



## Upcoming Events, Opportunities, and Important Information

November 2023

### NEW INFORMATION:

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will host a series of listening sessions this fall for Iowans who receive community-based services to share their experiences with Iowa Medicaid leaders. Upcoming dates:

- VIRTUAL, Tuesday 11/28, noon-1:30 PM
- VIRTUAL, Thursday 11/30, 4-5:30 PM (Spanish language event/ Español)
- VIRTUAL, Thursday 12/7, 4-5 PM (Medicaid Town Hall)

For answers to frequently asked questions see: [FAQ](#). For additional questions email [imetownhall@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:imetownhall@dhs.state.ia.us). To register go to: [Medicaid Town Hall registration](#).

The Iowa Department of Transportation Driver's Manual is now available in multiple languages. More information, including downloadable/printable PDFs, can be found at: [Iowa Driver's License Manual \(iowadot.gov\)](http://iowadot.gov).

**Applications are now open for Shop with a Cop 2023!** Shop with a Cop was developed to help make the holidays brighter for disadvantaged families in the Ames area. Officers from the Ames Police Department and local partner agencies host youth from throughout Story County. On December 9th, officers and their special young guests will head off to Target via CyRide for a morning of shopping, eating, gift wrapping, and fun. Applications are available at the Records Counter at the Ames Police Department, or the Boys and Girls Club on South 5th Street in Ames. Applications are due November 22nd.

**Viking Village Apartments, 910 Fairview St, Story City offers income-based rent.** Call 712-580-5360 for more information.

**LSI's People Place offers support and resources for parents of young children.** Our philosophy is simple: We believe all families should be empowered with the resources they need to thrive. Childcare is provided during many on-site programs and allows kids to play and learn! This program serves families with newborns to preteens. Families must reside in Story or Boone Counties. For more information, contact LSI's People Place office at 515.232.7262.

**Iowa Department of Justice Office of the Attorney General – NEW Victim Assistance Section,** providing services and assistance to victims of violent crimes. For more information visit their website [HERE](#).

**Iowa Finance Authority: Iowa Homeowners Assistance Fund** – this program provides eligible homeowners assistance with mortgage payments and related property expenses. Eligible homeowners may receive a one-time assistance payment of up to \$25,000. The information about the program can be found on our website, [www.iowafinance.com](http://www.iowafinance.com) or call 888-668-0927.

The [Iowa Spanish Helpline](#) is for anyone who needs assistance with Spanish language services. This line is to help the Spanish-speaking community in the state of Iowa with the goal of providing information, resources and support for the Iowa Latino communities statewide.

### INFORMATION SHARED PREVIOUSLY BUT STILL CURRENT:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER AND ORIENTATION CLASSES, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## STRUCTURED CLASSES:

**Des Moines Area Community College**, Ames Hunziker Center, 1420 South Bell Avenue, Ames. Contact person: Deb Sheehy, 515-778-2729, 515-612-7708 (call or text, including in your native language), or [dcsheehy@dmacc.edu](mailto:dcsheehy@dmacc.edu)

- Free non-credit ELL classes at various levels. Registration appointments needed. Sign up at: <https://iowa.getconnectable.com/des-moines-area-community-college/start> OR by phone/email/text.
- Ames Class Schedule: Monday – Thursday, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm OR Tuesday – Thursday, 6:00 – 8:30 pm. See [www.dmacc.edu/ell](http://www.dmacc.edu/ell) for more information.
- Fall 2023 Class Sessions are as follows: Session #1 is August 28 – October 19. Session #2 is October 30 – Dec. 14.
- For information on credit (tuition fee) ELL classes, please visit <https://www.dmacc.edu/ell/Pages/ellcredit.aspx>

**Memorial Lutheran Church International Student Ministry**, 2228 Lincoln Way, Ames. Contact Person: Judy Newhouse at [ISM.MLChurch@gmail.com](mailto:ISM.MLChurch@gmail.com) or 515-292-5005.

