



Refugee Action Working Group Training

Sunday, August 5, 2018 | 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Location: Hillel at the University of Wisconsin, 611 Langdon St, Madison, WI 53703

*Efforts will be made to set up local in-district meetings with Members of Congress, or their staff, on **Monday, August 6, 2018**. Please hold this day in order to participate, if possible. You do not need to be available on Monday to attend the training on Sunday.*

The number of refugees worldwide is the largest in history and yet in 2018, the United States government is prepared to offer safety to tragically few people. This year, HIAS is expanding its advocacy efforts by providing deeper support and training to community leaders who are well-positioned to advocate for refugees and refugee resettlement in three key states:

New Jersey, North Carolina and Wisconsin.

HIAS is building powerful local advocacy teams by bringing together leaders from the Jewish and interfaith communities, refugees, and refugee agency professionals. Over the course of the year, these working groups will receive training and resources that strengthen the capacity to be effective local champions for refugees.

We cordially invite you to join HIAS and Jewish Social Services of Madison this summer in Wisconsin for the first of these trainings.

WHAT IS THIS TRAINING?

The training will cover the basics on how to advocate for refugees in 2018 and beyond. Over the course of the training, participants will receive an up-to-the-minute briefing on what issues are at play for refugees, and will build a group strategy for local activism based in the most effective advocacy messaging and tools.

Training content includes: building relationships with decision makers (including Members of Congress); communicating effectively about refugees; answering tough questions about the refugee

program; civic engagement throughout the election season; and using media and social media as effective advocacy tools.

WHY NOW?

This is a critical moment to advocate for refugees. In a time of global crisis, the United States should be showing leadership by welcoming victims of violence and persecution. Instead, our government is slamming the doors on tens of thousands of people through a steady stream of policies designed to limit the number of refugee arrivals and which ultimately, over time, will dismantle the refugee program itself. Only a fraction of the number of refugees have been admitted this year in comparison to last year at the same time.

As a community, we must not - cannot - stand idly by while our government denies safety to refugees. Strategic advocacy from local communities has the potential to play a powerful role in influencing decision makers at all levels.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED?

HIAS and Jewish Social Services of Madison are convening a group of community leaders to form a local working group for refugee advocacy. HIAS, the Jewish refugee agency, has focused our recruitment on leaders from the Jewish community, local refugee advocates, and refugee leaders. We are inspired and energized by the significant on the ground organizing, volunteering and deep communal learning about refugees in Wisconsin, and seek to complement and enrich those efforts.

We are hopeful that the participants in this session will, with the ongoing support of HIAS and JSS Madison, take action together for refugees, in both the short and long-term, in order to address the challenges currently facing the U.S. refugee program and refugees around the world.

HOW DO I REGISTER TO ATTEND?

You can sign up through this link [here](#). Please contact Janna Diamond, Campaigns Specialist, at janna.diamond@hias.org, with questions or suggestions of additional people to invite to participate.

Founded in 1881, HIAS is the global Jewish nonprofit that protects refugees whose lives are in danger for being who they are. Guided by our values and history, HIAS helps refugees rebuild their lives in safety and advocates to ensure that all displaced people are treated with dignity. Backed by over 2,000 American rabbis in 48 states and nearly 400 congregations across the country, HIAS stands firm in our commitment, as Jews and as Americans, to support and welcome refugees.