

## How can I help?

Newcomers to our community are in need of help and support. Some, like in the stories of those featured in Torn From Home, have gone through great lengths to get here, and must struggle to adapt to a place that is drastically unlike their homeland. There are many ways you can get involved:

**Educate Yourself:** Torn From Home is a great place to start. Make sure to look at the resource guides for additional places to find information, such as books, websites, discussion groups, and other organizations.

**Welcome:** If you know of newcomers to your community, invite them to your social networks to speak, or simply to come and meet others. Offer to help them with basic tasks, such as grocery shopping – sometimes the smallest gestures of kindness are the biggest help.

**Donate:** Nonprofit organizations rely on both donated money and goods to do their work. Contacting the organization will help you understand exactly how your donation supports them.

**Volunteer:** Local refugee and immigrant service organizations often need individuals to assist with various activities or clerical work, especially if you have a special skill such as legal, language, or medical expertise. See “Where can I find more information?” to find an organization near you.

**Advocate:** Contact your elected officials with your letters of opinion and concern. Pay attention to legislation that arises around migration, and spread information to your friends and family.

**Sponsor:** Lutheran Family Services in Colorado Springs has information on how to become an official sponsor of a refugee or refugee family for up to six months. Responsibilities may differ, but often include day-to-day, financial, or emotional support.

**Employ:** Recently arrived refugees come with a broad range of backgrounds and skill sets and can really be assets to your company or organization. Contact Lutheran Family Services to find out how you might offer employment to newcomers in search of work.

## Where can I find more information?

### Catholic Charities, Diocese of Pueblo

Serving 6500 individuals per year, Catholic Charities Pueblo provides translation & interpretation, emergency assistance, legal services & education, mental health, advocacy, parent education, Know Your Rights workshops, Cultural Competency training, and Citizenship classes for migrant communities.  
[www.pueblocharities.org](http://www.pueblocharities.org), 719.544.4233

### Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs

Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs, Inc. is the social service arm of the Diocese of Colorado Springs. Catholic Charities provides social services throughout a 10-county area with most of the services targeted to people living in Colorado Springs and El Paso County.  
[www.ccharitiescs.org](http://www.ccharitiescs.org), 719.866.6535

### The Pikes Peak Immigrant and Refugee Collaborative

PPIRC's mission is to increase interaction and integration between immigrants and refugees and the receiving community of El Paso County. Contact: Megumi Esperanza Nakamura.  
[megumi@ccharitiescs.org](mailto:megumi@ccharitiescs.org), 719.866.6510

### Lutheran Family Services Colorado Springs

LFS Refugee and Asylee Programs are among four agencies that resettle refugees and provide services during refugees' first year in the United States. Begun in 1978 to receive Southeast Asian refugees, the agency served nearly 1000 refugees, asylees, and victims of trafficking in 2006, making it the largest in the region.  
[www.lfsc.org](http://www.lfsc.org), 719.227.7571

### Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning

The Spring Institute works with people and organizations all over the world, enabling communication and increasing understanding, helping to turn cultural differences into assets. For more than 25 years the Spring Institute has provided direct services, technical assistance, training, and consulting services regionally, nationally, and internationally.  
[www.spring-institute.org](http://www.spring-institute.org), 303.863.0188

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[www.tornfromhome.org](http://www.tornfromhome.org)



# TORN FROM HOME: My Life as a Refugee

Immigrants and Refugees in  
Southern Colorado

## InfoZone News Museum

4th floor of Rawlings Public Library  
100 East Abriendo Avenue  
Pueblo, CO 81004  
719.562.5604

June 5th to August 30th, 2009

**Southern Colorado has been at the crossroads of migration for centuries and Pueblo is a key trading post along the historical U.S. /Mexico border.**

Native American communities were transformed by immigration and that trend continues today. Seeking refuge from economic strife, war and political and religious persecution, newcomers continue to look to Southern Colorado as their new home and the place to carve out a brighter future. This diverse group of people includes both immigrants – people who choose to come here to settle – and refugees – people who flee danger in their homelands and seek safety in another country. Regardless of where people come from, global migration is now an inevitable part of our world, and provides an opportunity for us to learn about different cultures and build upon the strength and vibrancy of our communities.



According to the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, approximately 1100 newcomers arrive in Colorado each year, most to the Denver metropolitan area, after which many settle in surrounding communities.

**What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee?**

**An immigrant** is a foreign national who has been granted permission to remain in the United States permanently. However, the term is often used more broadly to mean any person who was born in another country and came to live in the United States.

**A refugee** is a person outside of the United States who seeks protection on the grounds that he or she fears persecution in his or her homeland. To obtain refugee status, a person must prove that he or she has a “well-founded fear of persecution” on the basis of at least one of five specifically enumerated and internationally recognized grounds: race, religion, membership in a social group, political opinion, or national origin.

**In Our Area**

**Pueblo**

While Pueblo County has a small refugee population, the county has historically been home to a diverse number of immigrants, the majority coming from Mexico and Central America, with a small but growing population from Korea, Pakistan, Russia, the Middle East and South America. Many immigrants come here for work, often filling gaps in industries in need of help. For example, Pueblo County hospitals regularly recruit experienced physicians from other countries to strengthen their physician base. Other immigrants come to Pueblo to attend Colorado State University Pueblo and remain after graduation. Others live here and own small businesses in Pueblo County; others own businesses here but live elsewhere.

**Colorado Springs**

Refugees have been arriving to Colorado Springs for over 30 years, with an influx from Southeast Asia occurring in the late 70's because of wars overseas. Today, they arrive from over 40 countries, including Burma, China, Colombia, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Liberia, Mauritania, Russia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Ukraine and Vietnam. The majority of immigrants in El Paso county arrive from Mexico, followed by Germany, Korea, the United Kingdom, Canada, the Philippines, and India. Many settle in Colorado Springs and work in the construction and service industries. High concentrations of immigrants reside in the southeastern section of Colorado Springs, one of the city's most impoverished areas.