

BUILDING PEACEFUL BRIDGES

"Bridging the hearts and minds of all people"



Clockwise: Kadjemba siblings in the city; Family celebration; Asha & Mukubanyi Kadjemba stay warm.

Meet BPB Families

The Kadjemba family of five arrived in Chicago in November 2019. They left their home in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2018 and went to live in a refugee camp in Burundi. While at the camp they received word from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement that they would be resettled in Chicago.

Upon their arrival in Chicago, RefugeeOne, a local resettlement agency, provided them with a furnished apartment and assisted them in receiving food stamps, healthcare, ESL Training and employment guidance. By December the three adults (father, mother and oldest daughter) were employed and enrolled in English classes. The two younger children were enrolled in school and in RefugeeOne's Youth Program.

Then COVID-19 hit and all three adults became unemployed. Currently, all five family members are at home and continuing their English studies virtually. The father is actively job hunting and the mother and daughter are hoping to be rehired by their former employer.

In early May, BPB began to partner with RefugeeOne as co-sponsors and mentors for the Kadjemba family. Our Bridge Builder Team virtually meets weekly with them. Father Joseph, a friend of BPB, has generously donated his time to serve as our translator. English is new to all of them.

In our conversations, we addressed some of their most immediate needs including rental assistance, food and clothing.

We hope to enhance their understanding of American culture and support them in short-term goals. We look forward to meeting in person sometime soon!

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CALENDAR

World Refugee Day
2020

Saturday, June 20 - 3 PM

Annual Fall Event

Saturday, October 24
6:30pm - 10:30pm
Details to Follow

Upcoming
Luncheon Meetings

September 21
November 16
Mondays: Noon - 2pm

Please visit our website
or send an email for
more details

Dear Bridge Builders,

Building Peaceful Bridges (BPB) is deeply saddened by the injustices highlighted by recent events in America. We believe all people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. We stand together with all who seek peace, equity and justice in America.

Peace requires responsibility of citizens: globally, nationally and locally. The memories of the 1960’s civil rights protests to the death of George Floyd and many others mandates us to make true institutional and policy reform to combat racism.

BPB’s mission is to support people of all faiths and to foster multicultural relationships. We are committed to listening to and learning from our immigrant brothers and sisters as we welcome them and seek to help them make this country their new home.

BPB will use its voice to enhance social justice and racial understanding. Given the three crises throughout the globe: the pandemic, economic crisis, and racial injustice, the time for hope and action is now.

We are grateful to be of assistance to our refugees through BPB’s mentoring and sponsoring program. We are enriched by the stories of their lives as we learn about their journeys. BPB will continue to educate Americans about the American Immigration System, resettlement process and work we do. We build relationships with refugee families to address their needs and plan for their independence.

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, speakers, communities for all of their support of “bridging the hearts and minds of all people.”

“If not me, who? If not now, when?”,

Lori Consadori Lucchetti

Lori Consadori Lucchetti, President & Co-Founder



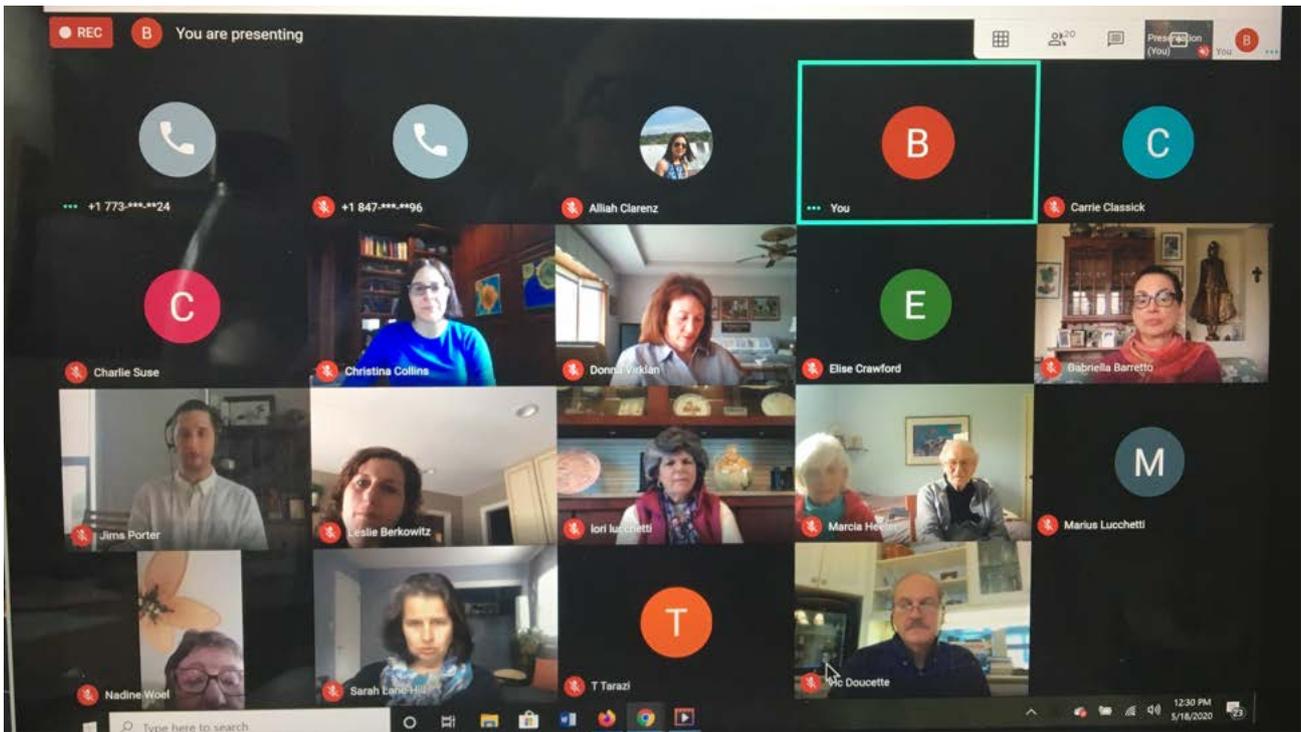
Bridge Builders

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead

Building Peaceful Bridges is a nonprofit organization supporting people of all faiths whose mission is to foster multicultural relationships by assisting in the integration of refugees into American society and educating communities on the challenges facing refugee populations through their stories.





BPB May Virtual Luncheon with speaker Jims Porter

Learning Luncheons

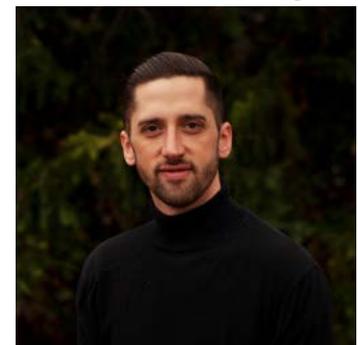
The Pandemic challenged BPB to explore a virtual alternative to our much loved luncheon meetings. While a virtual meeting does not provide the same opportunities for shared friendship and good food, our Bridge Builders requested us to continue the educational component of these events. BPB’s first virtual luncheon, May 18, had Jims Porter speak about “Refugee Resettlement and the COVID-19 Response.”

Jims is the Communications and Advocacy Manager at RefugeeOne, a refugee settlement agency in Chicago. Jims educated the audience about how the refugee settlement agency executes its mission of “creating opportunities for refugees fleeing war, terror, and persecution to build new lives of safety, dignity and self-reliance.” Their programs include English Language Training, Workforce Development, a Wellness Program, a Sewing Studio, a Youth and Young Adult Program, Women’s Services, and Immigration and Citizenship Assistance.

During the pandemic, RefugeeOne continues to provide support remotely. Staff help families navigate healthcare, mitigate lost wages and provide support to stay in their homes.

Jims also spoke to us about the Refugee Action Network (formerly Golden Door Coalition). The Network is a statewide coalition of refugee focused organizations, whose vision is to “foster the dignified resettlement and successful integration of refugee families into the fabric of our communities.” As a member of this coalition, BPB looks forward to sharing information and learning from our partners.

If you are interested in hearing Jims’ May 18th presentation, please follow the YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/HTCMGcCB7D4>



Jims Porter - RefugeeOne

Meet BPB Families

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The young family from Afghanistan we sponsored through our partnership with Catholic Charities successfully “graduated” from BPB’s program. We wish them success as they continue their journey.

Bushra and Zeyad’s family continue their progress despite setbacks imposed by the Pandemic. They are developing a longer-term financial plan with the guidance of one of our Bridge Builders, Christina. Christina is a CFP who is donating her time to coach the family through the next phase of their resettlement towards self-reliance.



Clockwise: Stocking the INCA Pantry, Delivering Care Boxes, A filled INCA Pantry!

Refugee Families Fed

In March and April, BPB initiated a “Call to Action” to our Bridge Builders to immediately provide “Food Boxes” to refugee families. Due to COVID-19 many of the food pantries were bare. BPB responded by raising over \$2,000 and feeding over forty families. BPB donated to the ICNA Relief Food Pantry thereby providing hope and support to our local refugee families.

Before the current COVID-19 crisis, refugee families faced tremendous challenges in operating, integrating and, frankly, surviving in a new land with a new culture, a new language, and new rules. The anxiety and uncertainty we all have during this shutdown is more acute for these families who escaped unimaginable horrors and now face a new hardship. The food assistance helped families survive through these unprecedented times.

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”
-Mahatma Gandhi

Thank you for supporting the BPB mission!

Support Building Peaceful Bridges – Be a Donor, Educator, Influencer, Mentor, Speaker, Sponsor

We are thankful for our sponsors and partners:



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ICNA Relief - Chicago

refugeeONE

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Compassion bridges to Trust.
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