



Upcoming Events, Opportunities, and Important Information

March 2023

NEW INFORMATION:

Lutheran Services in Iowa will be hosting three Citizenship classes this upcoming quarter starting on March 27th. There will be morning and evening classes, both on zoom and in person. Please contact Masoka Mkombozi with inquiries: 515-271-7418 or see [the flyer here](#) for more information.

LSI is hosting a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site to support refugees or immigrants in filing their taxes. Filing is free for participants and is completed securely by tax certified volunteers. Immigrants are at an increased risk for scams, frauds and predatory practices around tax season- filing taxes properly, securely and on time can help to protect their identity, secure loans in the future, apply for financial aid, and even to apply for citizenship. To learn more, visit <https://lsiowa.org/vita/>. Appointments are STRONGLY encouraged, to make an appointment- please call or text Miasem Abidulrazaq at (515)443-2870 or send an email to VITA@lsiowa.org. Flyers about this program are available here in [Swahili](#), [Dari](#), [English](#), [Pashto](#), and [French](#). More languages to come.

Community Housing Initiatives offers income-based rent. They currently have 2- bedroom apartments available at Eastwood of Ames with no waitlist and 3-bedroom apartments with a short waitlist. Call 515-225-6711 for more information.

Saving Suds, a free laundry service, is an initiative of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church and Bethesda Lutheran Church. It is hosted on the first and third Thursdays of each month, 4 – 6 pm at Squeaky Clean Laundry, 517 Lincoln Way. They provide quarters for the machines, as well as detergent. More information, as well as links to volunteer or donate, can be found here: [Local Ministries of an LGBT Friendly Church Near You \(standrewsames.org\)](http://standrewsames.org)

Scholarships are available for Ames Parks and Recreation programs for school age youth (up to age 13) who are residents of the City of Ames and whose families meet the income guidelines as predetermined by MICA. The scholarship will pay 50% of the cost of the registration fees, up to \$60 per year. Scholarships are also available for season swimming passes. For more information see: [Ames Parks and Rec Spring Guide](#).

The Ames Public Library will be offering a series of free computer classes this spring. All classes are held on Wednesdays from 10 am – 12 pm in the PEO Room at Ames Public Library.

- April 5: Introduction to Computers
- April 12: Introduction to Web Browsers
- April 19: Introduction to Computer Files
- April 26: Introduction to Email
- May 3: Introduction to Word
- May 10: Introduction to Powerpoint
- May 17: Introduction to Excel
- May 24: Free Alternatives to Microsoft Office
- May 31: Introduction to Microsoft Publisher

Call the Library at 515-239-5646 ext. 4, or email webref@amespubliclibrary.org to sign up for classes or if you have any questions.

The Ames Public Library is also continuing their English Conversation Circles. Those take place every Monday at 12:30 pm in the Danfoss Room at the Library.

INFORMATION SHARED PREVIOUSLY BUT STILL CURRENT:

Central IowaWorks compiles a weekly job list which can [be found here](#).

See this week's IowaWorks Apprenticeship HOTJOBS [list here](#).

American Job Centers 101 videos have now been translated into Spanish. Both English and Spanish versions can be found below. [English:](#) [Spanish:](#)

Iowa Workforce Development has a Registered Apprenticeship Program which provides opportunities for workers seeking high-skilled, high-paying jobs. For additional information, see <https://www.earnandlearniowa.gov/apprentice>

The Bureau of Refugee Services (BRS) is offering a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program. This program will help participants prepare for the class, enroll into the DMAACC CDL program at **no cost**, and obtain a job after completion. For questions or to learn how to enroll, email Rasheed Ebrahim at rasheed+rebrahi@dhs.state.ia.us

For job seekers, there is a tutorial on how to find jobs through LinkedIn. It is translated in Dari, English, Spanish, Arabic, French, and Ukrainian. See: <https://socialimpact.linkedin.com/refugees>

The Story County Retraining Program is moving towards upskilling people in Story County that are 18+ and have a diploma or GED. Classes we are looking to fill are: Welding, Healthcare Patient Services, and CNA (Basic and Advanced). Classes for other careers may become available as well. Applications can be found by scanning the QR code. For more information contact Nikki Fisher at nikki@ameschamber.com or call 515-232-2310.



Iowa Works is offering Career Planning Services at the Ames Public Library on Mondays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Come by to speak with a Career Planner for individualized, one-on-one career services. For more information see: [Career Planning](#).

USCRI has announced a new program: READY4Life is open for anyone who self-identifies as a refugee, immigrant, or asylum-seeker and is aged 14-24. Documentation of their status is NOT required, and they do not have to have come through the R&P program. The program is a 16-hour course focused on communication skills, relationship building, conflict management, and emotional self-regulation. Clients participate in surveys related to their experiences and can receive up to \$95 worth of Wal-Mart gift cards. They are also eligible for 8 months of case management. More information can be found on [the flyer here](#).