- Free “Learning English” classes at all levels. Free childcare available.
- Free “Conversational Activities” classes and “Idioms” classes also available.
- Fall 2023 classes will be held in the International Resource Room (north entrance). Unless otherwise stated, classes are in-person.
- For the class schedule, see <https://memorillutheranchurch.org/international-ministry/>

**Plex/Christ Community Church**, 5501 George Washington Carver, Ames. Contact person: Nancy Foote at [Nancygfoote@gmail.com](mailto:Nancygfoote@gmail.com)

- Free English Conversations classes at 4 levels. Held Monday and Thursday mornings, 10 – 11:15 am.
- Classes start on August 28 and follow the ISU academic calendar. New students are welcome to join any time.
- Textbook fee is \$15. Scholarships available.
- *If requested in advance, the following can be provided:* 1) Transportation from ISU’s SUV Community Center, with pick-up at 9:45 am; 2) Childcare.

## CONVERSATION GROUPS:

**Ames Public Library**, 515 Douglas Avenue, Ames. 515-239-5646.

- English conversation circles available on Mondays, 12:30 – 1:30 pm, ongoing.
- Gather for casual conversations in English. The focus of this group is to help English Language Learners gain confidence and fluency in a comfortable and fun setting. Library staff will pair native and non-native speakers and provide themes, questions, and topics for conversation.

**“Coffee, Tea, and English” Conversation Group, Iowa State University**, Gerdin Business Building-Lobby Café. Contact person: Nancy Foote at [Nancygfoote@gmail.com](mailto:Nancygfoote@gmail.com) OR [isubridges@gmail.com](mailto:isubridges@gmail.com)

- Meet in small groups with American volunteers and follow a format learning English and cultural customs.
- Starts again on August 25. Held every Friday, 4:30 – 6 pm.

**USCRI has announced a new program: READY4Life** is open for anyone who self-identifies as a refugee, immigrant, or asylum-seeker and is aged 14-24. Documentation of their status is NOT required, and they do not have to have come through the R&P program. The program is a 16-hour course focused on communication skills, relationship building, conflict management, and emotional self-regulation. Clients participate in surveys related to their experiences and can receive up to \$95 worth of Wal-Mart gift cards. They are also eligible for 8 months of case management. More information can be found on [the flyer here](#).

**The Catholic Legal Immigrant Network (CLINIC) has a self Study Opportunity:** [Completing the Application for Naturalization Form N-400](#)

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND JOB TRAINING

**American Job Centers 101 videos have now been translated into Spanish.** Both English and Spanish versions can be found below. [English:](#) [Spanish:](#)

**Iowa Workforce Development has a Registered Apprenticeship Program** which provides opportunities for workers seeking high-skilled, high-paying jobs. For additional information, see <https://www.earnandlearniowa.gov/apprentice>

**The Bureau of Refugee Services (BRS) is offering a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program.** This program will help participants prepare for the class, enroll into the DMACC CDL program at **no cost**, and obtain a job after completion. For questions or to learn how to enroll, email Rasheed Ebrahim at [rasheed+rebrahi@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:rasheed+rebrahi@dhs.state.ia.us)

**For job seekers, there is a tutorial on how to find jobs through LinkedIn.** It is translated in Dari, English, Spanish, Arabic, French, and Ukrainian. See: <https://socialimpact.linkedin.com/refugees>

**The Story County Retraining Program** is moving towards upskilling people in Story County that are 18+ and have a diploma or GED. Examples of classes are: Welding, Healthcare Patient Services, and CNA (Basic and Advanced). Applications can be found by scanning the QR code. For more information contact Nikki Fisher at [nikki@ameschamber.com](mailto:nikki@ameschamber.com) or call 515-232-2310.



**Iowa Works is offering Career Planning Services at the Ames Public Library** on Mondays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Come by to speak with a Career Planner for individualized, one-on-one career services. For more information see: [Career Planning](#).

