

2022 Annual Impact

REPORT



**THEIR STORY
IS OUR STORY**

Letter from the Executive Director

100 Million.

On May 23, 2022, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that the number of people forced to leave their home countries to flee conflict, violence, human rights violations and persecution had exceeded 100 million for the first time on record. It was not a surprise. The fall of Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine both added millions to this sobering total.

100 million is not a number that our brains are wired to comprehend, making the need to shine a light on the people impacted by the refugee crisis through individual stories even more critical. As European nations worked to make space for individuals and families fleeing Ukraine, accounts of small acts of kindness ranging from empty strollers lined up ready to receive families at a Polish train station to individuals joining together to provide warm food at border crossings served as powerful reminders that we can all play a role in welcoming those whose lives have been turned upside down.

In 2022, Their Story Is Our Story (TSOS) asked the question “What Does Welcome Look Like?” The answers varied, but in the end “welcome” is about helping those seeking refuge in any way possible, whether providing assistance with language, health care, housing, school shopping or simply listening to a newcomer’s story. Welcome is asking someone about their name, rather than where they are from and valuing someone’s perspective and experiences. Welcome is being open to those around you and celebrating another’s triumphs. Welcome is having your story heard.

We are enormously grateful to everyone who helped us in 2022 with story gathering and production, and across our core pillars of Education, Advocacy, and Integration. Every one of us has the ability to reach out and welcome those seeking refuge. We remain committed to helping people understand the refugee crisis, telling their stories, and answering the question, “What can I do?” in the years ahead.

Kristen Smith Dayley

Executive Director

“Anyone could become a refugee. It’s a thing that happens to you, it’s not who you are.”

- Trevor Noah

STORIES

It is through stories that we make sense of large, complex issues and can imagine ourselves in someone else's shoes. It is through stories that we are inspired to take action.

In 2022 we published 17 new stories. We gave a face to the women and children that fled Ukraine with Julia's story and gained insight into how the men who stayed behind to defend their country felt with Mykola's story. We heard from Carlos, who explained how death threats, criticizing the government, and a lack of resources are forcing Venezuelan refugees to flee their country. Through Nezia and others like her we were able to showcase the amazing assets refugees are in their new communities.

Through our volunteer stories we were able to give people hope and ideas on ways they can stand with refugees. Amy Underwood invited a family into her home, Josh Mojica used his flight benefits to serve Ukrainians at the Polish border, and Lark Escobar continues to help the friends she met through her military service flee to safer homes. TSOS also launched Storytelling Live on Instagram, featuring live interviews and discussion on the refugee crisis with key opinion leaders, refugee advocates and partner organizations, offering new avenues of participation for our social media community.



On the left: Nezia | On the right: Josh Mojica

TSOS produced a video story of a teenage girl's journey from her home country of Afghanistan to the United States, adjusting to a new country, being separated from family members, and meeting with legislators to tell her story and advocate for refugees.

In partnership with Reclaim Childhood, Collateral Repair Project, and Lifting Hands International we completed a story gathering trip in Amman, Jordan and the surrounding communities. The on-site team completed eight full length interviews and 10 short interviews in and shot 3TB of video and photos. These powerful stories are in the process of being translated, transcribed, and produced. We look forward to publishing them as they are completed.

Additionally, we formalized an interview training program for TSOS volunteers to ensure ethical story gathering, informed consent, cultural and trauma sensitivity, and consistent processes as we accelerate our story gathering and production activities in the coming year.

EDUCATION

In addition to providing our stories and materials to anyone who wants to learn more about displaced people, TSOS provides curricula for schools, presents at conferences, and hosts an internship program.

In 2022, TSOS hosted 23 new interns as part of our internship program for college-age students. Interns completed readings on immigration policy and refugee emergencies around the world and participated in weekly discussions about these topics, receiving instruction from presenters working in the field or sharing their own refugee stories. Our interns also receive training in professional software suites, mentorship in project management, and hands-on experience in research, writing, editing, advocacy, and story production. They wrote blog and social media posts, transcribed interviews, and created legislative tool kits. To date, TSOS has more than 70 individuals who have completed internships, including many of whom come from a refugee background.



