

39

Number of Family Mentor Teams
CANMP has created since 2017.
Interested in joining one? Email us!
newmainersproject@gmail.com

Tutoring, apple picking, finding goats . . It's all part of being on a Family Mentor Team!

Family Mentor Teams are the heart and soul of CANMP. As part of an FMT, volunteers build lasting relationships as they help new refugee families adjust to life in Maine. There's no formula for what makes a team work, and there's no adequate "job description" that captures the variety of things that teams do.

Pam Lombard, a member of a team that has worked with three different Afghan families in the past six years, offers a short summary of what her team has done. She writes:

"With our new Afghan friends we have:

- gone apple picking
- tutored English
- given rides to the bank, food bank, & medical appointments
- shared photos and videos
- been advocates at medical appointments and at school
- enjoyed picnics, celebrated birthdays, & watched a parade
- translated mail, mediated with the landlord, & buoyed spirits
- given driving lessons & tutored for the driving permit test
- shared food and danced in the living room
- located a goat
- learned a few words of Dari
- swam and worked out at the Y
- celebrated new citizenship!!"



December 2022

The Capital Area New Mainers Project is a cross-cultural organization that welcomes immigrants and works to build a thriving, integrated community in central Maine.

Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, Congo. . .

Central Maine is more diverse than many people realize. More than 80 refugee families have settled in the capital area in recent years. At CANMP, we celebrate this diversity and welcome newcomers from across the globe. We offer Family Mentor Teams, English classes, housing assistance, scholarships, an Activity Fund, celebrations, and more as we help build a thriving community together.

Dear CANMP friends,

Our world can seem so hopeless at times. Wars and climate crises have displaced millions of people, some of whom wind up in Maine. Uprooted from their homes, refugees arrive in a strange new land, cut off from everything and everyone they knew and loved. They face so many daunting challenges — housing, language, health care, jobs . . .

And yet, the families with whom CANMP works have not succumbed to despair. Come to our English classes, and you will see **eager students** learning what may be their third or fourth language. Sit for tea with them, and you will hear **hopeful stories** about their children and what they will accomplish in America.

CANMP is built on hope – the hope of refugees, volunteers, and staff alike that tomorrow will be just a bit better than today. Your support sustains that hope.

Thank you,

Chris Myers Asch, Executive Director



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We need your support!

More than 50% of our funding comes from individual donations. Your support makes a huge difference! You may send a check or donate online:

www.newmainersproject.org/donate



Living the Dream

For refugee families, the struggle is real. Despite the challenges, over time — with hard work and support — refugees can find their way and thrive in central Maine.

The Munezero family is a great example. Originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the family consists of 5 twenty-something siblings who arrived in Waterville in 2016. An array of Family Mentor Team volunteers helped them find housing, get work, learn English, enroll in college, and adapt to Maine life. The siblings worked hard, saved money, and now own two homes in Winslow and Auburn.

The Munezeros recently earned their American citizenship, and they are helping new refugee families adjust to life in Maine. They are an inspiration for all of us!



Civics for New Citizens

With support from Maine Voices / Maine Voter Network, CANMP now offers a Civic Education Program. We help new citizens register to vote, meet with public officials, and learn about the American political system. At right, State Rep. Raegan LaRoche speaks to new voters at one of our candidate forums this fall.



What does CANMP mean to you?

My family and I were able to find a home to live in through CANMP's help, and I obtained a scholarship for my first year of college. They also sent us American friends with whom we could speak and share our religion, beliefs, and culture.
— Nada, Syrian refugee

I learn every day about culture, resilience, integrity, friendship, and trust from each family member and from my mentor team. My life has only been enhanced by this experience.
— Romaine, volunteer

Immigrants have been the lifeblood of Maine since colonial times and they continue to be. Today's New Mainers bring energy, cultural vitality, and economic promise to our community and we are fortunate that they have chosen to live here.
— Bill, elected official

CANMP is a great asset to help our New Mainers by showing them how to live peacefully through providing them with their essentials needs.
— Nakaa, Iraqi refugee & CANMP Program Director

My first involvement with a CANMP Mentoring Team occurred during the reign of a president who was anything but welcoming to our immigrants. I wanted our New Mainer families to feel supported by community. Now, with my third family, I continue to be honored and humbled to be allowed to be part of their lives and receive so much more than I give.
— Ellen, volunteer

250+
Number of volunteers who have been part of CANMP since 2017



Multicultural Center Opens in Hallowell

The new Hallowell Multicultural Center opened this summer with our second annual International Kids Festival (pictured above). The celebration drew more than 200 visitors as immigrants from 14 countries shared food, culture, and traditions with people of all ages. The Center also hosted Hallowell's first public Diwali celebration, a potluck Thanksgiving dinner for new families, and other events. We look forward to many years of events celebrating the diverse array of cultures in central Maine.

