

IRIS Volunteer Opportunities Summer/Fall 2019

Please note the following:

- Volunteer positions are UNPAID
- Applicants must be 17 years or older
- Applicants must be able to commit to a minimum of 3 months in their volunteer role, unless longer commitments are noted below
- Positions occur in the morning, afternoon, or evenings primarily Monday through Friday
- Speakers of these languages are strongly encouraged to apply: Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Arabic, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Amharic or Tigrinya

Steps to becoming a volunteer:

- Complete the IRIS volunteer application online
- Email your most recent resume to volunteer@irisct.org with the subject line "Resume for [Last Name, First Name]"
- If selected, complete an interview over the phone or at IRIS
- Complete a background check
- Attend a volunteer orientation
- Get started!

Click on a volunteer position below to find out more.

[Education and Wellness \(children and adult\)](#)

[Childcare Assistant \(Wellness Classes\)](#)

[Women's Jewelry Making Class Teachers & Assistants](#)

[Women's Sewing Teachers & Assistant](#)

[Sewing Machine Repair Technician](#)

[Sewing Donations Sorting/Processing](#)

[Garden Club Gardener](#)

[In-School Tutor](#)

[Infant & Toddler Childcare Assistant \(Family Literacy\)](#)

[Preschool Readiness Class Assistant \(Family Literacy\)](#)

[Preschool Readiness Volunteer on Wednesdays \(Family Literacy\)](#)

[Children's Summer Learning Program Volunteer](#)

[Parent Educator](#)

[ESOL Assistant for Family Literacy](#)
[College & Career Readiness Youth Mentor](#)
[After School Music Program Volunteer](#)

Housing & Donations

[In-kind donations Sorting/Processing](#)
[Food Pantry Volunteer](#)

Case Management

[Housing Acquisitions Volunteer](#)
[Administrative Assistant](#)
[Earned Income Tax Credit Mentor](#)
[Citizenship Preparation Tutor](#)
[Citizenship and Civic Engagement Coordinator](#)

Interpretation/Translation

[Interpreter/Translator](#)

Cultural Orientation

[Cultural Orientation Assistant](#)

Community Engagement

[Development Volunteer](#)
[Data Collection & Impact Analysis Volunteer](#)

Employment Services

[Employment Volunteer](#)

Transportation

[Driver](#)

Education and Wellness (children and adult)

Childcare Assistant (Wellness Classes)

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5-5 hours per week

- ❖ Days/times preferred: Tuesdays 12-2:15pm, Wednesdays 12-1pm, and/or Thursdays, 12-2:30pm
- ❖ Commitment: 4 months
- ❖ Requirements: No formal training is necessary. Basic understanding of children, child safety, and engagement in children's activities.
- ❖ Duties: Volunteers provide supervision of children, ensure cooperation and safety of children, engage in age appropriate and culturally sensitive activities with children, and work closely with other child-care providers.

Women's Jewelry Making Class Teachers & Assistants

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5 hrs per week
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Knowledge of jewelry-making (especially out of recycled materials) and a desire to teach refugee women the skill.
- ❖ Duties: Volunteers will instruct women in the art of jewelry making.

Women's Sewing Teachers & Assistant

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5 hrs per week
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Tuesdays, 12:15 pm - 2:15 pm
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Sewing knowledge and a desire to teach refugee women the skill. Duties: Women's sewing teachers help women set up their sewing machines and guide them in learning projects or improving their sewing skills in a safe community space. Assistants help organize the sewing materials and socialize with the women while in the group.

Sewing Machine Repair Technician

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1+ hrs per week
- ❖ Days/times preferred: any M-F 9:00-5:00
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Sewing machine repair knowledge and skills for mostly older machines
- ❖ Duties: Test, troubleshoot, and repair sewing machines that come through donations. We have some spare parts and repair tools.

Sewing Donations Sorting/Processing

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1+ hrs per week
- ❖ Days/time preferred: Monday-Thursday
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx.
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to do some lifting and moving, a knack for organizing
- ❖ Duties: Sort and organize sewing donations (fabric, notions, etc.) for sewing group use.