From left to right:
Brandi Kilmer, Director of Community Programs; Sherianne Schow, Director of Advocacy; Robin Peterson, Director of Archives at the Idaho Conference on Refugees

At the Idaho Conference on Refugees in February 2022, TSOS presented on the role mental health plays in the integration process. In March, we spoke on issues surrounding immigration policy at Brigham Young University's Law and Leadership Conference and on welcoming newcomers at Mormon Women for Ethical Government's annual conference. Additionally, founding members of TSOS and its current leadership led a week-long class on understanding the refugee crisis and refugee resettlement at Brigham Young University's Education Week, the first seminar to address such a topic at the 100-year-old conference.

In partnership with Nova Friends of Refugees, TSOS advised Georgetown University School of Medicine in connection with its Community Based Learning program and trained first-year medical students in interviewing techniques and co-led interviews with foreign-trained physicians who had been forced to flee their home countries. The Georgetown students used the findings from those interviews to produce a report and recommendations for developing a mentoring program and better medical career pathways for displaced medical professionals within the United States.

During 2022 TSOS established a collaborative relationship with Instructure, the company behind the web-based learning management system known as Canvas, to host portions of our free education curriculum for K-12, which is also available on our website. Our high school literature and writing curriculum focuses on identity, learning from personal stories, and media bias. Our elementary curriculum focuses on welcoming newcomers, developing empathy, advocating for friends and appreciating diversity. TSOS has developed specific modules for download and use through Canvas and will add additional models as we create additional curriculum.

ADVOCACY

In partnership with Jesuit Refugee Services, Veterans for American Ideals, Human Rights First, Lutheran Immigration Refugee Service, New Partners for New Americans, Church World Service, and We Are All America, TSOS participated in Refugee Congress USA's Advocacy Days where we engaged in more than 30 meetings with members of the United States Congress to advocate for passage of the Afghan Adjustment Act, a bill that would provide a path to permanent residency for the more than 70,000 Afghans paroled into the United States in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

TSOS established new Changemaker campus chapters at the University of Utah, Boise State University, Arizona State University, Utah Valley University, and Salt Lake Community College to help train student leaders to become advocates for refugees. Participants in the previously established Changemaker chapters at Brigham Young University and Utah State University, along with the newly established chapters, receive training to act as advocates within their communities and participate in various service learning opportunities both with TSOS and other refugee-oriented organizations. Many of our Changemakers have gone through TSOS' interview training and have begun participating in interviews and story collection efforts. In addition,

Changemakers delivered presentations on inclusion and mental health at numerous high schools, colleges and other youth organizations.



***From left to right:** Shurooq, University of Utah Changemaker Campus Chapter; Ten Sor, Utah Valley University Changemaker Campus Chapter; Sara Frandsen, Utah Valley University Changemaker Campus Chapter*

Additionally, we commenced building a library of tool kits that can be used by individuals and organizations, including prepared talking points, templates for letters to Congress, telephone scripts, social media content, and other advocacy resources on various policy subjects.

INTEGRATION

Through personal volunteer efforts with local nonprofit organizations and relationships with community partners, our on-the-ground teams in the US, UK, Europe, Africa, and South America develop opportunities for collecting and sharing stories to promote integration and spotlight the contributions of newcomers in our communities. They organize donation drives, participate in and publicize partner events, and fill advisory roles on coalitions, among other activities. In 2022, we expanded our Community Programs volunteer base in North Carolina and increased collaborations with local resettlement efforts.

Opportunities for involvement in resettlement work swelled with the fall of Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine. We witnessed many acts of generosity as people reached out to respond to calls for clothing, household goods and other basic needs. TSOS worked to promote and encourage involvement in resettlement activities through the U.S. Welcome Corps, temporary housing and permanent housing, language and employment acquisition, and meeting the social needs of

newcomers. As a direct result of our work this past year with Georgetown University School of Medicine and Nova Friends of Refugees, we have begun work to create a mentoring program specifically for foreign-trained displaced physicians in Virginia, working with contacts who have developed similar programs in other states.



