

IRCO Volunteer Handbook



IRCO's MISSION is to promote the integration of refugees, immigrants, and the community at large into a self-sufficient, healthy, and inclusive multi-ethnic society



Why volunteer with IRCO?

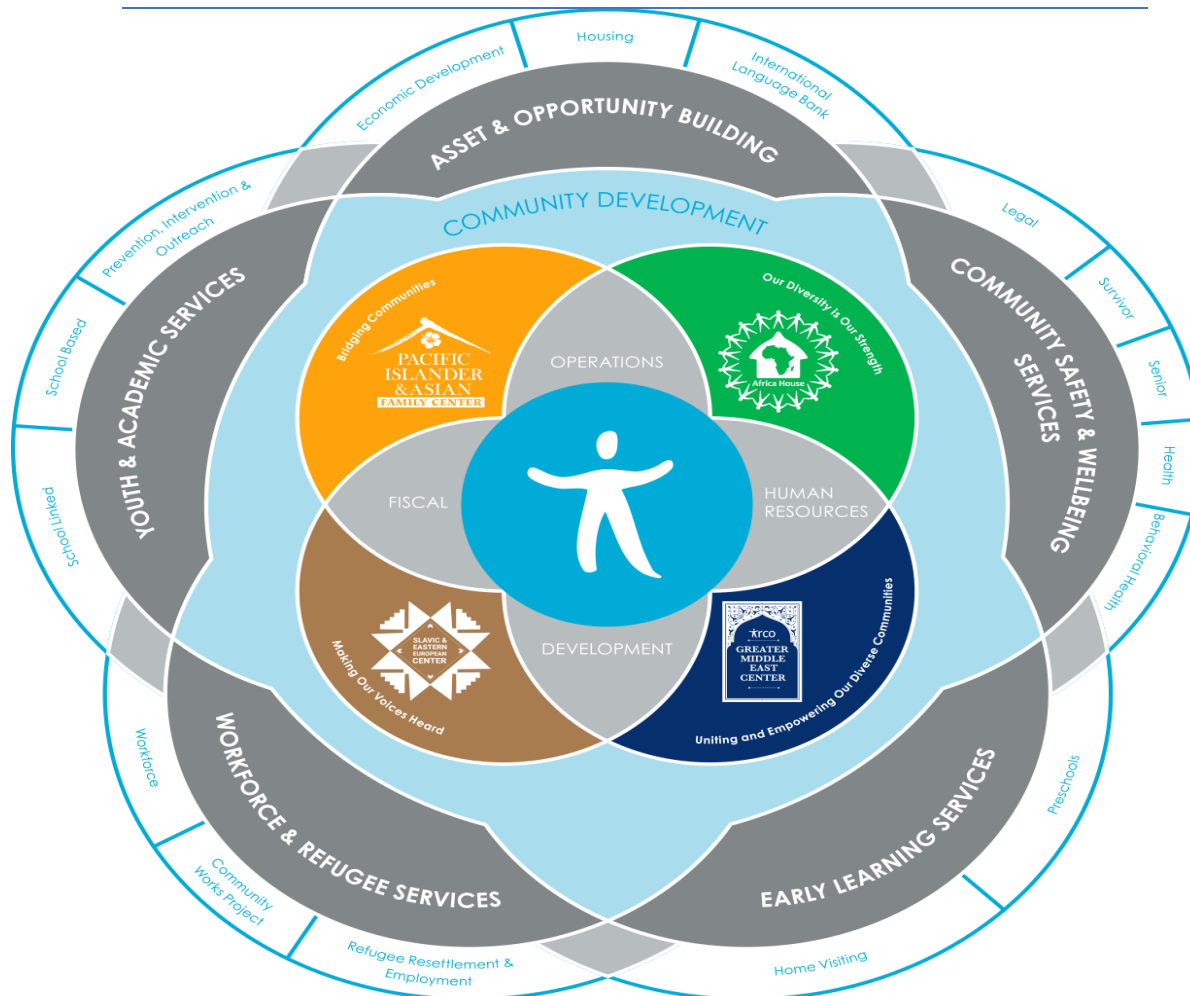
At IRCO, our volunteers are considered part of our family, our greatest advocates, and crucial to our mission. Our volunteers provide essential skills and knowledge to fulfill our mission, meaning your time can have a real impact on people’s lives. Volunteering with IRCO can also provide a transformative opportunity to be part of a diverse group and gain exposure to different areas of social services.

