



BUILDING PEACEFUL BRIDGES

"Bridging the hearts and minds of all people"



BPB and QAS moving family into new home



Taleb playing soccer



Gulaly can drive!

BPB Family Update

Beatha and her family are settling into their new home in Chicago. BPB, along with HIAS, have helped make a house a home providing financial support and supplying furniture, clothing, school supplies and household items. Three of the children are enjoying school and Beatha and the oldest daughter are learning English.

Habibulah's family recently arrived in America from Afghanistan through the U.S. SIV Resettlement Program after working for the U.S. Military in Afghanistan. BPB is partnering with HIAS/JCFS to resettle the family. The father is actively seeking work and pursuing a driver's license. His wife would like to improve her English and the BPB Team will tutor her in English. Habibulah has family members that live in Illinois and Wisconsin and are willing to help him with the job search. The couple also has two young children who our team will begin teaching the alphabet to during visits.

Education is a really important ticket to a better life, and a couple members of Basharmal's family

are doing just that. Two of the men are at Northeastern University studying Accounting and Engineering. They are looking for part time job opportunities in January and will graduate in May 2023. This is the first family that BPB has given a rent guarantee to, and the family is able to move forward because of this support. The family has moved within walking distance of the institution and are anxiously awaiting the arrival of a new baby. Thanks to our partner, Queen of All Saints (QAS) for facilitating the move.

Gulaly passed her drivers license and continues at Oakton Community College for ESL.

Taleb is enjoying soccer with AYSO, where BPB Volunteer Andrew Kramer is an Assistant Coach.

CALENDAR

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, November 29

Annual Event

Thursday, December 1
7pm

Learning Luncheon

February, TBD

Reading Refuge Book Club

March, TBD

Spring Clothing Drive

April, TBD



Dear Bridge Builders,

Hope you are enjoying this lovely Fall weather. In 2022, BPB has reaped a plentiful harvest thanks to our donors, volunteers, staff, speakers and communities for all of

their support to “bridge the hearts and minds of all people.”

Thank you for your generous sponsorship enabling us to provide housing “peace of mind” to many newcomer families. Monthly rent payments continue to exceed over 73% of a refugee family's budget, leaving minimal income to pay for other necessities. BPB continues to provide Rent Guarantees to landlords for refugees without a credit history.

Bridge Builders responded to a number of Call to Action requests, reaching the \$10K goal to assist Beatha and her family to settle into America from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Others wrote to their Congressional Members urging passage of the Afghan Adjustment Act.

On October 21, BPB joined Refugee Action Network (RAN) David Zverow, Housing Subcommittee Director and COMPASS Founder Dr. Galya Ben-Ariah on a panel at the Housing Action Illinois Conference to discuss Affordable Housing for Refugees. Kevin Harvey, BPB Director of Communications, highlighted our families' stories regarding the challenges of renting in Illinois.



Bridge Builders

Daily, people ask us “How can I help America’s newcomers?” We say “Become a Bridge Builder.” Given the increases in refugees and parolees (Afghan, Ukraine, Venezuelan), BPB invites more volunteers and donors to help. BPB is creating a Hybrid organization with more staff and volunteers. We welcome Lesley Allen, BPB Volunteer Coordinator and Arditia Roci, BPB Family Support Manager.

We are hard at work creating a documentary on the importance of education and what it means to each individual. We hope you will join us for the screening of “Dreams” on December 1, 7 pm at BPB’s Virtual Annual Event *Gather for Good*.

I completed my Fellowship at Hello Neighbor Network (HNN), allowing BPB to engage with fellow immigration focused organizations around the United States. We shared best practices, learned from knowledge experts and made new colleagues.

We grieve the loss of Hikmat Hanna, BPB benefactor, who passed away this August at 91. Hikmat and The Hanna Charitable Limited have been supporters of BPB since its inception in 2018. A refugee himself, he was committed to paying it forward for new immigrants into our country throughout his lifetime.

A big thank you to Julie Halverson for serving as Secretary for two years on the BPB Board of Directors. We wish her and her family the best.

Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays!

“If not me, who? If not now, when?”,

Lori Consadori Lucchetti

Lori Consadori Lucchetti, President & Co-Founder

BPB Annual Event
December 1, 2022, 7 P.M
[REGISTER NOW](#)

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.



