



IRM Opens its Arms to Evacuees from Hurricane Katrina

September 23, 2005

Hundreds of survivors of Hurricane Katrina have arrived in Connecticut, and more are on the way. As you know, Interfaith Refugee Ministry's primary mission is to resettle foreign refugees. But as you would expect, we will not stand on the sidelines with so much to offer in the face of such overwhelming need. With more than 20 years of experience resettling foreign refugees, Interfaith Refugee Ministry (IRM) is uniquely qualified to help homeless American families from the Gulf Coast resettle in Connecticut. Survivors of Hurricane Katrina have much in common with our refugee clients. They have experienced a crisis, were forced from their homes, and are beginning a new life in a new place. They need shelter, clothing, food, and jobs. They need help enrolling their kids into schools and arranging doctor's appointments.

IRM is involved in evacuee resettlement through multiple avenues. First, we are working with a team of City of New Haven departments and nonprofit organizations who are resettling families in the New Haven area. And through a separate initiative, in cooperation with Episcopal Migration Ministries and Church World Service, IRM is preparing to resettle as many as 50 evacuee families throughout Connecticut – all of whom would be sponsored, or hosted, by churches or other community groups. At the moment, we are in the process of resettling a New Orleans family of seven with an ecumenical group in Canton, CT. We continue to identify and support other churches and institutions ready to sponsor Katrina evacuees.

Finally, this week the Department of Social Services (DSS) announced that it will utilize the expertise of the six refugee resettlement agencies working in CT to resettle these evacuees. IRM will provide case management services—including arranging housing and travel back to the Gulf States—to evacuees living in the Greater New Haven area who have registered with FEMA, the Red Cross, or State agencies.

Like most Americans, you are probably looking for a way to get involved. **If you are interested in helping IRM in this effort, please contact our office**—by phone at (203) 562-2095 or by email at info@interfaithrefugee.org. Furthermore, to keep up with the added workload, we have hired additional staff and expanded our services. While this work was neither anticipated nor budgeted, it is terribly necessary and it is why we need your help. Please consider sending a tax-deductible contribution today to support IRM's work.

With your help, IRM will continue to welcome all newcomers – from other countries and from our own – and work to ensure that they have the best possible start to their lives in Connecticut.

[Learn more](#) about how your group can sponsor a family displaced by Hurricane Katrina. [Read](#) IRM's article on resettling Katrina survivors in Connecticut.