



# THE HARVEST

*Bringing People to the Table to Harvest the Power of Community*



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## English & Integration

*by Karen Everling, Executive Director*

Since December, our organization has worked directly with over 80 new Haitian community members in Waterloo. Each individual has a unique story and path requiring individualized help.

We are partnered with Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids, which is helping us provide accredited English classes.

Our largest barrier is transportation to classes. Only approximately 1 in 8 resettlers have transportation. However, in our primary resettlement cases, zero have transportation making it critical for us to provide as much education in one stop as possible.

Starting June 12th, we will offer culture integration and driver's permit study courses as well to move our students to independence.



CLASS WITH VERIDIAN CREDIT UNION

**Veridian Credit Union** partnered with us to provide education on how credit works. This class sets students up for success by helping them create a bank account with a \$250 stipend for attending. The goal is for participants to get a low credit limit card that they buy and pay back immediately to build their credit score. Also, to help them with their first vehicle purchase when they are ready. Special thanks to Veridian and LeKeshia for teaching!

## New Life in Waterloo

by Karen Everling - Executive Director

When asked how his people find their way to Waterloo, our Haitian Creole interpreter Wilkin says, "People are talking." **The reality is that we underestimate the power of these minority communities to help one another.**

Migration and homelessness is a trauma I have underestimated. Trauma, in general, can be challenging to navigate. Every day, with one more day of having a roof over her head, the world of the mom of this little one (right) has become safer and easier to navigate.

While our organization did not set out to help with housing, Maslow's Law prevails. Without solving basic needs, we cannot move forward to employment and education.

**Special thanks to those of you who donated to help us house these families!**





# Haitians Mother's Day & Haiti Church

by Karen Everling - Executive Director



**When God gave me a dream several years ago, and he showed me Haiti, I moved toward His call.** I thought God was asking me to "go," but I was mistaken. A couple of weeks ago, I asked the Haitian church if they knew they were coming to Waterloo, and no one raised a hand. Yet, God showed me in great detail the migration they would make to get here. In the dream, the journey was treacherous and people were screaming, I was putting life vests on. I was so convicted that I moved toward something that did not make sense and began preparing a space here for them.

Perhaps the life vests were community support and development, or maybe they were Jesus, either way, I'm honored by the presence of this community. Because God is faithful, this group named me the community "mom." I could never have imagined that the vision God gave me would come to such fullness and reality. Jenni and I (right) looked on at the group worshiping and were in tears. Who could have known - ONLY God, and I'm thankful He shared his vision with me.

Celebrated 2 weeks after American Mothers Day, the Haitian community also honors their Mothers. The Living Stone Haitian church surprised Jenni (Board President married to Wilkin, our Haiti Community Outreach Leader) and me with special honors.

The church is led by Jean Wilbert Metine, alongside several other trained pastors from Haiti. From the first day Jean arrived, he gathered and talked to all of the Haitian community, and the church was born in partnership with my husband, Lew Everling, a doctoral student at Bethel University in Minnesota.

**Special thanks to Waterloo First United Methodist Church and King's Table Church for hosting the immigrant & refugee communities with open arms. We can't do this important work without our church partnerships.**



# Words of Encouragement

by Lew Everling - Co-Founder World Grace Project



**From Left to Right: Wilkin Accilien (Haiti Community Outreach) Jenni Accilien (Board President) Karen & Lew Everling (Founders World Grace Project)**

## **Everything happens in God's timing, not ours.**

When we were certain we could not help with homelessness, we had donors step in to help house a family. When the situation was too overwhelming for our organization, volunteers took charge and dove into collecting housewares and furniture.

It is all so much. How will we continue to help with housing? "Don't worry," says God, "I got you," and brings a couple who purchased a triplex to be dedicated to the ministry.

How can we possibly teach all these students? "Do not worry," says God again, bringing a teacher who has worked with international students for years.

Dear God, how will we ever create all the coursework so quickly? Again, God brought, on cue, a teacher of teachers to work with our VISTA on creating a curriculum.

Oh Lord, how can we afford this? In to our office walks a volunteer with 10+ years of refugee community experience and helps us secure a

financial partnership with the Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services with only hours to spare on the deadline.

When we look at the communities migrating to Waterloo, worry and faith is something that they balance well. To make their moves, they walk on water with perpetual faith movements. Their focus is not on things but on people and God's faithfulness to bring them "home" safely.

The migration of the Haitian community knows that God is doing wonders within them. The community around them, much like the promises given to Joshua as he led the Israelites to cross the Jordan (Joshua 3:5). The World Grace Project has experienced God's miracle of wonders with the continual provision of people, materials, and needs.

Coming to Waterloo is a step of obedience to the already promised lands and a covenant of grace, just as with the Israelite's conquest of Canaan, the Haitian community is discovering the omnipotence of God on their journey into Waterloo.