Learning Luncheon



Bridge Builders at Learning Luncheon

BPB welcomed Amy Hill, LCSW, as the speaker at our recent Learning Luncheon. Amy is the Program Manager for the Kovler Center Child Trauma Program, a program of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and has worked with refugee and asylum-seeking youth and families for over 15 years. The Kovler Center Child Trauma Program provides therapy and wrap-around services for refugee and asylum seekers from age 6 to 21 who have experienced trauma at any point in their journey to the United States. Amy's presentation was very informative in defining trauma, especially how it shows up in children.

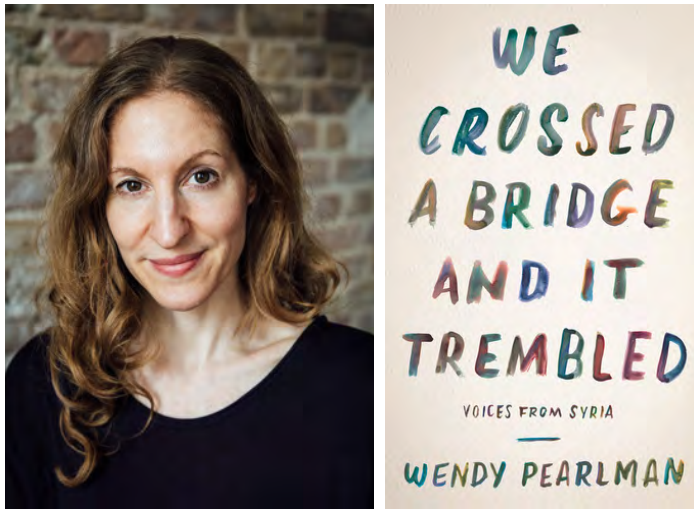
She described the different types of stresses that may impact refugees' emotional health. These include: traumatic stress, resettlement stress, acculturation stress and isolation stress. The effects of these stresses may manifest themselves differently in children than in adults. Amy explained that children may show signs of behavioral regression, a desire to continuously talk about the event, and older children may start engaging in risky behaviors.

Amy emphasized the importance of establishing trust when working with refugee families and encouraging a child focused approach to assist in healing. We thank Amy for her presentation and for motivating BPB Mentors to develop trusting relationships with the families we work with and for providing the tools needed to assist in a trauma informed way.

For those that were unable to attend, you can watch the discussion at:

<https://www.buildingpeacefulbridges.org/videos/learning-luncheons/>

Reading Refuge Book Club



BPB welcomed Dr. Wendy Pearlman, Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, to our most recent Reading Refuge Book Club. Dr. Pearlman began the evening by reading a powerful passage from her book *We Crossed A Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria*.

Following the reading, KK Brown, our moderator, shared questions from our Bridge Builders with Wendy. During the Q and A Wendy explained her motivation and process for writing the book as well as shared some personal stories from the hundreds of interviews she conducted. She addressed what she found as patterns in behavior when discussing the question of what leads people to engage in high-risk dissent and drew parallels to recent events in Afghanistan and Iran. Wendy's insights were especially relevant to BPB's work with refugee families.

We look forward to Wendy's next book project, tentatively titled *Home is in the Details: Narratives from the New Syrian Diaspora*. The book will be a collection of interviews with displaced Syrians reflecting on the meaning of home. We look forward to reading this book and hopefully welcoming Wendy back to BPB's Book Club!

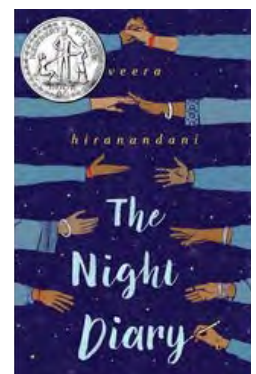
For those that were unable to attend, we encourage you to watch and share the video of the event

buildingpeacefulbridges.org/videos/book-club/

Junior Book Club



This quarter BPB introduced its Junior Reading Refuge Book Club. KK Brown and Ellie Suse, BPB Bridge Builders, took the lead and began the Club with four young refugee girls. Their first book selection was the classic, *Little Women*. Throughout the summer, KK and Ellie met with the girls once a week and read sections of the book together. They discussed themes which included family relationships as well as friendships. They also explored new vocabulary words. They decided to continue meeting during the school year and chose *The Night Diary* by Veera Hiranandani. It's the story of a twelve-year-old girl coming of age in Pakistan in 1947. The Club has met both virtually and in person at a local library. KK, Ellie and the girls are looking forward to more in person activities including library visits and holiday baking.



