

Refugee & Immigrant Community Services (RICS) Internship Descriptions

Refugee & Immigrant Community Services (RICS) partners with refugees, asylees, immigrants and survivors of trafficking to address their needs by connecting them to their new community, providing education and employment services and the help they need to succeed in their new country. Each year, RICS resettles over individuals and families from places like Afghanistan, Burma, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

All of our internships require a minimum commitment of 16 hours per week, and we can accommodate up to 40 hours per week. Most of our services take place during our office hours of 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM, but some program activities, such as after school program or airport pickups, take place in the evenings. We are actively recruiting interns who want to gain valuable experience by assisting in the following program areas: 1) Case Management, 2) Employment Services, 3) Youth & Family Services, 4) Vocational English Language Training. Some programs have additional program areas that an intern may focus on including: 1) Early Childhood Education, 2) Housing, 3) Hospitality, 4) Preferred Communities. Here are more detailed descriptions of each program:

1. Case Management

The Case Management team has multiple programs with varying populations served within the refugee and immigrant community. For that reason, internship positions with the case management team are often specific to the individual program. Please see the descriptions below:

*NOTE: Desired Qualifications Across CM Programming Include:

- A clear interest in gaining experience with refugees, asylees, immigrants or international populations
- Past experience working with different cultures
- Familiarity with other languages is a plus, specifically: Arabic, Burmese, Farsi, French, Tigrinya, Swahili, Rohingya or Sango
- Excellent communication skills, specifically the ability to work with English Language Learners
- Driver's License and a clean driving record
- Computer proficiency (Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Strong work ethic and great organizational skills

Generalist, Refugee Case Management Intern

The generalist refugee case management intern works to support the refugee case managers who support newly arrived refugees and individuals who have gained asylum, from date of arrival/asylum granted to 5 years post arrival/asylum granted. These supports are broad and cover a wide range of holistic and comprehensive services.

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Intern Responsibilities include:

- Assisting with airport pickups
- Conducting home visits and new arrival orientations to make sure refugees receive a warm welcome, have all the information they need, and have their basic needs met
- Accompanying refugees to appointments at the public aid office, the secretary of state office, the health clinic, and other places
- Ensuring that refugees receive the appropriate public assistance by filling out paperwork, accompanying them to appointments, and communicating with the public aid office
- Helping refugees meet their physical health needs by scheduling and accompanying them to medical appointments
- Assisting refugees with problem-solving various issues while empowering them to handle things on their own and supporting their self-sufficiency
- Creating files and managing documentation
- Coordinating donation pickups and new apartment setup prior to refugee arrivals

Medical Case Management Intern

The medical case management intern works within the case management department and largely supports the medical case manager. The work is primarily with newly arrived refugee families in addressing their medical needs, accessing medical services, and learning to navigate the health care system.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Scheduling an initial health & wellness exam
- Scheduling follow-up appointments or appointments with specialists, based on referrals
- Explaining medical insurance and its purpose/use
- Assisting with managing medical bills and ensuring acceptance of medical insurance
- Accompanying participants to various medical appointments
- Assisting in connecting to other medical services (e.g. care coordinators via insurance, medical transportation, medical loan forgiveness programs, etc)
- Communicating with medical professionals regarding follow-up care for families
- Conducting home visits to ensure safety & wellbeing
- Explaining medications and their purposes (with information from medical providers)
- Advocating for proper medical care and services with medical providers

Housing Intern

The Housing Team provides vital housing supports to recently arrived refugees. The team builds relationships with landlords, secures and prepares apartments and collaborates with local providers to establish additional housing supports.