Garden Club Gardener

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5 hrs per week
- ❖ Days/times preferred: April to mid-October
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to bend, lift, and participate in an outdoor gardening activity. Gardening knowledge and a desire to share skills with refugees.
- ❖ Duties: Participate in the activity of gardening with participants, and help participants take care of their garden plots. Garden club volunteers can also help plan activities in the garden such as a garden season kick-off party, garden picnic, and harvest celebration.

In-School Tutor

- ❖ Commitment: Full semester/4 month minimum
- ❖ Hours per week needed: Flexible
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible
- ❖ Duties: In school tutors provide academic support to students in grades K-12 in New Haven Public Schools. Tutors work with students inside and outside the classroom, individually and in small groups. Tutors work directly with educators, school staff, and IRIS staff to coordinate schedules and to help facilitate positive educational outcomes for students.

Infant & Toddler Childcare Assistant (Family Literacy)

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: One or more of the following days: Monday, Wednesday 9:30-1, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30-12
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month minimum

- ❖ Requirements: An energetic and nurturing disposition. Basic understanding of child development, child safety, and activities.
- ❖ Duties: On a team, supervise and monitor the safety of babies and toddlers while their moms are attending an English class nearby. Help toddlers get accustomed to being away from their mothers and interacting with others. Provide a language-rich environment and engage in age-appropriate activities.

Preschool Readiness Class Assistant (Family Literacy)

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible, morning position
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month minimum
- ❖ Requirements: An energetic and nurturing disposition. Enjoy spending time with young children age 2-4. Basic understanding of child development, child safety, and activities. An understanding of the benefits of play or willingness to learn. Flexible and open to a program that balances structured and unstructured time.
- ❖ Duties: On a team, supervise and monitor the safety of young children age 2-4 while their moms are attending an English class nearby. Help children get accustomed to being away from their mothers and interacting with others. Help the children and mothers participate in mother-child interactive literacy activities.

Preschool Readiness Volunteer on Wednesdays (Family Literacy)

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1
- ❖ Days/times: Wednesday 12-1pm
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month minimum
- ❖ Requirements: Basic understanding of child development, child safety, and activities. An understanding of the benefits of play or willingness to learn.
- ❖ Duties: Engage children age 2-4

Children's Summer Learning Program Volunteer

- ❖ Commitment: 3 months; early June - August
- ❖ Hours per week needed: 4 – 25
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Mornings

- ❖ Requirements: Volunteers *must* have had prior teaching experience and have spent time working in a classroom with children. Classroom management experience is a must. Cross cultural communication skills and ESOL teaching experience are a plus. Duties: Volunteers assist with the daily operation of a Summer Learning Program for 50-100 refugee students with varying levels of English proficiency. Volunteers and interns will help facilitate activities, teach lessons, organize games, and ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for the kids.

Parent Educator

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2-4
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Monday 12-1pm, or Thursday 12-1pm
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx
- ❖ Requirements: Knowledge of child development, parenting techniques, child safety, and activities. An understanding of the benefits of play. Ability to speak slowly and clearly in short, simple phrases (or willingness to learn ESL techniques). Hold a degree or certificate in early childhood social work, or a related field or be working toward your degree with coursework.
- ❖ Duties: In collaboration with the project manager, develop and teach workshops to assist mothers in understanding the development of their children and how to best help their children thrive through positive parenting. Workshop topics may include, but are not limited to, tummy time, separation anxiety, preparing for preschool, child safety, sleep, soothing, the power of play, and approaches to behavior management.

ESOL Assistant for Family Literacy

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Mornings
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month minimum
- ❖ Requirements: Passionate about learning and teaching. Ability to speak clearly in an easy to understand manner. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people from other cultural backgrounds. Teaching experience preferred in ESOL/ Adult Ed. Phonics instruction is a huge plus! Pro-active, reliable and flexible to the needs of the program. Enjoy being around mothers and young children.
- ❖ Duties: With another volunteer, co-teach a beginner or intermediate level English class to a group of mothers. Lesson plans and materials are provided, but you may add your own activities too! There are opportunities to help with materials creation and lesson planning if interested.