Annual Event

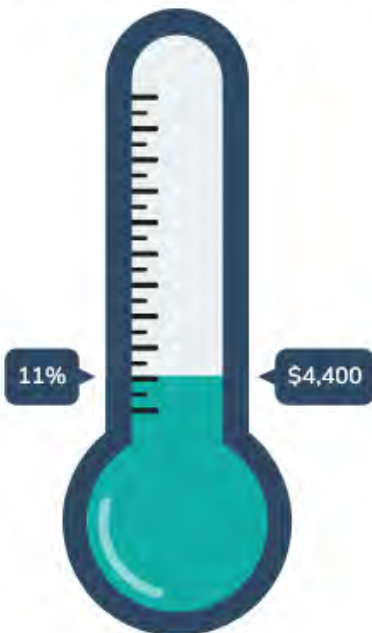
[Come join us at our virtual Annual Event](#), Gather for Good, Thursday, December 1 at 7 pm CT. We will be sharing personal stories of our refugees' journeys; how education is impacting their goals and dreams.

Join us to learn about the important work we do and hear our families' stories. BPB supports all of our families in their efforts to learn, grow and thrive in their new homes. Your support ensures we can continue to support the educational efforts of these students as well as provide food, furniture, and rent assistance to the families we mentor.

This year we will also be raffling off a number of exciting items including museum passes, theater tickets and a grand prize of a chef's dinner. Visit our [link](#) to purchase tickets!

Thursday, December 1st, 7:00 PM CST via Zoom

GOAL: \$40,000



Bridge to Belongings



Nneka Obasi presents BPB recognition award to Greg Kain from IPM

BPB extends its sincerest gratitude to Integrated Project Management Company (IPM), who generously hosted our Fall Clothing Drive as part of their most recent quarterly philanthropic outreach program. IPM is a nationwide consulting firm headquartered in Burr Ridge, IL. Under our guidance, IPM ran a targeted clothing drive among their employee population and was able to gather and purchase approximately 1,000 needed items for our families to stay warm this winter. IPM also gave BPB a platform to raise awareness about our organization and the refugee experience by hosting a company wide learning event in which Lori Lucchetti and Roqayah Mohammed shared their stories. As a token of our appreciation, BPB has awarded IPM with a BPB Recognition Award. We are thankful for our partnership with IPM and especially want to thank Greg Kain, Jonathan Merrick and Jessie Ellerbrock.

www.buildingpeacefulbridges.org/donate/



BPB Family receives winter clothing from IPM

Call to Action

Volunteer!

BPB's need for Volunteers is tremendous.

We welcome individuals to join our team, and are currently recruiting these team members:

- Family Mentors
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Academic Tutors
- IT Assistant
- Social Media

Please [visit VolunteerMatch](#)

to learn more about the opportunities.



VolunteerMatch

Volunteer Spotlight



Marilyn Garcia

I've been a BPB volunteer since the summer of 2021. I heard about the organization through a friend who thought I'd be interested in volunteering. Once I attended some educational events and heard about the mission, I knew I wanted to work with refugee families as a mentor. As a mentor I help families assimilate by learning English, attending school, finding a job, and learning about their community. It's been so rewarding to see how motivated and determined these families are as they succeed and call Chicago their new home.



[DONATE NOW](#)

Halloween Fun



BPB Family Support Manager Ardita Roci organized two fun Halloween activities for our families. The children enjoyed a trip to Wagner Farm in Glenview where they bought pumpkins and visited with the farm animals. Then, an afternoon of carving pumpkins into scary faces. Finally they all enjoyed trick or treating on Halloween.

Thank you for supporting the BPB mission!

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OUR BELIEFS

Compassion bridges to Trust.
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