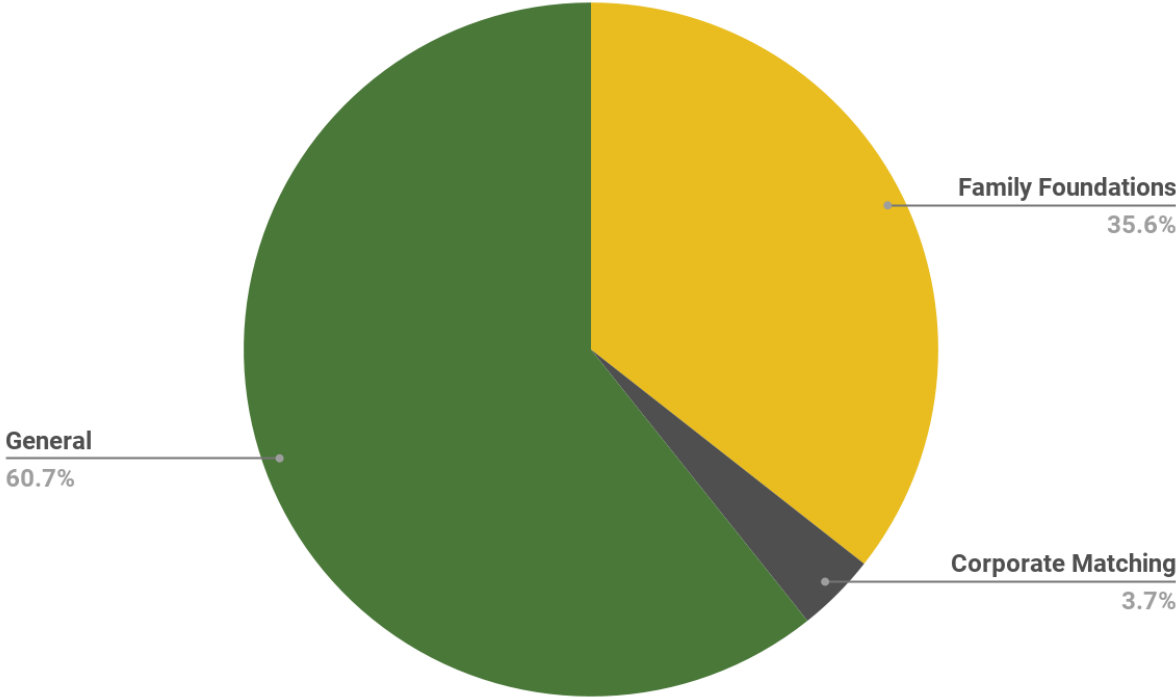
In the photo: *Their Story is Our Story* volunteers at the World Refugee Day event in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

In 2022 we saw a return of in-person events and our Community Programs teams participated in World Refugee Day celebrations in June in Salt Lake City, Boise, Phoenix, Kansas City, Austin, Washington D.C, and Paris. We also hosted a virtual World Refugee Day panel discussion on “What Does Welcome Look Like?” featuring five leaders in refugee belonging. In September, we participated in Refugee Welcome Week events in Washington D.C. and Kansas City. The event in Kansas City gave us an opportunity to highlight six local refugee friends’ stories through a visual display installation at a public library. And in April, the Washington D.C. team represented TSOS at a George Washington University campus event.

Our partnering relationships continue to connect us with those forcibly displaced persons who wish to share their personal stories, and we have found that highlighting the work of our partners and our own perspectives through blogs to be an important form of storytelling as well. In 2022 our Community Programs team published 38 blog posts spotlighting the challenges and triumphs experienced by newcomers and those working to assist them in various parts of the world.