Our Volunteer Program is dedicated to our community’s well-being. We work every day with our programs and identify where volunteers are most needed. We have many opportunities within a variety of programs, including 75+ and support for youth to successfully complete high school. We need volunteers to help empower children, youth, families, and elders of our communities to build new lives and become self-sufficient.

Oregon has one of the fastest growing refugee and immigrant populations in the country. With the help of our generous volunteers, our programs engage the most diverse communities in the state. Since 2020, our Volunteers have donated almost 30,000 cumulative hours and we are so thankful for each one of them. Volunteers like **you** are how IRCO is able to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

IRCO has many [volunteering opportunities](#) that can be a perfect match with your personality, lifestyle, or schedule. We offer many one-time and long-term volunteer opportunities, as well as virtual volunteer options, all of which can be applied for through our website. Multilingual volunteers are especially important and welcome to apply.

Our Centers & History



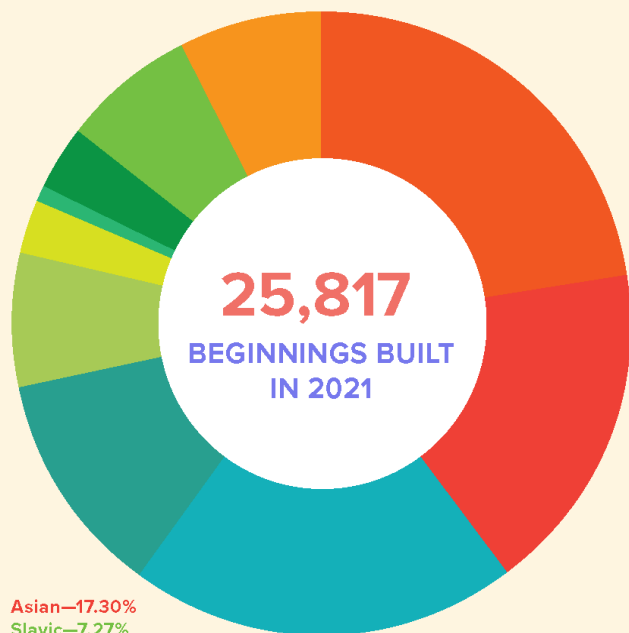
Founded in 1976 by refugees for refugees, IRCO has over 40 years of history and experience working with Portland’s refugee and immigrant communities. Following the 1970’s political upheavals in Southeast Asia, Oregon and Washington were two of the first states to offer new opportunities and homes to refugees. A group of Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian refugees in Portland formed the Indochinese Cultural and Service Center (ICSC) to help newly arrived families adjust to American society and find jobs.

By the mid-80s, ICSC joined forces with another community-based organization, Southeast Asian Refugee Federation (SEARF). The newly formed International Refugee Center of Oregon (IRCO) became the sole service provider of employment services and job training for all newly arrived refugees, a role IRCO has retained ever since. We became the immigrant and Refugee Community Organization in 2001. In 1994, IRCO founded the Asian Family Center, the first of our culturally and linguistically specific one stop service locations, followed by the establishment of Africa House in 2006, as well as the creation of our Slavic & Eastern European Center in 2018 and Greater Middle East Center in 2020.

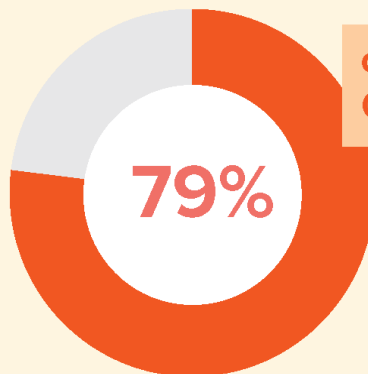
Our Impact in 2021!

Year in Review

Thanks for your support and outstanding work of our staff, we achieved a lot this year!



- Asian—17.30%
- Slavic—7.27%
- Caucasian—19.22%
- Latino/Hispanic—11.28%
- Middle Eastern—6.78%
- African—10.34%
- African American—11.47%
- Multi Racial—2.70%
- Native American/Alaskan Native—0.83%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander—3.33%
- Declined to answer—9.48%



of those we serve come from
COMMUNITIES OF COLOR



Providing direct support with rental assistance, eviction, and helping community members with paying their bills.

