

Annual Report 2018
**Community Refugee Committee of St. Albert
(CRCSA)**

The Community Refugee Committee of St. Albert (CRCSA) is a unique collaboration among the citizens of St. Albert, members of the Host Lions Club of St. Albert and St. Albert United Church. We have been meeting regularly for over three years. The first year was spent in two major activities which resulted in significant community awareness and participation: fundraising and educating ourselves and the community about the meaning of refugee sponsorship.

With assistance from the national United Church Refugee Advisor's Office in Toronto we chose a young Syrian family to sponsor. The young family of four arrived at the Edmonton International Airport on July 6, 2018. We shared the financial support for the newcomers with the Federal Government under the framework of the BVOR (Blended Visa Office Referral) portfolio. The responsibility of the CRCSA has involved all settlement activities, which are undertaken to assist the family to begin to become valuable Canadian citizens.

At this time we are happy to report that this family is healthy and happily settled in Edmonton. It has been a very steep learning curve for the settlement team as well as the family. The acculturation process has included the large extended family, both a blessing and a challenge. The husband recently decided to withdraw from qualified English language learning at One World One Center to assist his wife at home and to learn English through informal networks. It is noted that neither the husband nor the wife are literate in their own language.

The team has been most diligent in encouraging English language acquisition with private lessons for the wife. The hope lies with the children, who will be attending local schools in Edmonton when they are old enough. Currently, we are waiting as patiently as possible for the arrival of Baby #3, due any day now. Similarly, the family has received the best of dental and health care which Canada has to offer, including immunizations and specialist attention during the current pregnancy. The job prospects for this young husband are in the area of manual labour. The settlement team has noticed that he is a hard worker, pleasant, and takes initiative as appropriate.

The CRCSA Team is holding a Sponsorship Celebration Party to mark the official closure of this one year sponsorship on July 16, 2019, 3-7 pm at the Lions Park in St. Albert. Everyone is invited, including the Council of St. Albert United Church.

Several thousand dollars remains to be used solely for refugee sponsorship. The CRCSA Team believes that this money should be used for refugee work to be decided jointly between the CRCSA and the St. Albert United Church Council in the Fall of 2019. In the meantime, the money remains in the Alberta Treasury Branch in St. Albert.

The CRCSA wishes to thank the Council of St. Albert United Church, our Sponsorship Agreement Holder, for support of this important life-saving community initiative.

Judy Evans and Helen Arnott
Co-Chairs, Community Refugee Committee of St. Albert
May 30, 2019