## HOUSING AND UTILITIES

**Nevada Living is an apartment complex located in Nevada, Iowa offering safe clean affordable living.** Nevada Living offers a secured building with cameras, onsite property manager, vending machines, and an on site laundromat. For more information see <https://www.nevada-living.com/>, or contact [Natasha@wbrealty.com](mailto:Natasha@wbrealty.com)

**Community Housing Initiatives** offers income-based rent. Call 515-225-6711 for more information.

**The Weatherization Assistance Program is accepting applications.** This grant program was established to help reduce the heating and cooling costs for low income persons, particularly the elderly, disabled, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes, thereby reducing the households' energy bills. This also is one resource to help with a past due bill or disconnection. For Story County, contact Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. (MICA) at 230 SE 16th St., Suite 100, Ames, IA 50010, 515-956-3333. Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am- 4pm, Tuesday 12pm-4pm and Thursday 9am-1pm; please call for an appointment or to request an appointment outside of these hours. Once approved, water bill assistance also may be provided. To learn more, please go to <https://www.micaonline.org/>

**The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more.** See [Affordability Connectivity Program](#) for more information.

**Saving Suds**, a free laundry service, is an initiative of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church and Bethesda Lutheran Church. It is hosted on the first and third Thursdays of each month, 4 – 6 pm at **Squeaky Clean Laundry, 517 Lincoln Way, Ames**. They provide quarters for the machines, as well as detergent. More information, as well as links to volunteer or donate, can be found here: [Local Ministries of an LGBT Friendly Church Near You \(standrewsames.org\)](http://standrewsames.org)

## SCHOLARSHIPS

**The ACLU is now accepting nominations for The Robert Mannheimer Youth Advocacy Award.** The Robert Mannheimer Youth Advocacy Award is a \$500 cash prize given to a young Iowan age 14 to 19 who has demonstrated a passion and advocacy for civil liberties. The award monies do not need to be used for any specific purpose. We're looking for a young person (age 14-19) who advocates for civil liberties with passion and determination—someone who recognizes injustices and finds ways to correct them. More information, including how to nominate yourself or someone else, [can be found here](#).

**Latinos Unidos of Iowa has been supporting Latino youth who will be attending higher education in Iowa.** During these past years, 100's of students have received assistance from LU of I, which is an all-volunteer organization. Full-time students may earn \$1000.00; part-time students are eligible for \$500.00, and many Iowa colleges match the LU of I funds. Students may apply scholarship funds as they earn a degree in Iowa: an associate's or bachelor's degree; master's or doctorates. This includes professional graduate studies (Law or Medical school for example) Previous scholarship recipients are encouraged to reapply. For more information contact Lena Avila Robison, Founder and President. email: [iowalatina12@live.com](mailto:iowalatina12@live.com).

**A New Scholarship** is available to "people with lived refugee experience" in Iowa who want to pursue a social work degree at the University of Iowa. This scholarship does not require the applicant to have a refugee visa - only the experience of forced displacement. This includes, but is not limited to, asylum seekers, undocumented folks, survivors of torture and trafficking, and folks with refugee visas and lottery visas. **It does not require relocating to Iowa City.** Students can be full time or part time and can use the scholarship for summer tuition too. For more information about the School of Social Work go to <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/>. Interested applicants can contact the UI School of Social Work directly at [social-work@uiowa.edu](mailto:social-work@uiowa.edu) and ask about the ABCD Therapy scholarship or look at the information online.

**Scholarships are available for Ames Parks and Recreation programs** for school age youth (up to age 13) who are residents of the City of Ames and whose families meet the income guidelines as predetermined by MICA. The scholarship will pay 50% of the cost of the registration fees, up to \$60 per year. Scholarships are also available for season swimming passes. For more information see: [Ames Parks and Rec Spring Guide](#).

**Every Kid Sports is a national nonprofit that helps income-restricted families to pay for youth sports registration fees** by providing up to \$150 per children, up to three times a year, through their signature program, The Every Kid Sports Pass. To qualify, families must fill out an application at [everykidsports.org](http://everykidsports.org) and submit a picture of a Medicaid, SNAP, or WIC document with the child's name and a date from within 12 months. More information can be found on the [flyer here](#).

