HIAS PENNSYLVANIA HAS ALWAYS FELT a special relationship to Lady Liberty, holding high her flame of freedom. When she first raised her beacon in the late 19th century, Jews fleeing pogroms and virulent anti-Semitism found safety and hope under her powerful protection. Our organization, formed in those same years to help Jewish immigrants, dedicated itself to defending the ideals she represented.

Today, immigrants and refugees from all corners of the world face barriers that throw a deep shadow across the light from freedom's flame. Those barriers have become far more difficult to clear at every step from arrival to citizenship.

In the face of this hostility, we rejoice that so many of you reading this report have stood with us, growing our capacity to serve. As we have every year for more than a decade, we increased the number of clients served. We continued to place priority on the most vulnerable groups: children, elderly and disabled, victims of torture, crime, and sexual violence. We responded to levels of trauma among our clients that were once rare but now common.

Partner organizations helped us achieve more than we could possibly have done alone. Law firms, health care providers, unions, public schools, and fellow nonprofit organizations gave us capacity and vital expertise. An expanding cadre of volunteers formed yet another pillar of support, performing a wider range of activities than ever before.

America's flame of freedom has always burned more steadily in some periods than others. As we look back over the past year, we cannot help but feel enormously grateful for the opportunities we have had to defend it from harm and to stand side by side with you as we work to keep it bright.

Catheryn Miller-Wilson, Esq.  
Executive Director

Dveera Segal, Esq.  
President of the Board

In this annual report you will hear from Harriet, a native of Sierra Leone who was granted asylum in the U.S. in 2015. You will also hear from her daughter, Beatrice, who received a visa to join her mother in 2017. In addition, Peter Drewniany, a volunteer for HIAS Pennsylvania, and Shaloo Jose, the director of our Asylee Outreach Program, will share their stories of how they helped Harriet and Beatrice. Each has a different perspective on this story of resilience and hope.
America’s flame of freedom has always burned more steadily in some periods than others. We are grateful to stand side by side with you as we work to keep it bright.
Asylum-Seeker: Harriet

“IN SIERRA LEONE, I became very active in politics and was named National Deputy Women’s Leader. I was letting women know about their importance in society, about the roles they needed to play. Then, my party lost the elections, and I became a target. The opposition sent thugs to humiliate me and threaten me.

When I came to the U.S. for a conference on women’s rights, everybody back home said, ‘Do not come back. You will not survive.’ I feared for my life and the lives of my children. I sent all five of them to stay with a friend in Guinea until I could figure out how to reunite the family. I was really, really traumatized.

Ayo Gansallo was the first person I talked to at HIAS Pennsylvania. She understood my situation right away and started helping me with my application for asylum. I was overjoyed when the courts granted me asylum! But then my son became ill and died before he had a visa to come here, where the right medications might have saved him. I thank God for his grace that there was enough in me to be strong.

Once I had refugee status, Shaloo took over as my legal advocate. She made everything come together. All my girls got their visas and are here now. My two older daughters are going to college and working. The younger two are in middle school. I want to see them grow in American society, so they can stand for themselves.

To people who support HIAS Pennsylvania, I say God will bless you. Without your kindness, HIAS Pennsylvania could not have given us the help we needed. I just pray for God to continue giving you the wisdom and the financial ability to support HIAS Pennsylvania.”

The U.S. courts granted Harriet’s request for asylum in the unusually short time of three months due to overwhelming evidence that her life was endangered by political persecution.
Shaloo Jose, director of the Asylee Outreach Program, started working at HIAS Pennsylvania over ten years ago after she immigrated from India.

Legal Advocate: Shaloo

“WHEN I MET HARRIET, I could see her tension. Of course! I would have been the same way. She had just lost her son in Guinea. She didn’t know what was going on with her daughters, whether they were safe, especially now that they had lost their brother’s protection. How could a mom even breathe or eat? I was happy I could sign a travel document so she could at least arrange a funeral for her son.

There is no comparison between my clients’ journeys and my own, coming here when my husband got a job as a software engineer. Still, I understand the anxiety of leaving your family and learning to live in another culture. All of us start from zero when we come to this country.