Intern Responsibilities include:

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- Assist housing coordinator in conducting landlord outreach and communicating with current landlords
- Coordinate donation pickups and new apartment setup prior to refugee arrival
- Assist refugees in obtaining rental assistance through various partner programs and agencies
- Participate in the Refugee Housing Consortium, a group of service providers focused on provision of quality, safe and affordable housing to refugees
- Educate participants on tenant rights and responsibilities, including leases
- Advocate for refugees in regards to housing, including connection to legal support
- Researching available housing resources that participants are eligible to access
- Assist housing coordinator in maintaining accurate files and documents

Preferred Communities (PC) Intern

The Preferred Communities (PC) Program serves refugee participants who can benefit from intensive/extended case management, specifically clinical services, due to heightened vulnerabilities, in order to reach self-sufficiency. Trauma-informed and culturally sensitive services include individual counseling, community support groups, psychoeducation, and psychiatric and/or psychotherapy referrals.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Facilitate or co-facilitate community support groups
- Collaborate with other departments on Cultural Orientation presentations
- Conducting home visits and new arrival orientations to make sure refugees receive a warm welcome, have all the information they need, and have their basic needs met
- Helping refugees meet their physical/mental health needs by scheduling and accompanying them to medical appointments as needed
- Facilitate psychiatric and therapy referrals as needed
- Assisting refugees with problem-solving various issues while empowering them to handle things on their own and supporting their self-sufficiency
- Conduct PC intakes with new participants
- Orient new participants to PC services
- Follow-up with PC participants' progress
- Creating files and managing documentation

Additional Desired Qualifications:

- *Required:* student must be in a Masters-level program
- A strong commitment to trauma-informed and strength-based approaches
- Ability to collaborate with RICS departments and outside community providers/partners for comprehensive services

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Nauru Papua New Guinea Program (NRPP) Intern

The Nauru Papua New Guinea Program (NRPP) works to provide enhanced case management services to individuals who were resettled in the US by means of the Australian detention centers, Nauru & Manus Island. The focus of this program is to provide additional support, on top of already existing case management services, including direct financial aid, career mobility, and community connection.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Conducting “check-in” calls with program participants to determine their needs, desires and goals for the program
- Assisting with researching available resources for program participants
- Completing applications for resources with program participants
- Assisting with file maintenance and documentation of services
- Assisting with the development of service plans and documenting progress towards goals
- Providing emotional and social support to program participants where appropriate

IL Welcoming Center (IWC) Intern

The Illinois Welcoming Center (IWC) provides case management services to immigrants regardless of their immigration status – thus enabling RICS to expand service provision to undocumented folks and persons seeking asylum status. This program is housed in our Belmont-Cragin site, and focused on providing comprehensive case management services and referrals to eligible program participants.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Conducting “check-in” calls with program participants to determine their needs, desires and goals for the program
- Assisting with researching available resources for program participants
- Completing applications for resources with program participants
- Assisting with file maintenance and documentation of services
- Assisting with the development of service plans and documenting progress towards goals
- Providing emotional and social support to program participants where appropriate

2. Employment Services

The Employment team helps refugees achieve self-sufficiency by preparing them for the US workforce and developing relationships with compatible employers in the Chicago area.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Conducting position specific interview practice with refugee job seekers
- Creating resumes for refugee job seekers
- Searching various internet job sites for open positions that meet the requirements of refugee participants

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- Completing online applications for refugee job candidates
- Accompanying refugees to job interviews and job fairs
- Providing logistical support to Employment staff as needed, such as assisting with maintaining documentation for each participant served

Desired Qualifications:

- A clear interest in gaining experience with refugees or international populations
- Past experience working with different cultures
- Familiarity with other languages is a plus, specifically: Arabic, Burmese, Farsi, French, Malay, Swahili, or Sango
- Excellent communication skills, specifically the ability to work with English Language Learners and to represent the agency to employers in the community
- Computer proficiency (Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Strong work ethic and great organizational skills

3. Youth & Family Services (YFS)

The YFS team helps enroll newly arrived youth into Chicago Public Schools while providing additional support in the form of early childhood programming, after school program and a youth mentoring program.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Help facilitate after school program for school-aged refugees by providing 1-on-1 tutoring and supporting group activities
- Meet with newly-arrived families to learn more about their background and educational history before enrolling them in school; conduct school enrollments
- Empower newly-arrived parents by teaching them how to navigate the school system
- Conduct home visits to check in on how students are doing or invite them to special events
- Support community volunteers mentoring refugee youth by providing guidance and planning group activities
- Support the YFS team maintaining thorough and accurate documentation by writing case notes and tracking program outcomes such as attendance
- Facilitate group meetings among youth
- Provide assistance for Young Adult Mentoring Program
- Engage in community outreach and planning events