ESL classes at Christ Community Church, 5501 George Washington Carver. Monday and Thursday mornings 10 to 11:15 am. Four levels. Babysitting available. \$10 textbook fee. Open enrollment throughout the semester. For more information email nancygfoote@gmail.com

English classes at Memorial Lutheran Church. Students can join classes at any time. For more information, visit their website: <https://memoriallutheranchurch.org/international-ministry/>

English Conversation Circles take place every Monday at 12:30 pm in the Danfoss Room at the Ames Public Library.

A New Scholarship is available to "people with lived refugee experience" in Iowa who want to pursue a social work degree at the University of Iowa! This scholarship does not require the applicant to have a refugee visa - only the experience of forced displacement. This includes, but is not limited to, asylum seekers, undocumented folks, survivors of torture and trafficking, and folks with refugee visas and lottery visas.

This will be available for students starting Fall 2023. The scholarship aims to pay as much tuition as possible for each person it's awarded to. It prioritizes master's level students first, then bachelor's level students. Students can be full time or part time and they can use the scholarship for summer tuition too. The University of Iowa Program was chosen because it has multiple locations across Iowa and an online program, so is **available to anyone in Iowa, without requiring them to relocate to Iowa City.**

For more information about the School of Social Work go to <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/>. Interested applicants can contact the UI School of Social Work directly at social-work@uiowa.edu and ask about the ABCD Therapy scholarship or look at the information online. As it is so new, they are still working out the details for applicants, but you can expect to see it online by the beginning of the Spring semester 2023 (Jan 2023).

The Catholic Legal Immigrant Network (CLINIC) has a self Study Opportunity: [Completing the Application for Naturalization Form N-400](#)

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Refugee Services (BRS) has implemented a 'services referral form' ([see form here](#)). This form is to be used as the mechanism to access services by beneficiaries (refugees), referring agencies and anyone seeking support through BRS. Follow the instructions at the top of the document when filling out the form. Contact Samira Ikeljic sikelji@dhs.state.ia.us if you have questions.

[Settle In for Ukrainians](#), an initiative launched by the [Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange](#), is designed to directly engage newly arrived Ukrainians resettling in the United States. Settle In serves as a touchpoint to disseminate vital, correct information in an interactive format tied to early resettlement services, employment, housing, and education. In addition to posts and the ability to directly message with trained and experienced Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking Digital Community Liaisons, Settle In for Ukrainians will host live-stream events on Facebook.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement has issued a [fact sheet](#) that outlines benefits and services for Ukrainian humanitarian parolees. The fact sheet, featured on the [ORR homepage](#), is in English, but by using the website's translation feature in the top right-hand corner, it can be translated into over 80 languages, including Ukrainian and Russian.

Every Kid Sports is a national nonprofit that helps income-restricted families to pay for youth sports registration fees by providing up to \$150 per children, up to three times a year, through their signature program, The Every Kid Sports Pass. To qualify, families must fill out an application at everykidsports.org and submit a picture of a Medicaid, SNAP, or WIC document with the child's name and a date from within 12 months. More information can be found on the [flyer here](#).

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. See [Affordability Connectivity Program](#) for more information.

The Weatherization Assistance Program is accepting applications. This grant program was established to help reduce the heating and cooling costs for low income persons, particularly the elderly, disabled, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes, thereby reducing the households' energy bills. This also is one resource to help with a past due bill or disconnection. For Story County, contact Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. (MICA) at 230 SE 16th St., Suite 100, Ames, IA 50010, 515-956-3333. Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am- 4pm, Tuesday 12pm-4pm and Thursday 9am-1pm; please call for an appointment or to request an appointment outside of these hours. Once approved, water bill assistance also may be provided. To learn more, please go to <https://www.micaonline.org/>

FEMA has funds to assist with funeral expenses for people that have died from Covid. More information, including how to apply, can be found at their website: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance/>

Covid-19 Vaccinations (including covid-19 bivalent booster): If you are still in need of a FREE covid-19 vaccine, appointments can be scheduled at Story County Public Health (1114 Duff Avenue, Ames), 1-800-945-8563. You do not need insurance or ID. If you need help with scheduling, you may contact Karen Stein at: 515-450-0272.

Free COVID-19 Testing Program: Each U.S. household is eligible to order four free at-home COVID-19 tests. Order tests online at covid.gov/tests; the website is available in English and Spanish, and [NRC-RIM has guides](#) in several other languages that help people navigate the site. The U.S. Government has set up a hotline for people who have trouble using the online ordering site or need help in languages other than English. Call **1-800-232-0233** from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET to order four tests per household. *This hotline closes at 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.*

Help is just 3 digits away. Call 911 for emergencies. Call 211 for information and community resources. Call 988 for suicide intervention and crisis support.

