Members of the Department of Political Science at the University of Victoria reached out to friends and acquaintances to form a refugee sponsorship group in December 2018. Now this group of 20 is fully engaged, seeking donations and starting to prepare for a family’s arrival in Victoria. We need to raise more money if we are to proceed, and that is why we are reaching out to you.

Please help us to raise our goal of CA $30,000 to bring the family to Victoria.

We know that there are many calls for your charitable donations, but ask you to consider the urgent plight of refugees.

While the global refugee crisis is still unfolding without much relief in sight, media attention since the 2015/16 crisis has waned and the public seems not to be aware of the continuing need. In August 2018, the Canadian government Blended Visa Office-Refereed (BVOR) Program had a capacity of 1,500 refugee cases, but more than 1,000 were left unclaimed, in part due to the large financial commitment of sponsorship. Only due to the exceptional financial commitment of some philanthropic leaders did Canada move closer to meeting these targets last year. In 2019, the government hopes to resettle 1,650 individuals under this program but without the extraordinary financial incentive from private donors, it is highly unlikely that these numbers will be reached.

Our private sponsorship group urgently needs your financial support: There are currently thousands of thoroughly vetted cases already identified by the government of Canada and UNHCR for resettlement. These cases are people in desperate need: families, individuals, women and children who are waiting in limbo in refugee camps and resettlement centres around the world. They wait in what can be unsafe and insecure conditions. They rely on strangers from across the world, a group like ours, to initiate their sponsorship to Canada. Underfinancing threatens the sustainability of the BVOR program and leaves thousands of people in limbo.

What is our group responsible for?
BVOR sponsorship groups are responsible for a refugee family for a year. Not only must they find and equip housing and provide day to day support, orientation and help integrating, they also are required to raise the majority of funds required to support the family for the first year. While we have committed to take them to government offices and medical appointments, arrange for language, educational and training programs, help them with the use of public transit and other facilities, and generally assist them in adapting to life in Canada, we need your help with funds.

With gratitude,
PoliSci and friends
Herman Bakvis, Nicole Bates-Eamer, Robin Bayley, Colin Bennett, Julia Eastman, Jamie Lawson, Pam MacDonald, Warren Magnusson, Wanda Murphy, Jim Pitcher, Gillian Roach, Oliver Schmidtke, Beate Schmidtke, Reeta Tremblay, Janice Walker, Rob Walker, Sharon Walls, Scott Watson, Reg Whitaker, and Feng Xu.

Donate via our CHIMP fundraising site:
https://chimp.net/groups/support-a-refugee-family-for-resettlement-in-victoria

Directly to ICA: Deliver/send cheques to ICA’s office: 930 Balmoral Rd, Victoria BC, V8T 1A8 (please insert our code “CG094-19”).

Directly to ICA on their website: Donors go to:
www.icavictoria.org/get-involved/donate-now/
Click on “Donate Now”
Choose “Private Sponsorship of Refugees” from drop-down menu, type “CG094-19” into box underneath.

Please connect with us if you have any questions and send an email to beates@uvic.ca