

WAYS TO HELP REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS, JANUARY 2020

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE: Exodus in Indy sent notice that they need winter clothing (coats, gloves/mittens, scarves, hats), especially for men and children, but also for women.

St. Thomas Lutheran Church (3800 E. 3rd St.) will partner with BRSN to collect these items through Jan. 31. Clothing can be donated through the 3rd St. entrance of the church. TIMES: between 10 a.m. and noon, and between 2-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. (After entering the Church, turn left into the hallway. At the end of the hallway you can place clothing in Room 13 (in front of you on the right) on the designated table. Signs will be in place to guide you. And please feel free to come into the office if you have questions.) *If you need a different drop off time, please call Jan or Tom Sinn to find another time to meet.*

St. Paul's Catholic Center (1413 E. 17th St.) is also accepting winter clothing donations. The Donation bin is located just inside the east side Gathering Space door.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT HELP IMMIGRANTS AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER:

MICA (Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project)

HIAS (Hebrew Immigration Aid Society): Originally established to help Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution, now helps refugees globally, and has been extremely effective in helping Arabic, African, Latino, and Asian refugees. HIAS is a very credible and moral organization, and can always use assistance. Here in Bloomington, Beth Shalom is the primary contact for HIAS, and is happy to help with any questions.

ADVOCACY NEEDED (our thanks to Christie Popp for the link!)

Hard as this is to believe, our federal government is proposing ADDITIONAL restrictions for asylum seekers, specifically additional reasons to bar the granting of asylum. This is the time to comment: email's and postmarks have a **deadline of January 21**. There are five attachments:

"Procedures for Public Comment, Asylum Eligibility" which is an explanation of the ways to submit a comment. PLEASE NOTE: there is an opportunity to list the organization you are representing in your comment, but please DO NOT list BRSN. Public comments on BRSN's behalf need to pass through our board first.

"Background of Asylum Eligibility", a lengthy summary of our asylum laws and policies.

"Proposed Regulatory Changes in Asylum Eligibility" (with the proposed changes, each followed by background, implications, and impact; it is lengthy, so feel free to follow the subheadings).

"Regulatory Requirements for the Proposed Asylum Limits"

"Sample Comments" on the proposed laws – these can be rephrased for your use; consider them templates.

NOTE: All 5 of these are all lengthy documents – you might print out only those sections that are of value to you.

FUNDRAISER FOR BRSN: As you know, much of our work consists not only in the tremendous efforts of volunteers who work directly with immigrants, but also with helping immigrants with their skyrocketing application fees, and also with fees for low-bono attorneys. We are thinking about holding a community-wide fundraiser in February. If you would like to participate (by contacting other groups, helping out with food, set-up, logistics during the event, and publicity), would you let us know (bloomingtonrefugees@gmail.com)? Also, we'd like to know the best dates for you in February.