



Saanich Peninsula Refugee Initiative Group

UPDATE #30

February, 2023

THE DECISION

The St. John's Refugee Sponsorship Fund has been given to the Anglican Diocese Refugee Program. Most of that money will be used to settle an Ethiopian refugee, Roma and her two children, on the Saanich Peninsula. Any surplus will be placed in the Anglican Diocese Refugee Program contingency reserve fund to help settle other refugees being sponsored through the Anglican Diocese Refugee Program in this region.

ROMA AND HER CHILDREN

Roma, who fled from Ethiopia, has been approved to come to Canada with her daughter aged 12 and son aged 9. They are just waiting for details about their travel arrangements, so could arrive here by mid March.

HOUSING – TOP PRIORITY - two bedroom accommodation.

FURNITURE NEEDED - Starting from scratch to set up a home: beds, table, chairs, chests of drawers, etc.

SPRIG's FUTURE

Tragically, millions of children, men and women all around the world are seeking refuge from their own countries. In 2016 SPRIG was formed to sponsor refugees to settle on the Saanich Peninsula. Now, we are bonded by our experience helping to settle Fatma and her family in Canada, and by working through the long application process with Safaa and her family. Among our assets is our commitment, knowledge, our generosity, our website and our contacts. Should SPRIG continue? If so what comes next? Please share your ideas and your interest.

THE PROCESS

The decision to give the money to the Anglican Diocese Refugee Program was based on careful consideration and criteria. SPRIG asked the two local Sponsorship Agreement Holders (the InterCultural Association of Greater Victoria and Anglican Church Refugee Sponsorship Program) if they had sponsorship groups who are settling refugees on the Saanich Peninsula, where arrival of the refugees is imminent and where the sponsorship group needs more money to meet government requirements. Another consideration could be "greatest need" relative to the current circumstances of the refugee applicants. ICA did not have any cases at this time.

The Anglican Diocese had one case that fit SPRIG's criteria with links to the Saanich Peninsula. Roma's experienced sponsor group has settled many refugees in this region, but their fundraising capacity was limited during COVID. So Roma and her children have been waiting until all money is raised for her government approved settlement budget for one year.

On February 9th SPRIG's Chair and Secretary delivered a cheque for \$58,144.94 to Brendon Neilson, Executive Director of the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia and Jibril Mohamed, Refugee Sponsorship Program Coordinator, South Vancouver Island. Brendon said, "It is a miracle to receive the money now." Thank you to St. John's United Church for initiating and being central to SPRIG and to the Church Council for expediting the transfer of funds



YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

**Help Roma's sponsors to find housing and/or furniture.
Help explore options for the possible continuation of SPRIG.
Please phone Mabel Jean Rawlins, 250 656 0834.**

www.sprig.me

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