Desired Qualifications:

- A clear interest in gaining experience with refugees or international populations
- Past experience working with different cultures
- Past experiences facilitating youth programming or working in a school setting are a plus
- Familiarity with other languages is a plus, specifically: Arabic, Burmese, Farsi, French, Malay, Swahili, or Sango

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- Excellent communication skills, specifically the ability to work with English Language Learners
- Computer proficiency (Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Strong work ethic and great organizational skills
- YFS interns will need to undergo a background check in order to work with youth/children

Youth and Family Services: *Early Childhood Education (ECE)*

Responsibilities:

- Assist in childcare classroom 2-5 days/week, during which you will: participate in or help lead early education activities; maintain an environment that is supportive and sensitive to the varying emotional needs of children; and report activities and observation of behavior in daily log.
- Assist in maintaining record of children's attendance, as well as monthly progress reports on school readiness and social-emotional development
- Accompany program on occasional field trips, assist with family literacy activities and monthly library trips
- Helping with other projects, reports, and administrative tasks as necessary, including database entry

Qualifications:

- Excellent communication and organizational skills.
- Patience and flexibility.
- Completed or pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education, Psychology, Sociology, or a related field
- Experience working with children preferred
- Experience working with families of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds
- Interest in working with refugees in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-ethnic environment.
- At least semester-long or summer months availability (4-6 months)

1. Vocational English Language Training (VELT) – 4419 N. Ravenswood

The VELT team provides English classes five days a week for three hours each day.

Intern Responsibilities include:

- Create educational activities and help teachers provide direct instructions to students in English classes
- The optional opportunity to lead ESL classroom instruction
- Help plan and facilitate student orientations
- Provide one-on-one assistance to English students
- Track class activities and services provided by entering data into a database

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- Help with other projects, reports, and administrative tasks as necessary

Desired Qualifications:

- No prior teaching experience necessary
- A clear interest in gaining experience with refugees or international populations
- Past experience working with different cultures
- Familiarity with other languages is a plus, specifically: Arabic, Burmese, Farsi, French, Malay, Swahili, or Sango
- Excellent communication skills, specifically the ability to work with English Language Learners
- Computer proficiency (Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Strong work ethic and great organizational skills

Vocational English Language Training (VELT) – 5715 W. Belmont Ave.

Refugee and Immigrant Community Services (a part of Heartland Alliance) is a nonprofit that provides English as a Second Language instruction (among other services) to adults, for free. Our students are mostly from Latin American and Eastern Europe. We serve about 700 immigrants per year. We are located at 5715 W. Belmont Ave. Chicago, IL

At the Belmont location of Refugee and Immigrant Community Services, we have many options for interns. We work with interns to find projects that align with their goals and interests. Volunteers and Interns can start anytime throughout the year. Interns can work a variety of schedules, as the site is open Monday-Thursday, 8:30am-9:00pm and Fridays, 8:30am-5:00pm and Saturdays, 8:30am-1:00pm. We ask that interns are available 15 hours or more per week, for a minimum of 3 months.

***Please note, as of January 2021, all programming is provided remotely until further notice.**

Interns are expected to work with participant: either 1on1, in small groups, or assisting in classes. Here are general qualifications we would like interns to have:

1. Affinity for working with people
2. Comfort with technology (Office 365, SharePoint, Microsoft Word & Excel)
3. Some experience with remote learning
4. Interest in transferable skills related to teaching such as interpersonal skills, group facilitation, 1on1 tutoring, lesson planning, sourcing learning materials, or researching community resources

Examples of past projects include:

- art in community workshops
- small group support sessions (centered around parenting or general wellness/self-care topics)
- community resources manual
- needs assessment and more

Vocational English Language Training (VELT): *Hospitality Program*
Not Currently Available