Asylees like Harriet have the same rights as refugees. The only difference is where they request asylum. Asylees make their request after they have entered the U.S., while refugees have been approved for refugee status before they arrive. As soon as Harriet received asylum, we could provide her with resettlement services, like referring her to health care. I could start applications for her children’s visas.”

At HIAS Pennsylvania, we have been blessed with so much support. People find me and say, hey, I need to do something. Even former clients, struggling themselves, want to help. Just the other day, we needed to find housing for a single mother with two kids for a couple of weeks. A former client offered an extra room in her home. To all of HIAS Pennsylvania’s supporters, I say keep it up. It’s time we give someone else a chance.”
Overall, Beatrice made such a nice transition to the States and to Philadelphia. This was not an easy thing to do, to come to a new country under less than ideal circumstances and pour herself into it. For instance, she became an instant Eagles fan.

The powerful relationships that exist between the immigrants and the volunteers at HIAS Pennsylvania are profound. As a volunteer, I have experienced a level of fulfillment and commitment that I never experienced as keenly in over 40 years of teaching. The appreciation from the kids, and in Beatrice’s case her mom, is just very meaningful. Every day, I feel like, hey, I did something to help somebody. I am really needed here.”

Peter Drewniany volunteers for HIAS Pennsylvania as a mentor for refugee youth. When he retired from the full-time faculty of Germantown Academy, he was chairman of the English department and a college counselor.

“I STARTED WORKING WITH BEATRICE in January 2018. I saw right away that I could challenge her a lot. I gave her difficult stories by Joyce and poems by Yeats as well as literature by African and immigrant writers. I asked her to write every week. All the time, she made progress and was extremely open to anything I would suggest.

It only took a couple of weeks for me to know she was ready for an American high school. In fact, she thrived and graduated a year earlier than I thought she would. We started to look at various college opportunities, because she is a very driven kid. She had already done some research on her own, and Delaware County Community College became the obvious choice. Then it became a matter of how she was going to afford it. We had to go through all the processes to qualify for financial aid that any kid would. HIAS PA’s education staff was right on it.

Overall, Beatrice made such a nice transition to the States and to Philadelphia. This was not an easy thing to do, to come to a new country under less than ideal circumstances and pour herself into it. For instance, she became an instant Eagles fan.

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Harriet’s Daughter: Beatrice

“My mother is my best friend. When she traveled to the U.S. and sent us to wait in Guinea, and then my brother died, that was really, really hard.

I was able to come here before my sisters. But then my mother went back to Guinea to see that my sisters were safe, so I was alone in this country for ten months. HIAS Pennsylvania gave me so many supports. When I needed all my documentation for school, they were here. When I needed to go see the doctor, they were here. When I needed food, they were here. Amy, Shaloo, Mr. Peter, all of them were always checking up on me.

Mr. Peter was my mentor. He took me to the Academy of Music to see The Nutcracker and introduced me to a gym. He was a teacher and a school counsellor, so he told me just how high school was going to be. He was coaching me in English, because our school system is really different from yours.

Now I go to Delaware County Community College and work as a cashier at Home Depot. I like that you are expected to work in this country. In Africa, it is just about school, school, school. Here, no sooner do you get to be sixteen years of age than you need to be working and going to school. Working makes you independent, and it makes you start to save for yourself.

I am so grateful to HIAS Pennsylvania, and all their employees, their volunteers, and the people who support the organization. I am grateful not only for my family, but for other families who have migrated here with nothing.”
Our year in numbers:

While 80% of our clients live in the Greater Philadelphia region, we serve clients who live as far away as Centre county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIAS PA clients</td>
<td>4,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied or separated youth</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of violent crimes</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors of torture</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly arrived refugees</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals newly granted asylum</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last year
247 volunteers contributed
11,948 hours

*Note: These statistics are not directly comparable to previous years’ annual reports because they include all cases, not just cases opened in the last fiscal year.*
5,282
CASES INCLUDING

173
refugee resettlement cases

708
immigrant social service cases

534
naturalization

4,401
other legal work (see right column)

4,401
LEGAL PROCESSES

Number of new clients served increased from 2,461 to 3,223

128
asylum and other deportation defense

97
temporary protected status (TPS) and deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA)

270
family reuinfication

199
visas due to humanitarian causes like domestic violence and trafficking

486
green card applications

394
employment authorization and other miscellaneous legal cases

2,293
legal consultations

Immigrants hailed from 137 different countries
Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our institutional and government funders, corporate and individual contributors whose support makes our life-saving work possible. Every effort is made to share an accurate and complete list; however, we apologize if we have made any errors. In the interest of space, we have only included donors who gave at the $250 level and above. We are sorry that we cannot include the hundreds of donors that gave below that level.

