An immigrant is someone who chooses to resettle to another country. The United States has a legal process for that immigrant to seek legal residency and eventually citizenship. However, many immigrants do not obtain such legal status and are thus undocumented.

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her home country. Getting refugee status isn't easy. The applicants have to prove that if they return to their home country, they'll be injured because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or their political opinion.

Challenges faced by immigrants and refugees in the United States: difficulty speaking and learning English, raising children and helping them succeed in school, securing work, securing housing, accessing services, transportation, and experiencing cultural barriers.

https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/the-7-biggest-challenges-facing-refugees-and-immig/

**STATE, NATIONAL, & GLOBAL AGENCIES:**

- **Americana Community Center** - [www.americanacc.org/volunteer](http://www.americanacc.org/volunteer)
  A non-profit organization in Louisville, KY that provides programs for more than 5,000 people from over 100 countries each year. Their mission is to build strong and healthy families, create a safe and supportive community and help every individual realize their potential. “We are bridging the gap from surviving to thriving.”

- **Centro Romero** - [centroromero.org/crweb/about_us/volunteer](http://centroromero.org/crweb/about_us/volunteer)
  For over 30 years, Centro Romero has been a community-based organization that serves the refugee immigrant population on the northeast side of Chicago. Our interrelated programs are for Youth, Families, Adult Education, and Legal Services.

- **Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)** - [www.icirr.org/category/category/job-posting/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.icirr.org/category/category/job-posting/volunteer-opportunities)
  ICIRR is dedicated to promoting the rights of immigrants and refugees to full and equal participation in the civic, cultural, social, and political life of our diverse society. In partnership with our member organizations, the Coalition educates and organizes immigrant and refugee communities to assert their rights; promotes citizenship and civic participation; monitors, analyzes, and advocates on immigrant-related issues; and, informs the general public about the contributions of immigrants and refugees.

- **International Rescue Committee (IRC)** - [www.rescue.org/volunteer](http://www.rescue.org/volunteer)
  IRC teams provide health care, infrastructure, learning and economic support to people in more than 40 countries, with special programs designed for women and children. We resettle thousands of refugees each year in 26 US cities. Staff and volunteers help the refugees to translate their skills, interests and past experiences into assets that are valuable in their new communities.

- **Migrant Help** - [www.migranthelpuk.org/contact-us](http://www.migranthelpuk.org/contact-us)
  We are a leading national charity offering support, guidance and accommodation to vulnerable migrants across the UK. Whether someone has fled persecution, escaped from slavery or found themselves in a situation that they do not understand, Migrant Help offers advice, support and a place of safety.

- **U.S. Committee For Refugees and Immigrants** - [refugees.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://refugees.org/get-involved/volunteer)
  U.S. Committee For Refugees and Immigrants aims to protect the rights and address the needs of persons in forced or voluntary migration worldwide and support their transition to a dignified life. Volunteers can get involved in direct service or administrative support, including mentor new families, setup new homes, provide transportation, and reading buddies and after-school tutors.
• World Relief - www.worldrelief.org/volunteer
  Through partnerships with local organizations and churches, World Relief is providing temporary shelters, hygiene items, and psychosocial counseling to displaced refugee families, as well as sponsoring child-friendly spaces for mothers and children.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA ORGANIZATIONS:

• East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center (ECIRMAC) - ecirmac.weebly.com/volunteeremployment.html
  ECIRMAC (also known as the Refugee Center) exists to provide services essential to refugee and immigrant resettlement in East-Central Illinois and to aid in the exchange and preservation of their respective cultures. Services offered include translation of documents and interpretation in community settings, case management and counseling, assistance with applying for government benefits for which an individual is eligible, aid in completing paperwork for citizenship, asylum, residency, and family reunification.

• The Immigration Project - www.immigrationproject.org/volunteer
  The Immigration Project provides access to quality legal services in Central and Southern Illinois. We believe that immigrants are members of our community, and that helping all members of a community strengthens the entire community.

• Three Spinners Inc. - www.threespinners.org/volunteer
  Three Spinners Inc. is a charitable organization that provides food, clothing, and shelter for Syrian refugees in Champaign-Urbana. We utilizing the resources and skill sets made available to us by the members of our community to facilitate the entry of refugees into the United States and direct the placement of families and individuals in the homes of volunteers.

CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES AND REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:

• Assyrian Student Association at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (ASA-UIUC) - https://illinois.collegiatelink.net/organization/asauic
  ASA-UIUC aims to promote the advancement of the Assyrian heritage and the improvement of Assyrian-American students through higher education, appreciation for Assyrian culture, unity and support for the Assyrian community and to raise awareness of human rights issues. We seek to accomplish these goals by basing our organization into 4 groups; education, culture, social, and humanitarian.

• Humanitarian Association for the Displaced at UIUC (HADUIUC) - humanitarianad.wix.com/haduiuc
  HADUIUC’s mission is to empower refugees and help them get back up on their feet. The Humanitarian Association for the Displaced makes a conscious effort to raise awareness about displaced populations around the globe by educating the student body on the campus of UIUC.

• La Casa Cultural Latina - https://oiir.illinois.edu/la-casa-cultural-latina/get-involved
  The mission of La Casa Cultural Latina is to promote a welcoming and dynamic atmosphere through the development of educational, cultural, socio-political, and social programs that lead to greater recruitment, retention, advancement, and empowerment of Latina/o students.

• La Colectiva - acollectiva.weebly.com
  La Colectiva is student organization at the University of Illinois, which exists to address the challenges faced by the immigrant community within Champaign-Urbana. The We Dream Mentorship Program was established through a grant from United Way, La Colectiva, and the University YMCA to help address some of the issues that Latino students encounter while in high school and encouraging their pursuit of a post-secondary education.

• The Immigration Law Society (ILS) - https://illinois.collegiatelink.net/organization/ils
  ILS strives to promote discussion of immigration law and policy issues that are currently impacting the United States and support any student who is interested in a career in immigration. By hosting career panels, inviting speakers, and reaching out to local organizations that help immigrants in the Champaign-Urbana area, we hope to give students a resource to turn to and experience in this changing area of law.