# Photo Highlights



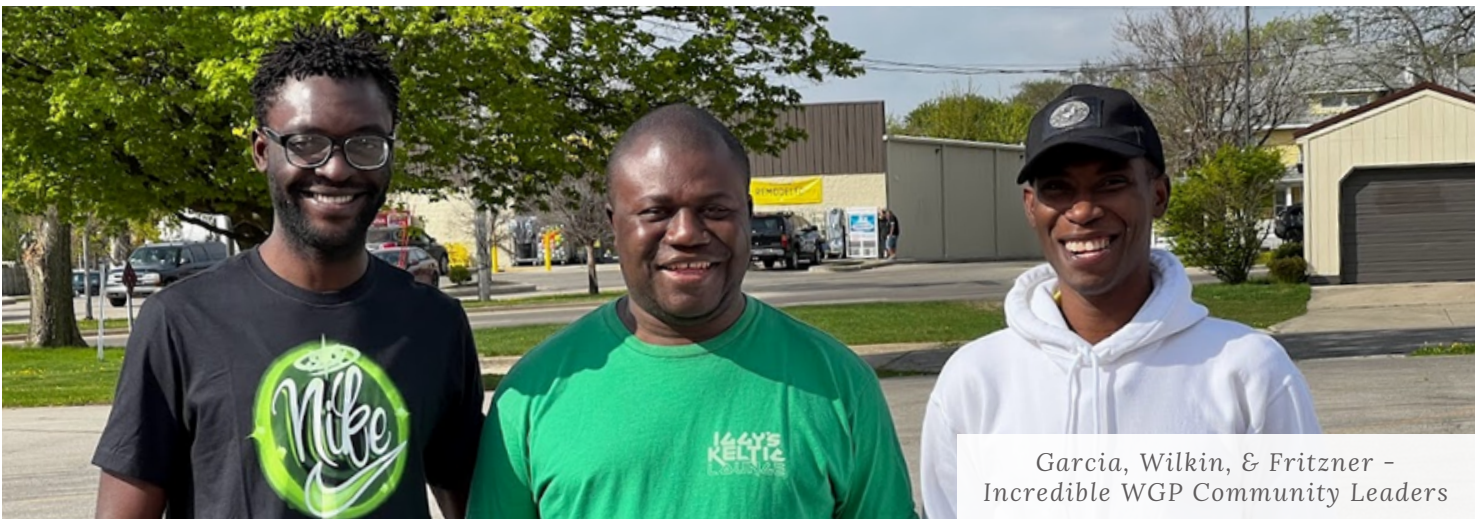
Josiah (AmeriCorps VISTA)  
checking our new van



New Triplex for WGP



A Bucks Baseball game was a first for  
some of our Haitian Families



Garcia, Wilkin, & Fritzner -  
Incredible WGP Community Leaders



Robert & Alcinete get their  
first debit Card!



From homeless to housed

# The Financial Gap

by World Grace Project Staff

Our organization has been working tirelessly to create ways to reach newcomers and mitigate crises like homelessness. We have made significant strides in the last year, raising support for our efforts. However, we have significant funding gaps with the recent influx of newcomers.



In partnership with the State of Iowa, we can employ a multilingual staff associate to help; however, we must raise cash to support the short-term funds' gap as we continue to apply to local foundations to match our State funds.

Helping with the gap will create a road to community development for incoming newcomer families.

- Housewares & Housewarming
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate community referral connections
- Help with forms and community navigation
- Transportation; short-term with a long-term community development plan
- Housing; emergency assistance with programming leading to long-term success and independence
- Workforce connections, job shadowing, and field trips in the Cedar Valley
- A World Grace Project paid multilingual staff

## In Partnership With



**BETHEL**  
UNIVERSITY

**HOMEWORD**  
HELPING FAMILIES SUCCEED

WATERLOO  
**CAREERCENTER**



**AmeriCorps**

**Iowa Bureau  
of Refugee Services**



# Meeting Needs Together

## Neighbors to Newcomers Welcome Store

Launching soon online at [welcome.worldgraceproject.org](https://welcome.worldgraceproject.org), the welcome store provides essential items such as flatware, sheets, garbage cans, and other items in partnership with Goodwill. The store removes the transportation barrier and appropriately delivers items culturally and linguistically using community leaders. **Funds raised will provide new items that will be "sold" in the store to students who earn points in our classes.**

## Housing

Many of our newcomers come from a life of scarcity and lack the resources to start a life here. The roots of homelessness are often complicated, and housing provides a platform for community development unlike any asset available. **Funds raised for housing will match State of Iowa funds and expand/extend the number of families we can assist.**

## Transportation

Next to language skills, transportation is the number one barrier to reaching education or workforce goals in the newcomer community. Approximately 1 in 8 secondary resettlement families (moved from another state in the US) we see have transportation, while primary resettlement (direct from another country) cases do not have any transportation outside of family or community support. **Funds raised will help purchase a second vehicle for transportation and aid in our driving classes to make newcomers self-sufficient in this area.**

## Education Classes & Workforce Shadowing

Our partners at the State of Iowa heavily support our education and workforce goals for incoming primary resettlement individuals. In addition, we are working with our AmeriCorps VISTA and an incredible volunteer team to utilize specific content and break it down for our participants.

We are matching funds provided by our state partnership!

Can you help us match funds in one of these areas?

Welcome Store \$2000

Housing \$5000

Transportation \$3500

Education Classes \$1000

# THANK YOU!

[WORLDGRACEPROJECT.ORG/GIVE](https://worldgraceproject.org/give)

# Purchase for a Cause

Head over to our store at [worldgraceproject.myspreadshop.com](https://worldgraceproject.myspreadshop.com) to order your own t-shirt and a portion of the proceeds will come back to our organization to support us!



## Join Us

If you want to help other nations living in Waterloo, please join us. We are looking for fast-paced, dedicated volunteers who are willing to jump "all in" to help out.

Go to [worldgraceproject.org/volunteer](https://worldgraceproject.org/volunteer) to join us today.



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[www.worldgraceproject.org](https://www.worldgraceproject.org) | 319-220-3972