## MEDICAL

**Story County Public Health offers immunizations free of charge** to individuals from birth through 18 years of age to families without insurance, or under-insured. This program is called Vaccines For Children (VFC). We offer VFC clinics on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 4PM to 6PM. We can also schedule outside of those hours. Please call 515-239-6730 to schedule an appointment.

Story County Public Health is pleased to offer translation services in a variety of ways. We have a Language Line via iPad with a live translator - it looks a lot like Facetime. We have "Pocket Talk" devices with 82 languages that offer audio and text translation. We have the more traditional Language Line via telephone, and we can also schedule in person translators if necessary.

We recently became a site for Raising Readers, and we offer books in English and Spanish.

**FEMA has funds to assist with funeral expenses for people that have died from Covid.** More information, including how to apply, can be found at their website: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance/>

**The Vermont Language Justice Project created videos on how to pick up prescriptions at pharmacies.** The videos have been created for many common refugee languages.

- **ARABIC:** <https://youtu.be/LqeijP6RDsI>
- **BURMESE:** [https://youtu.be/C\\_6zJpWI6eU](https://youtu.be/C_6zJpWI6eU)
- **DARI:** <https://youtu.be/iVYezQBg5r4>
- **ENGLISH:** <https://youtu.be/xVxQbo6qZ4I>
- **FRENCH:** <https://youtu.be/R6Z0o7eYld8>
- **KIRUNDI:** <https://youtu.be/q874nNqTvaU>
- **MAAY MAAY:** [https://youtu.be/\\_VyHFERocSs](https://youtu.be/_VyHFERocSs)
- **MANDARIN:** <https://youtu.be/-iMDjLab6Ec>
- **NEPALI:** [https://youtu.be/w\\_HqnM2GE5A](https://youtu.be/w_HqnM2GE5A)
- **PASHTO:** <https://youtu.be/MS9OujSU0a8>

- **SOMALI:** <https://youtu.be/hC7ITw0FYfA>
- **SPANISH:** <https://youtu.be/P-b-zrlrjg8>
- **SWAHILI:** <https://youtu.be/6ErRNpcte7A>
- **UKRAINIAN:** <https://youtu.be/sGTXf7AYtHM>
- **VIETNAMESE:** <https://youtu.be/yvr8WkBYtCY>

**Iowa Total Care: Language Access Services.** *Our culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare services are available to all our members and all reasonable accommodations are provided to equal access to communication resources.* Download this free [Language Access Services and Guidelines](#): or Download this free [Language Interpretation Services Poster](#). Any questions can be directed to [C&L@IowaTotalCare.com](mailto:C&L@IowaTotalCare.com).

**Iowa Total Care: No-cost\* transportation services.** Our members can get rides to non-emergency medical appointments at no cost\*. Iowa Total Care has partnered with Access2Care to provide rides to and from eligible doctor appointments. If a family member or friend drives our member to an appointment, our member may be able to get help paying for gas or mileage.

- Have questions or need to schedule a ride? Contact Member Services at 1-833-404-1061
- (TTY: 711). Press 2 for member services, then 1 for transportation.
- [Download Iowa Total Care's new Transportation Brochure](#) to learn more!
- For more details on transportation services, [visit our page on the Iowa Total Care website](#).

#### **Easterseals Resource for Iowa refugees and immigrants with a disability/ongoing medical concern**

Easterseals Iowa has Durable Medical Equipment (DME) available at a nominal cost, which can be waived. The individual is then able to use the item for as long as they need it. Examples of DME include hospital beds, wheelchairs and grab bars.

**Easterseals has a Lending Library of over 2,000 devices.** They can help people identify what devices might be helpful for them and they can borrow the device for 30 days to find out if it helps or not. Some examples are devices to make it easier to prep and cook with one hand, an alarm that shakes the bed if you can't hear a typical alarm clock and canes that adapt for walking on uneven ground. For more information see [assistive technology center](#).

