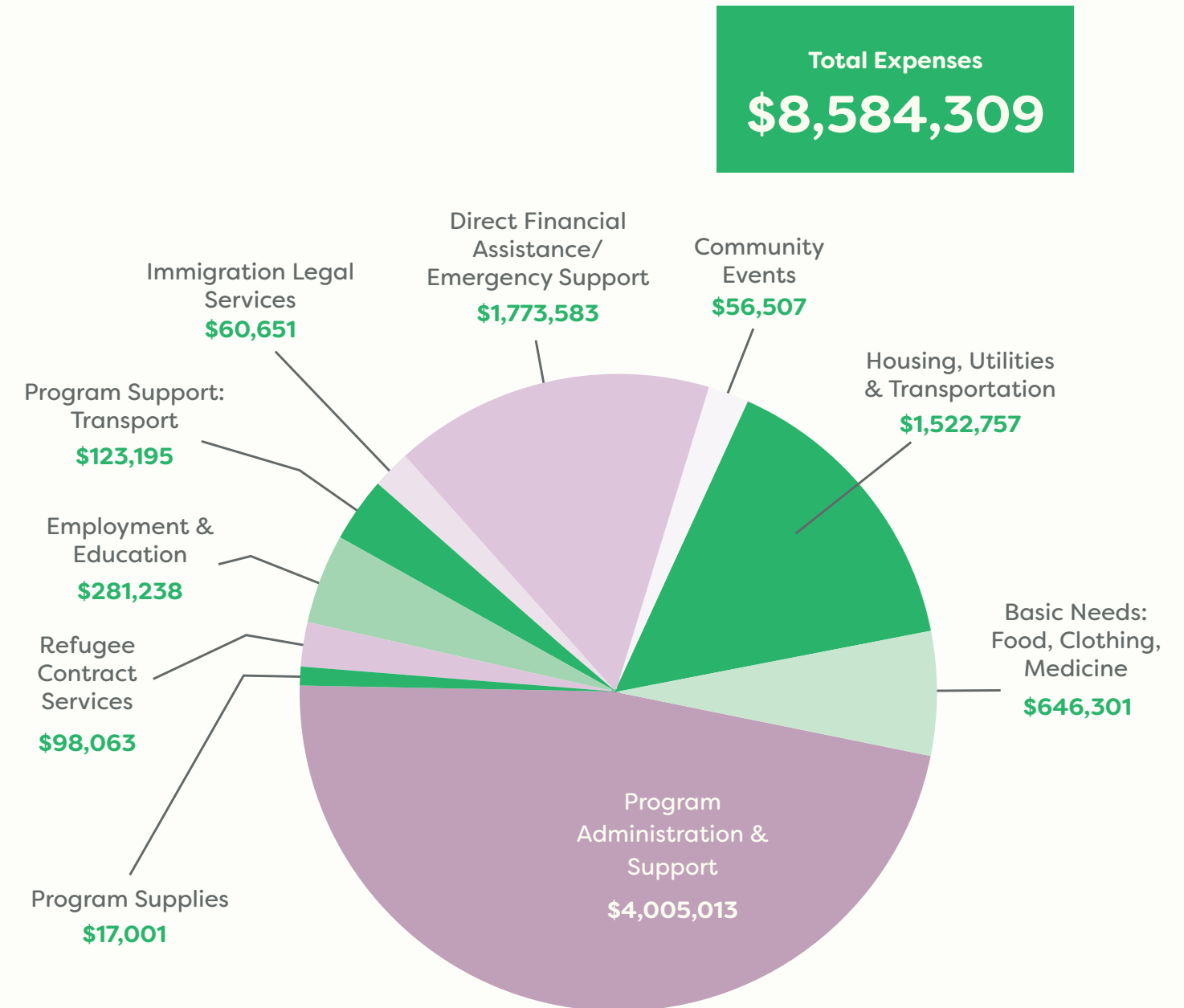


Section 4

# Income & Expenses



Condensed Audited Statement of Activities for the year ending September 30, 2016.



Condensed Audited Statement of Activities for the year ending September 30, 2016.



# Donors & Funders

Thank you to the KRM Partners who have joined us on the journey in 2016.

Transformation Partners: \$20,000 - \$50,000

Greater Houston Community Foundation In Honor of Sarah Campbell Grados Charitable Fund  
W. L. Lyons Brown Foundation on Behalf of Matthew and Brooke Barzun

Hope Partners: \$10,000 - \$24,999

Highland Baptist Church  
Peter Rutledge In Memory Of Betty Rutledge  
Highland Presbyterian Church

Empowerment Partners: \$5,000 - \$9,999

Brown-Forman	The Reverend Jesse W. Lebus On	Jane and Wayne Parker
Christ Church United Methodist	Behalf Of Bertha Lebus	Springdale Presbyterian Church
Cornelia W. Bonnie Revocable Trust	Mitchell Family Foundation	Patricia G. Swope
Helen Lang	Joe and Edie Norris	John Werst
Leadership Louisville Center	Dominique Olbert	West Sixth Brewing
		Yum! Brands Foundation

