

ABCUSA MATTHEW 25 GRANT APPLICATION

1. General Information

Church or Region: First Baptist Church in New Haven

Region Affiliation with ABCUSA: ABCCONN

Ministry or Group receiving these funds: Resettlement Ministry

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#2-7 responses are on second attachment.

I certify that all the information submitted with this application is true and correct, and that we will use any granted funds as described. We will supply a 1-page report on the use of the funds and a photo/photos within six months of receipt of the grant.

Application submitted by: LaRee Delahunt

Date: March 1, 2016

2. Mission Statement of The Resettlement Ministry at First Baptist Church in New Haven:

Our mission is to provide an intentional ministry of loving Christian leadership for the support of newly arrived refugees for their successful resettlement in the New Haven community, in partnership with other organizations, including IRIS, the primary sponsoring agency. Support includes advocacy, mentoring, transportation, and supplying basic needs leading to self-sufficiency.

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." Lev. 19:33-34

Financial Statement/Proposed Budget for one year. These estimates are based on our expenses for the past two years, assisting two families (seven persons total).

Proposed Resettlement Ministry Income & Expenses 2016

INCOME	2016 proposed
FBCNH Benevolent Fund	\$1,518
Member gifts	\$2,000
New Haven Baptist Union	\$1,000
Grants	\$5,000
Total	\$9,518
EXPENSE	
Work grant	\$1,518
Medical	
Dental	\$700
Food	\$1,425
Household items	\$1,425
Rent	\$1,800
Utilities	\$1,000
Clothing	\$1,000
Transportation	\$150
Other (career training, etc.)	\$500
Total	\$9,518

Many other items were given at church sponsored baby showers or donated from St. Gianna Pregnancy Center or purchased at Goodwill/Salvation Army and other thrift stores. Funding sources up to this point: Much of the financial support has come from generous members of our church. Approximately \$2,800 was disbursed through our Benevolent Fund (Communion offerings) over two years.

3. The requested funds will allow our congregation to continue to support refugee families with basic needs as they begin to seek new and self-sufficient lives. The financial statement above indicates the specific use of Matthew 25 Grant funds: some portion of families' costs for food, clothing, housing, utilities, career and educational training, transportation costs, and medical/dental out of pocket. For example, we have helped family members with fees needed to enter a Certified Nurses Aid program, to purchase boots or warmer jackets for the winter temperatures, and even to replace a stolen bike (the only means of transportation for one young man).

4. The grant funds would enable us to prevent these families and individuals from falling between the cracks and into poverty once the original support is no longer available. For instance the parents of one family of six Congolese are still searching for jobs after arriving in Connecticut in late November, even with the mentoring aid of one of our church members. They need material support during this anxious time. The results of our efforts are multigenerational and will be evident as these families become increasingly independent and contributing members of the community.

The needs of the refugee families are comprehensive once they arrive in New Haven from their refugee camps. They arrive with almost nothing, and are sponsored first by IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services) of New Haven who find housing and provide some basic household set up. They are given approximately 3 months of limited financial support, some English language instruction, job seeking assistance, and public transit orientation. IRIS cannot provide financial resources to cover much more than three months of cultural orientation and financial assistance. Refugee families need the continuing support of welcoming people who will lovingly help them adapt to life in a new place. We are learning to do that.

We first gained experience with a young refugee couple from the Congo, via a Malawi refugee camp. We quickly saw that these newly arrived folks needed much more assistance than the three months of aid provided by IRIS. To become independent members of the community takes time, education, encouragement, mentoring, and significant financial resources. Funds from the Matthew 25 Grant will provide much needed financial support to help First Baptist Church of New Haven assist refugees to adapt to life in America within their first year of entry. They arrive as strangers and we welcome them.

5. The total cost of the project is approximately \$9, 518.

6. The amount requested is \$5,000.

7. Other funding sources:

- The Baptist Union of New Haven: we will apply for a maximum grant of \$1,000 this spring
- Monthly Special Offering (one month each year)
- Benevolent Fund (Communion Offering)
- Designated Gifts (generous free will donations)

Other: We agree to supply a one page report on the use of funds and a photo or photos within six months if the grant. We agree to share our stories via the ABC-USA website.

Our Story Begins

One Sunday morning in April of 2013, a young man visited our church. We welcomed him and noticed, in spite of his rudimentary English, that he was glad to have visited our church. He returned and we soon learned that he and his fiancée had arrived in New Haven within two days of each other and were from Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi, Africa. They had lived there for years after losing their parents and other family members to the tragic, political violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We began to learn of their needs and worked with IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services), their sponsoring agency, to supplement the resources that were quickly running out. Soon we were also assisting another young refugee family. A third refugee family of six arrived in New Haven in November, 2015. We are blessed and honored to have all 13 of these wonderful children and adults as part of our worshipping community.

Several members of our small congregation began to shepherd our new friends through the time-consuming processes of applying for medical insurance, supplemental government food aid, WIC, school enrollment, resume writing and job hunting. Medical, food, and clothing needs were immediate; so our Benevolent Fund and generous individuals have basically funded our Refugee Ministry so far. We cannot continue to help our friends without additional funding from outside resources. We are planning to present our ministry needs to the Baptist Union of New Haven this spring. We have a monthly mission theme for our congregants to give to as they feel led and hope to dedicate one month a year to this Resettlement Ministry. Our monthly special offerings currently include collections for all four of the ABC-USA offerings (WWMO, RMMO, OGHS, AFC) as well as for local ministries and organizations such as Christian Community Action, and recently, for IRIS. The Matthew 25 Grant seems to be perfectly suited to our mission of reaching out to help, honor, and love the stranger among us.