The Vermont Language Justice Project created videos on how to pick up prescriptions at pharmacies. The videos have been created for many common refugee languages, as well as Dari, Pashto, and Ukrainian.

- **ARABIC:** <https://youtu.be/LqeiP6RDsI>
- **BURMESE:** https://youtu.be/C_6zJpWI6eU
- **DARI:** <https://youtu.be/jVvEzQBg5r4>
- **ENGLISH:** <https://youtu.be/xVxQbo6qZ4I>
- **FRENCH:** <https://youtu.be/R6Z0o7eYLd8>
- **KIRUNDI:** <https://youtu.be/q874nNqTvaU>
- **MAAY MAAY:** https://youtu.be/_VyHFERocSs
- **MANDARIN:** <https://youtu.be/-iMDjLab6Ec>
- **NEPALI:** https://youtu.be/w_HqnM2GE5A
- **PASHTO:** <https://youtu.be/MS9OujSU0a8>
- **SOMALI:** <https://youtu.be/hC7ITw0FYfA>
- **SPANISH:** <https://youtu.be/P-b-zrlrjg8>
- **SWAHILI:** <https://youtu.be/6ErRNpcte7A>
- **UKRAINIAN:** <https://youtu.be/sGTxf7AYtHM>
- **VIETNAMESE:** <https://youtu.be/yvr8WkBYtCY>

Iowa Total Care: Language Access Services. *Our culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare services are available to all our members and all reasonable accommodations are provided to equal access to communication resources.* Download this free [Language Access Services and Guidelines](#); or Download this free [Language Interpretation Services Poster](#). Any questions can be directed to C&L@IowaTotalCare.com.

Iowa Total Care: No-cost* transportation services. Our members can get rides to non-emergency medical appointments at no cost*. Iowa Total Care has partnered with Access2Care to provide rides to and from eligible doctor appointments. If a family member or friend drives our member to an appointment, our member may be able to get help paying for gas or mileage.

- Have questions or need to schedule a ride? Contact Member Services at 1-833-404-1061
- (TTY: 711). Press 2 for member services, then 1 for transportation.
- [Download Iowa Total Care's new Transportation Brochure](#) to learn more!
- For more details on transportation services, [visit our page on the Iowa Total Care website](#).

Easterseals Resource for Iowa refugees and immigrants with a disability/ongoing medical concern

Easterseals Iowa has Durable Medical Equipment (DME) available at a nominal cost, which can be waived. The individual is then able to use the item for as long as they need it. Examples of DME include hospital beds, wheelchairs and grab bars.

Easterseals has a Lending Library of over 2,000 devices. They can help people identify what devices might be helpful for them and they can borrow the device for 30 days to find out if it helps or not. Many of the devices are geared toward concerns common among those who have lived in an area with sustained war/conflict, such as a missing limb, hearing loss, or mobility problems. Some examples are devices to make it easier to prep and cook with one hand, an alarm that shakes the bed if you can't hear a typical alarm clock and canes that adapt for walking on uneven ground. For more information see [assistive technology center](#)

The LSI Refugee and Immigrant Wellness (therapy and case management) fliers have been translated into additional languages: Arabic, Burmese, English, French, Karen, Kinyamulenge, Nepali, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, and Tigrinya.

Mental Health Emergency Hotline. Individuals/community leaders can dial "988" on their phone and will be able to have mental health support for crisis and suicide prevention. Trained mental health professionals around the country are available 24 hours, 7 days per week to answer the calls, listen, and if needed connect them with local support. Language line is available.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement has put together some [great multi-lingual resources](#) for disaster preparation (including winter storms, hypothermia and frostbite). The booklet has been translated into Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi, French, Karenni, Kinyarwanda, Nepali, Karen, Sgaw Karen, Somali, Swahili, Tibetan, and Tigrinya. The English version is also on the website, with print-ready versions in the languages listed above. Also attached is additional content on Hypothermia and Frostbite in [Dari](#) and [Pashto](#)

The Story County Immigrant and Refugee Collaboration welcomes participation by local immigrants in our work. If you are interested in coming to a monthly meeting or volunteering, please email Anneke at amundel@uwstory.org . Se habla español.

EMAIL: story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com / FACEBOOK: [@storycountyimmigrants](https://www.facebook.com/storycountyimmigrants) / WEBPAGE: www.uwstory.org/SCIRC
GENERAL CONTACT FORM FOR REFERRALS: <https://tinyurl.com/contactSCIRC>

Regular publication date for this newsletter is the first of the month.

Please submit any information for inclusion by one week prior to that to: story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com.