Please note that the following list only includes donors who contributed between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019. If you donated after that date, your gift will be acknowledged in the next annual report.

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PA is Ready!

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)

Pennsylvania Department of Education (Office of Refugee Resettlement pass-through funding)

Pennsylvania Interest on Lawyers’ Trust Account (PA IOLTA)

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Gabriela Rodriguez
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Director of Refugee Programming and Planning
Jade Flora-Holmquist, MSW
Refugee Resettlement Program Manager
Caroline Anapol
Refugee AmeriCorps (until October 2018); Resettlement Case Manager (from November 2018)
Bestman Judue
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Hannah Spielberg
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Rona Gerash, Esq.
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Philadelphia Partnership for Resilience Legal Coordinator (from July 2019)
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Damaris Aguilar
Removal Defense Paralegal (from June 2019)
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Teresita Diaz-Bradley, Esq.
Victims of Crime Initiative Supervising Attorney (until December 2018)
Emma Compton, Accredited Rep.
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Paige Cohen
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**DONATE MONEY**
You can help us defend the rights of immigrants and refugees by making a donation at hiaspa.org/donate. You can also contact Daniella Scruggs, Director of Development, at dscruggs@hiaspa.org or 215-832-0940 about ways to give and fundraising opportunities.

**DONATE TIME**
Volunteers are critical members of the HIAS Pennsylvania team. Opportunities range from helping families re-settle in the U.S. to teaching English and moving them toward citizenship. Please go to hiaspa.org/volunteer to learn more.

**EDUCATE YOURSELF**
Policies about immigrants and refugees are constantly changing. Learn more about the immigrants and refugees we serve by reading our updates, coming to our events, and exploring advocacy opportunities at hiaspa.org/the-issues.

*The financial statement for 2018-19, the period covered by this report will be posted to hiaspa.org/the-issues/resources/financials as soon as the audit is completed — usually in April. You may review the statement for 2017-2018 on the website now.*
THE LAST FEW YEARS have been tough for Harriet, but her future looks bright. She is a permanent resident of the United States, and no longer fears imprisonment or death. She has been reunited with her children, who are all doing well. Her breast cancer, diagnosed soon after she was granted refugee status, is in remission. But it took a village, as the saying goes, for all that to happen. In this report you heard about helpers Shaloo Jose and Peter Drewniany, but those aren’t the only individuals that contributed to Harriet and Beatrice’s well-being and success. Staff members Amy Eckendorf, Ayodele Gansallo, Valeri Harteg, Jason Hernandez, Enock Sanon, Jennifer Selpa, Gin Sum, and the often unsung administrative team all worked with the family. It took many hours contributed by not only Peter Drewniany but also volunteer Carol Gantman. Every one of these people played an important role in helping this remarkable family gain a foothold in American society.

Harriet is not alone. She is one of many asylum-seekers, refugees, and immigrants who come to HIAS Pennsylvania’s door every day, asking for help to overcome more obstacles than ever before. Each one of these vulnerable people needs a village. That’s why your support is so critical.

Because of you, HIAS Pennsylvania has been able to expand to meet the growing need. We are excited to be moving to the Public Ledger Building at 6th and Chestnut in April 2020, because our current space cannot accommodate the increased demand on our services. It’s a challenge, as we know, to migrate from what we have known as home. But our new space will bring together staff who have been spread across three locations, and we will have the added pleasure of welcoming new Americans right next door to the places on Independence Mall where the ideals we cherish were first proclaimed as the soul of our democracy.

HIAS Pennsylvania has taken to heart the lesson of our clients, who refuse to be stopped. You have provided the critically needed support to grow our village, even as government funding decreases and attacks on our clients increase. Because of you, we can continue to fight for our clients with renewed energy and hope. Thank you.