

*“Recognize yourself in the  
‘he’ and ‘she’ who are not  
like you and me.”*  
— Carlos Fuentes



WGRP’s first sponsorship:  
the Al-Salkhadi family

## WEST KINGSTON REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP



With funds in hand for the Al-Salkhadi family, WGRP is working, in collaboration with the Islamic Society of Kingston, on sponsoring another UN-approved family. Our families are selected with consideration to the cultural, spiritual, language and community support systems Kingston can provide.

### QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

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## WEST KINGSTON REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP



A YOUNG FAMILY who fled Syria to Beirut after their house was bombed is embarked on a new life in Kingston thanks to a refugee sponsorship by five churches and others in the West Kingston area.

In collaboration with the Islamic Society of Kingston, (which pledged 25% of the funds needed to sponsor the Al-Salkhadi family), and with The United Church of Canada as its Sponsorship Agreement Holder, the West Kingston Refugee Partnership (WGRP) now invites others to join in this work, and help families to realize their dreams of peace and security.

ANCIENTLY, Syria was an important cultural seedbed for the societies we today identify as 'the West'. Its peoples were the first to smelt copper — founders of the 'Bronze Age'. In Ebla, they established the earliest known trading centre Syria's capital, Damascus, which figured in the emergence of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

As a vital trading hub on the Old Silk Road, Damascus disseminated wealth, ideas and trading practices throughout Europe. Syria's largest city, Aleppo, has been an important city for 4,000 years. Syrian culture today places strong values on family, faith, education, self-discipline, and respect. It has a proud tradition of oral and written poetry. And the Syrian music scene, particularly that of Damascus, has long

been among the Arab world's most important, especially in the field of classical Arab music. Syrian cuisine is rich and varied. There are six state universities in Syria and a number of private universities.

### SYRIAN ARABIC

Hello... marHabaa

Thank you... Shukran / Yeslamuu

What is your name? ...

to a male: Shuu ismak?

to a female: Shuu ismaa?

Yes... eh

No... la'

My name is... Ismii

Please... Iza betriid

Tomorrow... Bukra

Come on... Yalla

Let's go... Khalliina nruuH

I'm sorry... be:tizir

Pharmacy... Saydaliyyeh

Shop... suu'

Friend... saaHib

Maybe... Yimkin

Welcome... ahlan, wa sahláan

*"I urge you to celebrate the extraordinary courage and contributions of refugees past and present."*

— Kofi Annan

## THE WAR

Inspired by the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011, Syrians took to the streets in peaceful protests against the Assad regime's violent reaction to anti-government graffiti.

The government responded with ferocity, igniting a civil war that quickly became factional, involving not only the Al Assad government's Syrian Armed Forces and the Free Syrian Rebel Army but also Hez-bollah, Kurdish separatist rebels, ISIL, the al-Nusra Front and Russian, Iranian, Turkish, French, British, American and Canadian forces.

More than 7.6 million of Syria's 23 million people have been internally displaced, and more than 5 million have fled to neighboring countries. Millions more subsist in harsh living conditions with shortages of food, drinkable water and other necessities. Casualties of the war are estimates at best but they top 200,000 and include thousands of non-combatants and the victims of brutal out-of-hand executions.

### Who is the West Kingston Refugee Partnership?

Local people concerned about the Syrian refugee crisis formed the West Kingston Refugee Partnership (WGRP) in September, 2015, with the intention of bringing at least two refugee families to Kingston.

It is now a 30-strong working group led by the Rev. Dr. Jean Stairs, Minister of Christian Education, Outreach and Pastoral Care at Edith Rankin Memorial United Church.

In liaison with the Islamic Society of Kingston, Edith Rankin Memorial United Church led the formation of a working coalition with four other west-end United Church communities — **Crossroads, Catarauqui, Cooke's-Portsmouth, and St Andrew's By-The-Lake** — and were joined by other interested people from the community. Donations, payable at any of the participating churches, are pooled and managed through a designated fund at Edith Rankin Memorial United Church, 4080 Bath Road, Kingston.

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Visit [www.ermuc.ca](http://www.ermuc.ca)

Click on 'Canada Helps'



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WGRP:**

[www.saveafamily.ca](http://www.saveafamily.ca)



West Kingston Refugee Partnership

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