



MEDIA RELEASE

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Caritas of Austin To End Forty-Four-Year-Old Program

Shrinking number of refugee clients, fiscal responsibility behind decision

The Caritas of Austin Board of Directors voted to end the organization's 44-year-old Refugee Resettlement program effective September 30th, 2018. The decision was made as a fiscal responsibility measure in response to the shrinking number of refugees allowed to enter the United States under the current administration. The Caritas refugee resettlement program has, since last October, seen drastically reduced number of arrivals. Between 2010 and 2016, Caritas resettled an average of 576 refugees per year. The decline of new arrivals began in October 2017. Caritas resettled only 151 refugees within Austin between October 2017 and April 2018. There have been *no new refugee arrivals* since April 2018.

Caritas ensured that every refugee household, that is, those experiencing "international homelessness," on its 2018 caseload received all the services for which they were eligible and entitled through September 30th including housing, case management and support. Clients will continue to receive employment services through December 31, 2018.

"While we did our best to keep a core refugee resettlement program in place by recalibrating it to what we thought was a sustainable scale, our efforts could not withstand the most recent 'drought' of arrivals," says Jo Kathryn Quinn, Executive Director of Caritas of Austin. "Given the current administration's policy with regard to refugees, we find ourselves in a circumstance driven by forces beyond our control."

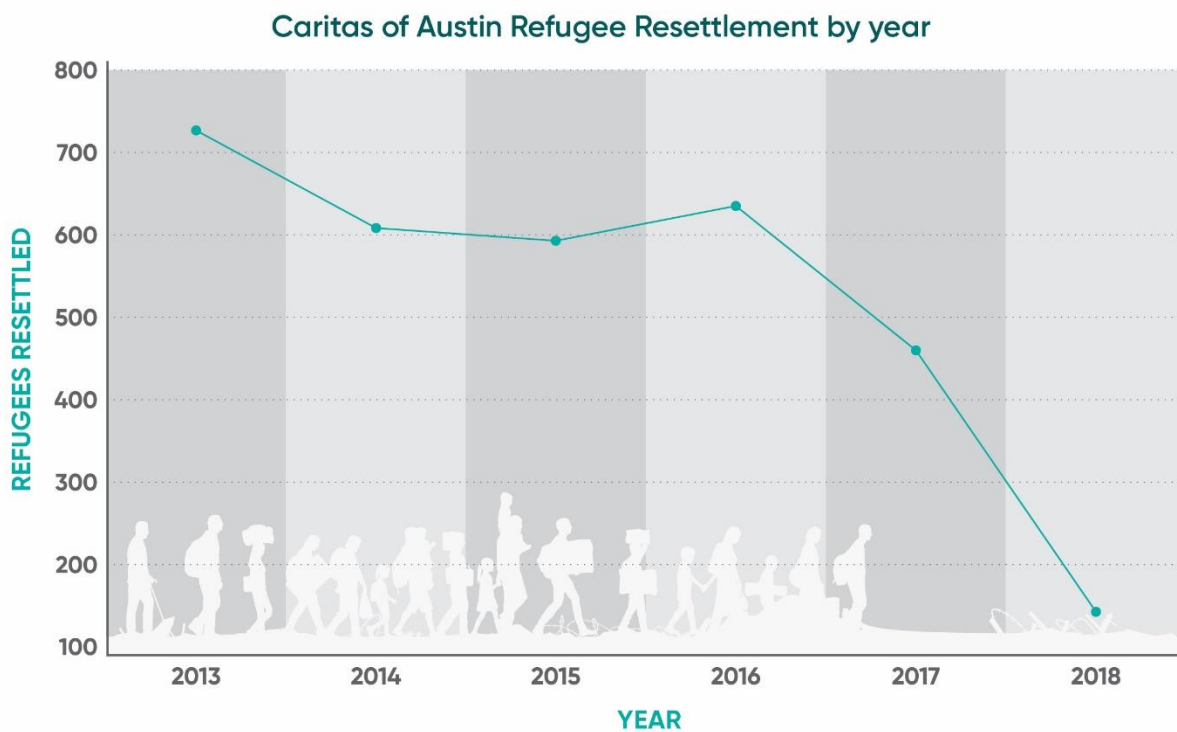
Refugee organizations across the country are facing the same struggle, with many programs shuttering due to fewer international refugees being allowed into the country.

"We had to face the reality that while our hearts were connected to this program, it was not in the long-term fiduciary interest of the organization to continue a program with so few recipients. Losing this program is heartbreaking, but our organization as a whole is financially sound," says Caritas of Austin Board President, John Lavorato.

The decision to close the refugee resettlement program was in no way related to its quality. The Caritas resettlement team served valiantly and despite outside forces, maintained its focus on excellent service.

Caritas will continue the work with our "domestic homeless" providing them the same services refugees have always received—case management, housing, employment, education and food.

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About Caritas of Austin: Caritas of Austin believes that when people have a stable place to call home, they can reach their full potential and contribute to the community. They build wellbeing for hundreds experiencing homelessness each year by making sure have a stable home, healthy food, jobs, and the life skills to thrive. Learn more at www.caritasofaustin.org.

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