Resilience Partners: \$1,000 - \$4,999

Joseph Adams	First Alliance Church	Presbyterian Church of Danville
Adath Israel Congregation	First Christian Church	Preston and Elisabeth Young
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Altar'd State Mission Monday	Katherine Fishback	Stephen Reily and Emily Bingham
Anchorage Presbyterian Church	Insuk Gordy	Joseph Scarlett, Jr. - In Memory of
Anthem Medicaid	Jessica Hamilton	Mary Ellen Peacock
Sean Baldwin	Benjamin H. Harris	Schrader Commercial Properties
Beargrass Christian Church	Harvey Browne Presbyterian Church	Sidney Anderson Foundation Inc
Carol and James Brees	on Behalf of Sally Jones' Family	Silver Dollar Honky Tonk
Kevin Brown	and Mission Committee	Greg and Ann Sparks
Philip Buckman	Ronald and Gladys Horvath	St Agnes Parish
Samuel D. Carter In Honor of	Jewish Community of Louisville	St Paul United Methodist Church
Shelby Allen	John N. Browning Family Fund - Mr	St Stephen United Church of Christ
Centenary United Methodist Church	and Mrs Thomas Van Meter III	Kenneth Stammerman
Elisabeth Clark	Rickard Jones	The Highland Vineyard Inc
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Crescent Hill Baptist Church	Harrison Kyle Kirby	Trinity Episcopal Church
Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church	Hannah Knudsen	Trustee & Council of the
Crestwood Christian Church	Korrek Optical	Episcopal Diocese of KY
Crossroads Christian Church	Geoff and Sherry Maddock	University of Kentucky
Daniel Family Foundation Inc.	Middletown Christian Church	Internship Award
David Kinny	Midway Baptist Church	University of Louisville
Maryann C. Davis	Northeast Christian Church	Venu Vemuri
William Dohrman	Joseph Oldham	David and Elizabeth Wactel
Douglass Boulevard Christian Church	Open Door Church	Mr. and Mrs. Warren Walker
Neal Dunlap	Pakistani-American Alliance	Walnut Hill Church Inc
Emmanuel Episcopal Church	Ashley Parker	Hannah Wiedemann
Taylor Outreach Fund	Atul Pathiyal	Beverly Wilson
William Faris	Pisgah Presbyterian Church	Aimee M. Zaring

Peace Partners: \$500 - \$999

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Margaret Anderson	Honor Of James and	Barbara Edelman
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Perry Bentley	Christ Church CROSS Ministries	Episcopal Church of The Resurrection
Blue Grass Community Foundation	Church of Christ Union	Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky
In Honor of Howard and	Covenant Community Church	Therese and Glenn Flood
Dee Reynolds	Carol E. Davis	



Peace Partners, continued

Robert Fohr In Honor Of Rev Dr. Cynthia Campbell	Ronald E. Marstin In Honor Of Ruba Al Sebai	James Roberts In Memory Of Rev Ken Thompson
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Patricia Henninger	Jennifer Moore	St William Catholic Church &
Sherilyn Hesler	Muhammad Ali Museum and	CrossRoads Ministry
Kaiju	Education Center - UCREW	Ann Stewart Anderson and
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A. Lee and Victoria L. Meyer	Passport Health Plan	Eleanor Sutter
Kenneth and Kathleen Loomis In	Sunny Payne	Toni Crawford Charitable Fund
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Welcome Partners: Up to \$499

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Of Bill Shores	Mary A. Arthur	Susan Bentley
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James Adams	Nazenin Assef	Berea Interfaith Task Force
Corey Adams	Athens Chilesburg PTA	For Peace
Ashleigh Adkins	Atherton High School	Bernice Pederson In Memory Of
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In Honor of Jessira Harvey and	Samuel Baker	Colleen Blackburne Beach
Matt Akridge	Bardstown Road	Amie Blandford
Frances Alien	Presbyterian Church	Beth Blankenship
Seamus Allman	Julia Barker	David R. Blanton
Amazon Smile	Stephanie Barnett	Block Party Handmade Boutique
Amnesty International	Andrew Bartlett	Bluegrass Hospitality LLC
David Anderson	Mary D. Barton	Maddie Booher
Matilda Andrews In Honor of	Steven Baughman	Edna Boone and Paula Pace
Macleod Andrews and	Harlan Beckemeyer	Daniel Bowman
Sarah Huaught	William Beckley	John Brantley

Welcome Partners, continued

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Joseph Brown	William P. Collins	John Ellington
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Jennie Burnet	Brad Craft	James Embry
Bruce Burton	John and Laurie Craycroft	Terry and Barbara England
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Mary T. Campbell In Honor Of	Joan and Ward Crowe	Taylor Ewing Johnstone
Caroline Reed Walker	Kathryn Culligan Simon	Facilities Management
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Samuel Carneal	Patricia Darnell	Rosemary Fedorchuk
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Adam Carrico	Deborah Davies	Sara M. Ferchichi
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Welcome Partners, continued

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Graeme Gardiner	Betty Hall	Sarah Hunter
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Laura Guissinger		

Welcome Partners, continued

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Donald Knowland	Heather Mahoney	Methodist Church
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