College & Career Readiness Youth Mentor

- ❖ Time: Mondays from 2.30-5 pm
- ❖ Ideal commitment: weekly from September 2019 to June 2020
- ❖ Location: Dwight Hall, Yale Old Campus, New Haven
- ❖ IRIS staff supervisors: Laurel McCormack, Tanya Genn and Dennis Wilson
- ❖ Description and Responsibilities: The IRIS Youth Leadership Program has a weekly meeting for teen and young adult refugees and immigrants focused on academic and extracurricular support. It's guided each week by IRIS staff, with mentors providing small group or one-on-one attention for youth in helping them identify their strengths and interests over time and to find and pursue extracurricular, vocational, and higher educational opportunities to work towards their goals.
- ❖ Desired skills and background: We seek mentors between who have some previous experience directly serving youth, communicating cross-culturally, **and/or who have experience guiding others with essay writing and FAFSA, scholarship and college applications**. We also hope to attract mentors who identify with historically underrepresented groups in college and professional paths who will be able to assist refugee and immigrant youth in navigating American institutions as young People of Color.

After School Music Program Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5-10
- ❖ Days/times preferred: 2:30-5pm Consistent day(s) each week
- ❖ Commitment: School Year (exception made for students on Semester Schedule only)
- ❖ Duties: Assist in the care and education of immigrant youth aged 8-18. Provide a language-rich environment and engage in age-appropriate activities. Follow a rotating schedule of recess facilitation, tutoring and homework help, and individual as well as group music lessons (covering elementary to intermediate theory, theater, piano, guitar, vocals, and choir). Most of all, a disposition to having fun in a team passionate about teaching music and arts to IRIS youth!

Housing & Donations

In-kind donations Sorting/Processing

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2-3 hrs/week
- ❖ Days/time preferred: Monday to Thursday, 9:30am to 3pm

- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to do some moderate lifting and moving. Those with a knack for organizing are always welcome!
- ❖ Duties: Sort in-kind donations and organize them in our storage areas so we can use in new apartment to resettle refugees.

Food Pantry Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2-3 hours per week
- ❖ Days/time preferred: Tuesdays 9:30-11:00am and/or Wednesdays, 8:30-11:00am
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to do some moderate lifting and moving of food. Patience and a sense of humor.
- ❖ Duties: On Tuesdays, help receive food delivery of ~2,000 pounds from CT Food Bank truck by moving boxes into the food pantry and stocking shelves. On Wednesdays, supervise the distribution of food and household items to up to 100 households, in a fair and equitable way.

Case Management

Housing Acquisitions Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible
- ❖ Commitment: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: High energy and positive attitude, good communication skills including with limited English speakers, access to a vehicle. Ideal candidate will have knowledge of New Haven neighborhoods and rental market, ability to research housing units online and network with various rental agents.
- ❖ Duties: Help IRIS staff and clients identify housing units for new arrivals and people who need to move. Conduct research online, make phone calls to agents, visit apartments, conduct basic safety evaluations, show apartments to interested clients, help coordinate paperwork and payments with landlords.

Administrative Assistant

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: High energy and positive attitude, good communication skills, attention to

detail, ability to manipulate basic Excel sheets and Word documents. Ideal candidate will take pride in efficiently accomplishing administrative tasks.

- ❖ Duties: Support Director of Case Management in maintaining information systems and various administrative projects as needed, may include: taking meeting notes, updating spreadsheets, writing letters, filing, organizing, etc.

Earned Income Tax Credit Mentor

- ❖ Hours per Week: Not a weekly commitment
- ❖ Days/Times preferred: To be arranged with the client you are mentoring
- ❖ Commitment: A few weeks for each assignment
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to understand form letters from the State of CT Dept. of Revenue Services; Patience and persistence in helping a newcomer gather and mail necessary papers
- ❖ Duties: Be available to be assigned to a refugee who claimed the CT Earned Income Tax Credit, but who is being required to send in additional documentation before receiving that large payment. Assist your “mentee” to identify and find useful documents they already have, and possibly request additional documents (such as a letter from their child’s school). Assist in photocopying documents (at IRIS, if you wish) and mailing them to DRS in accordance with instructions found in mentee’s letter from DRS.