**Easterseals Iowa Assistive Technology Program Lending Library** is offering a limited-time opportunity for individuals to access **Smart-Tech for Daily Living** for an extended period of time, beyond the typical 30-day trial period loan. Approved applicants may qualify for up to a **\$500 scholarship toward the purchase of Smart-Tech Devices** for increased independence with tasks of daily living. These devices will remain the property of Easterseals Iowa but may reside with the applicant for the length of need. Priority will be given to recipients of Health and Community Based Services. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Easterseals Iowa Assistive Technology Program 866-866-8782 (Toll-Free) 515-289-4069 (TTY) [atinfo@eastersealsia.org](mailto:atinfo@eastersealsia.org).

**United Way of Story County has SingleCare prescription discount cards** available at their office, 315 Clark Ave, Ames. These cards are for everyone, whether you are insured or uninsured. SingleCare can help you save up to 80% on prescription medications. There's no registration or eligibility criteria required.

**The LSI Refugee and Immigrant Wellness (therapy and case management) fliers** have been translated into additional languages: [Arabic](#), [Burmese](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Karen](#), [Kinyamulenge](#), [Nepali](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Swahili](#), and [Tigrinya](#).

**Mental Health Emergency Hotline.** Individuals/community leaders can dial "988" on their phone and will be able to have mental health support for crisis and suicide prevention. Trained mental health professionals around the country are available 24 hours, 7 days per week to answer the calls, listen, and if needed connect them with local support. Language line is available.

**A new resource from Switchboard:** [Tip Sheet: Know your rights: Important information for Cubans and Haitians entering the United States regarding Medical Care](#).

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Let's Listen and Learn from Our Immigrant and Refugee Neighbors**, Sunday, November 12, 2023, at Collegiate United Methodist/Wesley Foundation, Wesley Hall, 2622 Lincoln Way (enter east door). All community members are invited to attend.

**5:00 p.m. Potluck Dinner.** Place settings and drinks will be furnished. Please bring a dish or two to share.

**5:45 p.m. Program : Hear personal stories from immigrants and refugees.**

- Who are our neighbors? How can we welcome them to our community?
- What can each of us do to make life better and safer for immigrants and refugees in our community?

There will be a free will offering to support the efforts of AIRA (Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance) and ASIP (Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partners). Checks can be made to CUMC, memo line Helping Our Neighbors.

**The Ames Public Library has a new program – [International Student and Family Meetup](#).** This program is meant to embrace the international residents in our community and give them a safe space to enjoy fun activities and culture-sharing together. The program takes place every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month in our Auditorium from 4:30-5:30pm.

**In light of recent news around the DACA program, this [Beyond DACA Resource](#)** could prove helpful to students and to all who are impacted. The guide is robust and includes details about institutional support, scholarships, legal support, and mental health resources.

**Help is just 3 digits away.** Call 911 for emergencies. Call 211 for information and community resources. Call 988 for suicide intervention and crisis support.

**Is the Derecho still impacting your life?** Iowa Legal Aid (ILA) started the Derecho Project to assist survivors of the August 10, 2020 derecho who continue to have legal issues related to the storm. Are you dealing with contractor fraud, landlord-tenant issues, mobile home issues, mechanic's liens, or civil infractions for unrepaired damage? Contact Iowa Legal Aid's Derecho Legal Advice Hotline at 877-469-2259 or email [disaster@iowalaw.org](mailto:disaster@iowalaw.org). For more information go to <https://www.iowalegalaid.org/> and click on "affected by disaster".

**Derecho Help**

**Ames Parks & Recreation offers many programs for adults and youth.** For more information and to sign up go to: [Ames Parks & Rec.](#)

**IowaWORKS Free Financial Planning Workshops:** There are multiple Zoom webinar opportunities coming up each 1st Monday of the month @ 2pm through the remainder of the year for free financial planning workshops. More information about these workshops can be found on [the flyer here](#).

**NAACP has a new tool to help families** as they work to establish their credit ratings and firm up their financial foundations. See: [Connecting to Our Financial Future](#).

**USCIS Announces Online Self-Service Tool to Reschedule Biometric Services Appointments:** On June 28, USCIS launched a new self-service biometric services appointment rescheduling tool on [my.uscis.gov](https://my.uscis.gov). Benefit requestors, and their attorneys and accredited representatives, can now reschedule most biometric services appointments online, without calling the USCIS Contact Center.