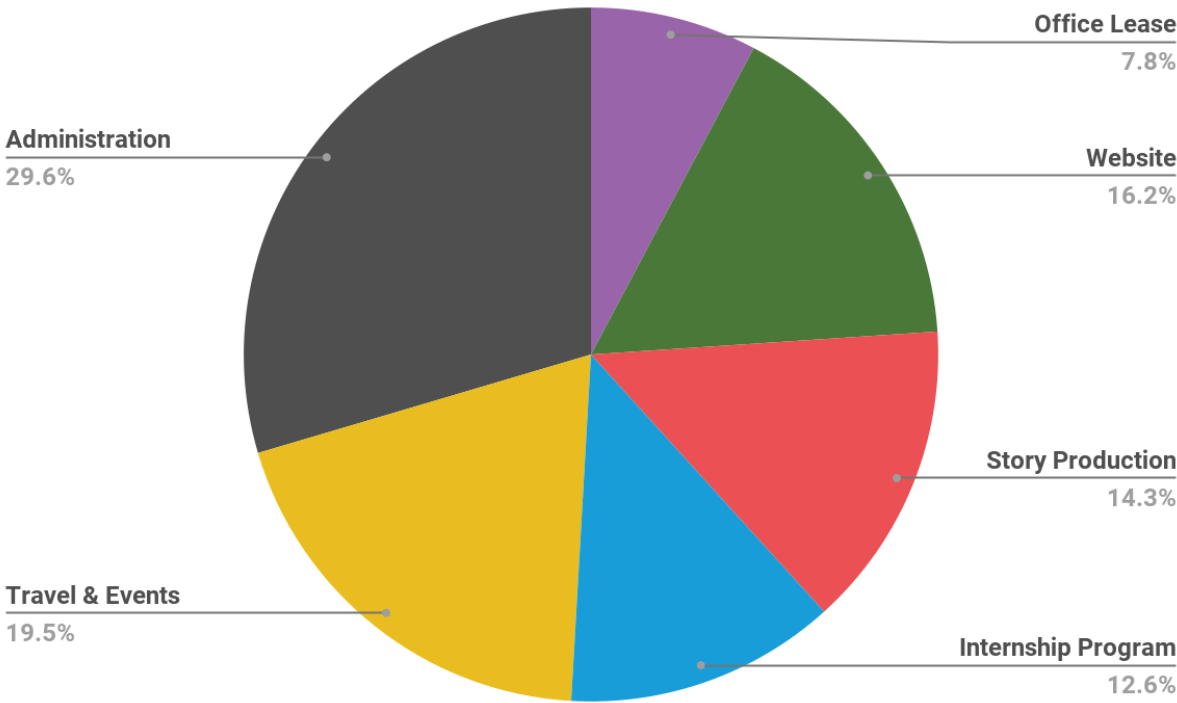
FINANCIALS

2022 REVENUE



| TOTAL | \$36,524 | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| General Contributed Support | \$22,174 | 60.7% |
| Family Foundations | \$13,000 | 35.6% |
| Corporate Matching Donations | \$1,350 | 3.7% |

2022 EXPENSES



| TOTAL | \$30,902 | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Administration | \$9,141 | 29.6% |
| Travel & Events | \$6,030 | 19.5% |
| Website Enhancement | \$5,000 | 16.2% |
| Story Production | \$4,431 | 14.3% |
| Internship Program | \$3,900 | 12.6% |
| Office Lease | \$2,400 | 7.8% |
| Net Income | \$5,622 | |

Looking Forward

As we move forward in 2023, the work we did in 2022 is already bearing fruit as our opportunities for story gathering, production and distribution are rapidly expanding. No matter the challenge at hand, stories will remain at the center of everything we do and support our pillars of Education, Advocacy, and Integration.

We are excited about the establishment of a thought leadership group within TSOS over the coming year. This new group will complete research that provides more context to the issues and stories we present. They will also collaborate with others to produce academic materials and presentations to expand our reach.

We will continue to build our relationships with like-minded organizations to amplify our impact and help those organizations spotlight challenges and victories with our storytelling expertise.

As we focus on ways to create and encourage connected communities that support and celebrate newcomers, we will continue to dispel myths about displacement, celebrate the significant contributions and strengths of newcomers, and demonstrate tangible ways for everyone to participate in this urgent and essential human work.



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