Interpretation/Translation

Interpreter/Translator

- ❖ Languages most needed: Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Arabic, Tigrinya, Amharic, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Massalit, French, Spanish
- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1.5-30 based on assignment, see below
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible, see below
- ❖ **Legal Interpreters- in person:** Interpret in-person during refugees' appointments regarding Green Card, Citizenship, and Family Reunification cases in our Immigration Legal Services office. Volunteers must be willing to be contacted directly by refugee clients to ask for their interpretation help, since IRIS staff are not involved in making legal interpreter appointments.
- ❖ **Legal Translators- remote:** Translation of legal or identification documents needed for Green Card, Citizenship, and Family Reunification applications. Volunteer translators will be contacted by the legal office as needed, and translations can occur remotely by email.
- ❖ **Employment, Health, Education, and Case Management Interpreters:** Flexible time commitment. Interpretation needs include interpreting during Case Management meetings or employment assessments. Staff can work around your schedule and will typically call you on an as-needed basis each week. Additionally, you can greet and welcome a newly arrived

family on their first night in New Haven! Accompany and translate for a case manager and the family at their new apartment, and review basic safety information before they rest after a long journey.

Cultural Orientation

Cultural Orientation Assistant

- ❖ Schedule: 6-7 hours per day, every four to six weeks
- ❖ Commitment: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: Volunteers must be knowledgeable on Google Docs.
- ❖ Duties: Cultural Orientation (CORE) is a three-day class held for all newcomer refugees once every four to six weeks. CORE Class Assistant will help CORE Program Manager to coordinate volunteer drivers and logistics. Assistant will ensure that all drivers receive their driving assignments on a timely basis and be available to answer questions. Assist the facilitation of a smooth CORE class as needed, with a focus on ensuring clients' needs are met.

Community Engagement

Development Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 8-10
- ❖ Schedule: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: Must be **exceptionally detail-oriented** and highly skilled at all aspects of computer work (including Excel, Word, data entry, Gmail, and mail merge functions) as well as not opposed to folding letters and stuffing envelopes. Experience in development is extremely helpful but not necessary.
- ❖ Duties: IRIS is looking for a volunteer to help our Development team process charitable gifts and thank our amazing donors.

Data Collection & Impact Analysis Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-10
- ❖ Schedule: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: Fluency with MS Excel, Google Sheets, and MS Word. Use of other database software and programs ideal. Ability to liaise effectively with a broad range of staff and volunteers
- ❖ Duties: Work with IRIS's grants management and program teams to track down and record key output and outcome data needed for completion of grant reports to funders. Meet with

key program staff on a regular basis understand what new program data is being produced and collected (e.g. program attendance records, English language test scores, etc.). Review data produced by program teams, ensuring quality and completeness. Work with the Grants & Donor Relations Manager to generate narrative text from the data collected. Help aggregate data and develop key insights and take-aways from the data collected

Employment Services

Employment Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5 to 15 hours
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Tuesday - Thursday, mid/late morning to end of day
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Duties: Includes but is not limited to: developing skills assessments, resume building, assisting with online applications, and interviews. Interns log case notes and maintain employment databases. Helping a client find and secure their first job allows refugees the opportunity to become financially independent, find fulfillment with their skill sets, and build upon their goals and dreams.
- ❖ Requirements: A driver with car willing to drive clients is strongly preferred. Experience with cross-cultural communication, anti-oppressive practices, and language skills in one of our clients' languages (listed at the top of this document) also desired.

Transportation

Driver

- ❖ Commitment: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: Car, license, insurance, and clean driving record. Timeliness, patience and willingness to call clients, knock on doors, and problem solve in order to make sure clients come to class on time and/or are taken home successfully. Must know how to install car seats or be willing to learn.
- ❖ Duties: Help new refugees get to important appointments, including IRIS's Cultural Orientation class (CORE) before they learn the bus system. Clients have their own car seats and volunteers can be reimbursed for mileage.