**The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Refuge Services (BRS) has implemented a 'services referral form'** ([see form here](#)), to be used as the mechanism to access services by beneficiaries (refugees), referring agencies and anyone seeking support through BRS. Contact Samira Ikeljic [sikelji@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:sikelji@dhs.state.ia.us) if you have questions.



**Free services for Ukrainians in Iowa** - Ukrainian humanitarian parolees who entered the United States after February 24, 2022 are eligible for FREE services: help with documents, enrollment in public benefits, legal assistance referrals Work application support (EAD). Contact [Illia Yamchuk](#) for more information or call 515-802-8981

[Settle In for Ukrainians](#), an initiative launched by the [Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange](#), is designed to directly engage newly arrived Ukrainians resettling in the United States. Settle In serves as a touchpoint to disseminate vital, correct information in an interactive format tied to early resettlement services, employment, housing, and education.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement has issued a [fact sheet](#) that outlines benefits and services for Ukrainian humanitarian parolees. The fact sheet, featured on the [ORR homepage](#), is in English, but by using the website's translation feature in the top right-hand corner, it can be translated into over 80 languages, including Ukrainian and Russian.

**Free services available for Afghans in Iowa** - Afghan humanitarian parolees and nationals who entered the United States after July 31, 2021, through Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) are eligible for FREE services including legal service referrals, enrollment in public benefits, school enrollment, and medical screening and appointment coordination. Contact [Emal Hotak](#) for more information, or, call 515-601-1044.

The **Afghan Immigration Help Line** is a free resource available to unrepresented eligible Afghans to answer general questions about immigration cases and provide limited general information and referral services ([flyer here](#)).

The Office of Refugee Resettlement has announced the launch of the **Immigration Legal Services for Afghan Arrivals website**. This website is a direct resource for Afghan Arrivals & Legal Service Providers (LSP). This helps evacuated Afghans located in the U.S. connect with trained legal experts. Learn how to connect with a LSP or to receive Afghan-specific immigration resources by visiting the ILSAA at <https://ilsaa.acf.hhs.gov!>

**International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Des Moines is offering The Support for Afghan Financial Empowerment Project (SAFE)** is an initiative launched by the **International Rescue Committee (IRC)** and IRC's **Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO)** to boost the economic empowerment resources available to Afghan families as they begin their path to financial stability in their new communities across the U.S. Pashto and Dari interpretation is available, with flyers also available in [Dari](#), [Pashto](#), and [English](#).

**Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice (IMMJ) is hosting legal services in both Dari and Pashto** ([flyer here](#)).

**New resource from CCUSA:** [Defining Benefits for Humanitarian Parole Recipients](#): this document breaks down federal programming and resources available to those with Humanitarian Parole status.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement has put together some [great multi-lingual resources](#) for disaster preparation (including winter storms, hypothermia and frostbite). The booklet has been translated into Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi, French, Karenni, Kinyarwanda, Nepali, Karen, Sgaw Karen, Somali, Swahili, Tibetan, and Tigrinya. Also attached is additional content on Hypothermia and Frostbite in [Dari](#) and [Pashto](#).

The **Story County Immigrant and Refugee Collaboration welcomes participation by local immigrants** in our work. If you are interested in coming to a monthly meeting or volunteering, please email Anneke at [amundel@uwstory.org](mailto:amundel@uwstory.org). Se habla español.

EMAIL: [story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com](mailto:story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com) / FACEBOOK: [@storycountyimmigrants](https://www.facebook.com/storycountyimmigrants) / WEBPAGE: [www.uwstory.org/SCIRC](http://www.uwstory.org/SCIRC)  
GENERAL CONTACT FORM FOR REFERRALS: <https://tinyurl.com/contactSCIRC>

Regular publication date for this newsletter is the first of the month.

Please submit any information for inclusion by one week prior to that to: [story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com](mailto:story.immigrants.fund@gmail.com).