Our Impact

547

NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES RECEIVED RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT

Culturally specific services help communities, families and individuals become self-sufficient and build new lives in Oregon.

1,290

SENIORS RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FOR HEALTH, HOUSING, AND FOOD

735

CHILDREN PARTICIPATED IN PROGRAMS OFFERING PARENT-CHILD DEVELOPMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC

1,786

FOUND EMPLOYMENT AND ENGAGED IN TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Equal and equitable opportunities for refugees and immigrants to help them develop valuable skills.

800+

VIEWERS TUNED INTO THE GALA BROADCAST FROM AROUND THE WORLD

including Turkey, Nepal, Korea, Russia, and more!

76

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

Collectively our clients represent 110 countries of origin and speak more than 76 languages.

Arabic	4.58 %	Other	1.45%
Burmese	2.15%	Russian	6.04%
Chinese	1.81%	Somali	5.72%
Chuukese	1.59%	Spanish	9.51%
Dari	2.83%	Swahili	2.17%
English	45.83%	Tongan	0.88%
Karen	2.79%	Ukrainian	3.61%
Nepali	3%	Vietnamese	6.04%

*not an exhaustive list

1,340

PARTICIPATED IN WRAPAROUND COVID-19 SERVICES

OUR VOLUNTEERS

To ensure high quality and consistent service to clients, each program specifies its own time commitment requirement from volunteers. IRCO has many [volunteering opportunities](#) ; both one-time and long-term, as well as virtual, all of which can be applied for through our website. Multilingual volunteers are especially important and welcome to apply. Before committing to volunteering in a specific program, please be clear about the length in time expectations.

WHAT TO EXPECT

After applying for an opportunity, a volunteer can expect the following:

- An interview with the program staff
- Background check required for specific volunteer or intern placement
- Program-specific training as needed
- Volunteers will be trained in reporting their individual monthly service hours on the Volgistics volunteer database
 - [Volgistics log in portal](#)
- Ongoing support and assistance

CONTACT US

If you ever have a concern, question, or volunteer-related problem, please contact IRCO's Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@irco.org

POLICIES

We have a few general expectations of all our volunteers:

- Because of our clients' diverse range of cultural backgrounds, please respect differing opinions on potentially divisive topics such as religion, politics, or gender roles.
- Be mindful of IRCO's confidentiality policy and any specific policies of the programs you volunteer with.
- In general, our dress code is sensitive to a range of social and cultural values, with the goal of making our clients feel comfortable and respected.
- Please do not exchange gifts with IRCO clients, including money or materials.

IRCO Volunteer Recruitment & Onboarding

- ❖ IRCO has numerous platforms for our potential volunteers, including our website. We welcome requests or questions through our volunteer@irco.org connection as well.
- ❖ IRCO Volunteers must complete and provide basic information about their education, schedule, and availability, contact details, and any relevant previous qualifications they may have.
- ❖ Most IRCO volunteer positions require an interview before recruitment. IRCO volunteer advocates schedule and interview with the prospective volunteer to see if they are a good fit for that specific position.
- ❖ IRCO Volunteer Team processes volunteer applications which includes a background check and a signed IRCO confidentiality agreement.
- ❖ Every IRCO Volunteer has their own Volunteer profile account. The volunteer team provides web-based training on the volunteer database, Volgistics, prior to the volunteer's start date. The training includes volunteer login access and detailed instructions on reporting monthly volunteer hours. Volunteers are also asked to review and update their profile and emergency contacts. Click [here](#) to log in to Volgistics
- ❖ New Volunteers receive IRCO Volunteer Handbook, so they have a deeper understanding of IRCO's culture, mission, and history along with the cultural centers and the services they provide. It is a great reference point for IRCO volunteer policies, contact information and volunteer administration process.
- ❖ IRCO volunteers receive Role-Specific Training for their respective programs. Every IRCO Program Training might look different due to their nature. In general, these training courses help IRCO volunteers develop their skills and knowledge also the training clearly lays out the role specific procedures.
- ❖ Please reach out to the IRCO Volunteer Team at volunteer@irco.org with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for supporting IRCO's Volunteer Program!