1. Help students with online job applications.
2. Assist with pre-testing and intake process in the recruitment phase of the class.
3. Help create and manage paper and digital files for each participant in the hospitality programs.
4. Help keep an updated binder of current job applications for each student
5. Assist with interview practice/ Consult with each student one on one to determine his/her employment strengths, and prepare scripts for interviews
6. Help set up group activities and participate in role play with the instructor when needed.
7. Accompany class instructor and students to hotel tours downtown. Escort students on job interviews, job fairs, job trips, etc.
8. Assist with graduation ceremony prep: assembling graduation packets including graduation certificates, CTA passes, class photo, copies of resumes, etc.
9. Coordinate Hospitality Interview Clothing in Storage Area. Keep well organized and labeled...and determine clothing needs for each session. Assist with soliciting interview clothing donations
10. Maintain student contact lists regularly.
11. Help students with applications online.

Requirements

1. Interest in the hotel/hospitality/service industry
2. Some experience in Customer Service
3. Interest in working with the refugee population
4. Outgoing, energetic, and eager to interact and engage with students and staff alike
5. Responsive to each student's needs and challenges
6. Basic computer skills (Word/Excel)
7. **Internship Time Frame: January – June*

2. Summer Youth Employment Program

Knowing that summer job programs support increased economic security throughout a participant's lifetime, SYEP has successfully connected youth with non-profit and for-profit employers, and Community Education programs. Youth served include CHA residents, refugees, immigrants, justice-involved, and other opportunity youth.

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During June, we work to recruit over one-hundred youth between the ages of 16-24, who are interested in a job for the summer. June is spent recruiting, the youth, holding orientations, and handling their paperwork. The youth begin work during the first week of July, and they work for 20 hours per week, for six weeks. They work in a variety of roles, but the majority of them work in the ESL classrooms at Heartland's Refugee and Immigrant Community Services on the North side or in high schools and summer camps on the South side of Chicago. In addition to the work they are doing, they also learn about topics like college readiness, human rights, and financial literacy - through project based learning, guest speakers and field trips.

Duties

- Assisting with recruitment and outreach
- Helping lead orientations
- Organizing new hire paperwork
- Planning field trips and guest speakers for the youth
- Leading activities and projects with small groups of youth
- Collecting timesheets and delivering paychecks

Schedule & Time Commitment

- Ideally, Mid-June through Mid-August (but there is flexibility)
- Hours can be completed on any schedule

Locations

- The bulk of the internship will take place at 5715 W. Belmont Ave. and 4419 N. Ravenswood Ave. - however, some travel to SYEP locations on the south side may be required as needed.

3. Community Engagement Intern

Reports to: Director of Refugee and Immigrant Community Services

Hours per Week: 16 minimum

Length: Minimum 1 semester

Agency Description: Refugee & Immigrant Community Services (RICS) partners with refugees, asylees, immigrants and survivors of trafficking to address their needs by connecting them to their new community, providing education and employment services and the help they need to succeed in their new country. Each year, RICS resettles over individuals and families from places like Afghanistan, Burma, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

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Job Overview: The Community Engagement Intern works in collaboration with Refugee and Immigrant Community Services staff to develop and implement opportunities to engage the community in the work of Refugee and Immigrant Community Services.

Responsibilities:

- Work with the Community Engagement Committee to develop comprehensive community engagement and outreach strategy
- Assist with electronic newsletter writing, editing and formatting
- Help to maintain RICS' media and communications list
- Help draft content for website and outreach materials
- Assist volunteer coordinators with volunteer management and volunteer events
- Assist with donation procurement; help to develop and streamline donation procurement processes
- Assist staff in developing new relationships with community groups, faith based organizations and schools in the Chicagoland area
- Collaborate with staff in designing, planning and implementing community engagement events such as donation drives, volunteer appreciation events, and awareness raising campaigns

Qualifications:

- Professionalism
- A clear interest in gaining experience with refugees or international populations
- Computer proficiency (Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Strong work ethic and great organizational skills
- Self-motivated, patient, reliable and flexible,
- Strong written communication skills
- Graphic design skills
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills