

BUILDING PEACEFUL BRIDGES

"Bridging the hearts and minds of all people"



Clockwise from left: Zahra celebrating her graduation; Grace, Ardita, and Ellie visit Baby Binja and Hawa; The Kadjemba family welcoming 2021!



BPB Family Update

BPB welcomes its newest family member - Master Binja Ahadi Chibabira, 12/15/20, son of Ahadi and Hawa, thrilled parents. The extended family joined together, eating and dancing, to celebrate Binja's arrival. BPB provided goat meat, a traditional Congolese favorite. Ahadi has joined a Long Haul Van Delivery Service, in order to provide for his family (Uber employment was not producing revenue). Bridge Builders are sponsoring the family for 6 months of half a month's rent, diapers and baby needs. We will provide coaching for Ahadi's path to U.S. citizenship.

Thanks to Carrie, Monique, Joanne, Tamara, and a network of young moms, who donated, collected and delivered baby items for Binja. Other Bridge Builders were thrilled to meet Binja and Hawa on a recent visit. The family is grateful for the support from Ellie, Ardita and Kerry.



Kerry visiting Binja

New beginnings for Bushra and Zeyad's family. Zahra graduated from Penn High School on January 17th, a formal graduation ceremony will be in May with her class.

She began Indiana University on January 19th studying medical sciences. The family has purchased property to rehab. It is a full family effort. Adam enjoys conversations with his preschool buddies as well as virtual visits with BPB. BPB will continue to provide academic support when needed and monthly financial coaching.

Bushra and Zeyad's family attended BPB's Annual Educational Event and screening of "Belonging". Our guests enjoyed the opportunity to speak with them about their story. Bushra will be baking Iraqi sweets for BPB's raffle winner Moshood.

We have initiated discussions with several resettlement partners regarding mentoring/ sponsoring additional families, but need your support to cross that bridge.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining the BPB Mentoring Team, sign up at:
<https://www.volunteermatch.org/search/org1177836.jsp>

CALENDAR

Inaugural Book Club Meeting

Wednesday, February 24,
7 - 9 pm

Upcoming Luncheon Meeting

Virtual - March 22
Monday: Noon - 1 pm

Please visit our website
or send an email for
more details



Dear Bridge Builders,

Welcome to 2021! We welcome the Biden Administration prioritizing restructuring of the United States Immigration System which produces a resettlement process that is more humane and more welcoming. Immediate action was taken

by Executive Order lifting the Muslim ban and Immigration Reform legislation was sent to the Congress.

Democracy is America! Democracy is based on the U.S. Constitution that reads “all men are created equal.” Building Peaceful Bridges’ (BPB) mission is based on achieving social and economic justice for all of the refugees that enter the U.S. resettlement process. The events at our nation's Capital early in the month are antithetical to BPB’s vision and frighten refugees who have experienced overwhelming situations.

As Amanda Gorman, Inauguration Day Youth Poet Laureate, says in “The Hill We Climb” “For there is always light, If only we’re brave enough to see it, If only we’re brave enough to be it.”



We honor her as an ambassador of peace and a bridge builder.

We recently gathered at BPB’s Strategic Planning Retreat and reflected upon our 2020 accomplishments that “we were brave enough to do:”

- Produced “Belonging”, a film telling the story of two refugee families and how BPB assists
- Mentored and sponsored additional families; graduated family toward self sufficiency
- Hosted over 10 educational events (Learning Luncheons; community speaking events)
- Accomplished Calls to Action: Winter Food Drive; Clothing Drives; Gift Drives; Furniture Deliveries
- Initiated a presence on Social Media and maintained an active Website
- Continued production of Publications (Quarterly Report, Bi-Monthly Newsletters)
- Implemented a Volunteer Recruitment Program
- Expanded partnerships through continued coalition building locally and nationally

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, speakers, and 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

Thank you!

A special thanks to Chris Heeter, The Wild Institute, and Pam Devereux, Gift of Adoption, for their coaching expertise at the 2021 BPB Strategic Planning Retreat.



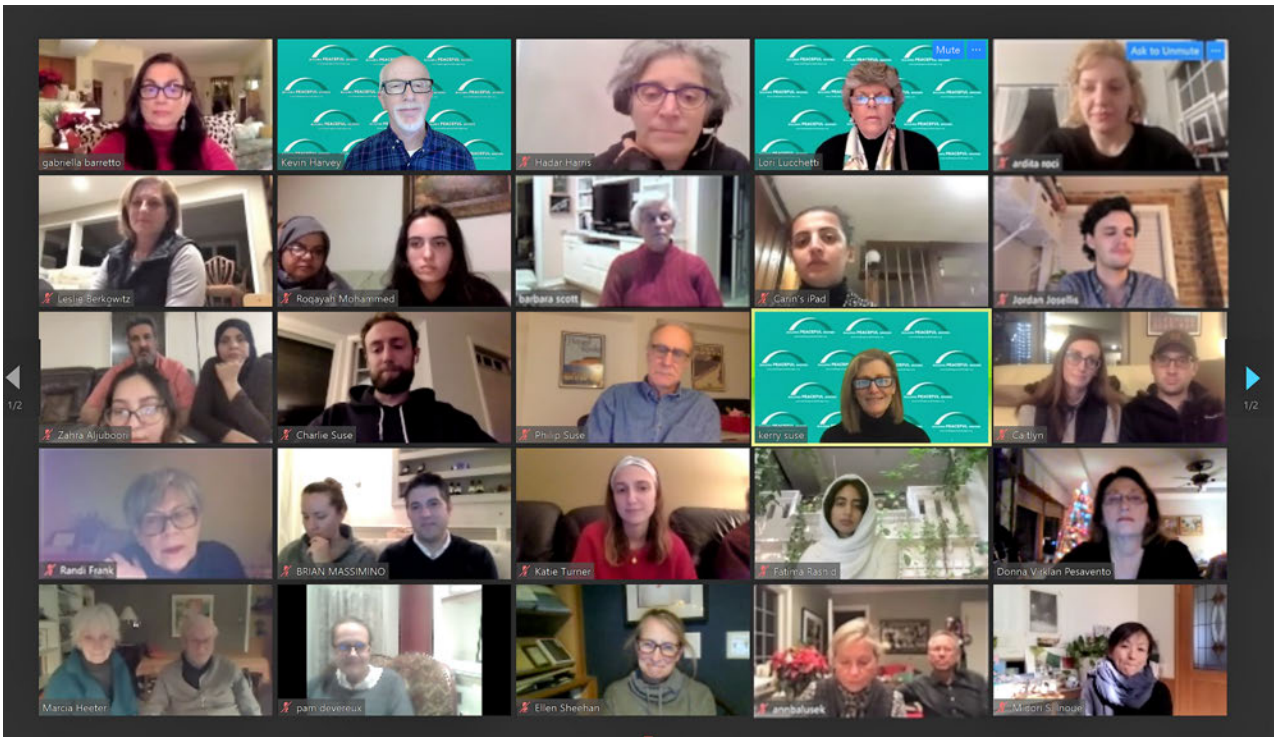
Bridge Builders

“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.





Annual Educational Event

BPB hosted our first Virtual Annual Educational Event and screened “Belonging”, a film directed by Kevin Harvey, BPB’s Digital Marketing Director. We welcomed Bridge Builders from all over the globe to understand our story and a refugee’s success story.

The highlight of the event was screening “Belonging”, a film that portrays the journey of a refugee family walking the path of resettlement, building relationships, and reaching U.S. citizenship. The film also tells the story of Ahlam and Roqayah, both of whom are Bridge Builders, and their path towards independence and self-sufficiency with the backing of their community and friends. Our guests learned about the founding of BPB and our mission from our board members.

Our guests participated in discussions and generated great ideas and suggestions for distributing

BPB supporters screen "Belonging" during the Annual Educational Event.

“Belonging”. Based on their recommendations, we plan to segment the film into shorter versions, enter “Belonging” in film festivals, and use it to spread awareness within our society.


Looking ahead in 2021, we plan to host several Educational Events for our refugee families and our members. We look forward to welcoming guests to speak about housing, the global refugee crisis, the Biden Administration’s goals for refugees and immigrants, transitional education, and other topics.

We are grateful to our donors, Bridge Builders, volunteers, and all our guests for attending our Annual Event, making it a successful evening, and supporting the mission of BPB.

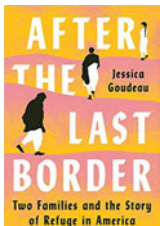
Please use this link to watch “Belonging”:

<https://vimeo.com/492626041>

Password: [bridgebuilder](#) (all lowercase)



We invite you to join us at our inaugural quarterly Book Club meeting on Feb. 24th at 7 pm with author Jessica Goudeau to discuss her book, “After the Last Border.” It is “the story of two refugee families, and their hope and resilience as they fight to survive and belong in America.” Bridge Builders asked us for literature suggestions to improve their understanding of refugees’ journeys and how we can assist in their effort to belong. Looking forward to hearing your perspective.



Click on the Book to Sign Up:



Volunteer Spotlight

This winter we celebrated the engagement of Roqayah Mohammed and Mahmood Akif. Roqayah is one of our fabulous interns, managing our social media platforms and assisting with event planning. She is a former refugee, working on her master's in nursing, and is committed to serving newly arrived refugee families.



Roqayah and Mahmood

Housing Help - Call to Action

BPB supporters answered our fall Call to Action meeting our matching target. The \$6,000 raised will provide a young refugee family with 5 months rent, food and baby supplies. BPB and the family are incredibly grateful for your help during this pandemic.

Happy New Year!

In an effort to bring brightness and joy to refugee families, BPB initiated a New Year Gift Drive for the children of our sponsored families and ICNA Relief refugee families.

BPB volunteers purchased, wrapped, and delivered more than 30 gifts for children of all ages, including toys, stuffed animals, illustrated books, art supplies, and candy. Beauty products and clothing were added to the mix to ensure each member of the family receives a present. The Gift Drive brought smiles to welcome the new year cheerfully. With your assistance the BPB Team



will continue with donation drives to reach others beyond the needs of our families.

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

-Mahatma Gandhi

Call to Action

BPB's need for Volunteers is tremendous. We welcome individuals to join our team, and are currently recruiting these team members:

- Academic Tutors
- Arabic and Swahili Translators
- IT Assistant
- Mentors
- Social Workers

Please visit VolunteerMatch to learn more about the opportunities.



VolunteerMatch

Thank you for supporting the BPB mission!

Be a Donor, Educator, Influencer, Mentor, Speaker, Sponsor

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ICNA Relief - Chicago



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OUR BELIEFS

Compassion bridges to Trust.
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