



## Welcoming in the New Year at RRRS

In this newsletter you will be able to get up to date on all of the exciting projects and tasks we have been doing. To receive immediate RRRS updates, follow us on our social medias below

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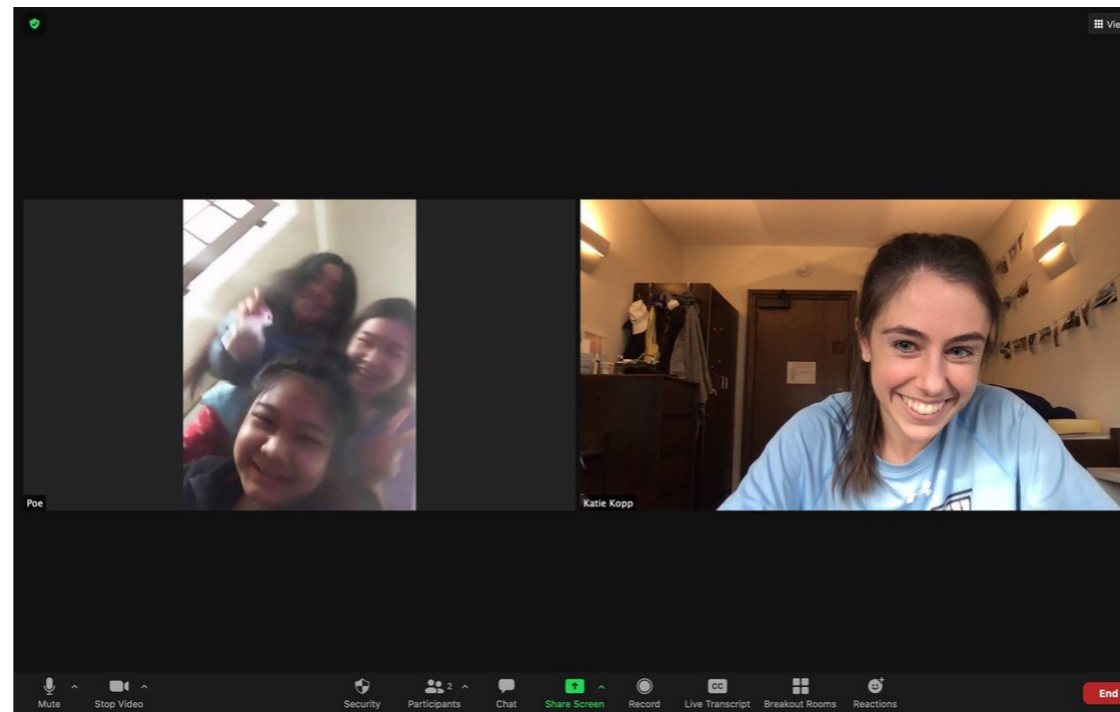


## ARSEO

ARSEO is half way through this year's academic cycle! For the fall semester we assisted 23 refugee high school students, 14 former ARSEO students who are now in college, and we have worked with over 30 peer mentors who have all volunteered time from their busy schedules at schools like Princeton, Brown, the University of Rochester, Nazareth College, SUNY Geneseo and, more!

We are so grateful for the continued support that our students receive from their peer mentors. While all of our mentors committed to only one semester, most of them will continue to mentor our ARSEO students. Most of our students have finished their applications for their first year of college. We hope that our students receive their acceptances in the coming weeks.

We now have a full-time AmeriCorps member who is helping us to further support our current students and mentors. Also, we are planning to expand the program this year. Our hope is to continue our work with refugee high school students planning to attend college, but we will also work with refugee high school students who may not be able to attend college and are interested in the skilled trades.



Pictured is peer mentor Katie Kopp, a sophomore at Princeton University, with three of our students!

## City Rise and Healthy Home

Ngo Hna, director of ARSEO and coordinator for the Cities RISE healthy home project, has been hard at work these past few months. By providing education on how to keep a healthy home, Ngo has been able to transform many houses and ensure that they will be well cared for as our New Americans are adjusting to their new lives. On top of providing these educational resources to our New Americans, Ngo has been working hard on an illustrated book that outlines everything you need to know about maintaining a household. By the time our spring newsletter comes out, the book will be available as well! Information about how you can purchase this book can be found on our social media in the coming weeks!

A lot of great things are on the way and we cannot wait to share them with you!



## Housing Updates



### RRRS on the News!

Pictured is 429 Glenwood which we have done a total rehab to. A Somali family is in need of a new house with a bedroom and bathroom on the first floor. Thanks to our amazing volunteers we have been able to completely transform this house. Spectrum News did a story about this project!

[Find the News Article Here](#)

## AmeriCorps

We are happy to welcome 4 new Flower City AmeriCorps member for the new year! Grace, Carolyn, Jason, and Daniel will be working on a variety of things: our high school mentor program, our asylum program, foreign educated doctor training program, and more! We can't wait for the exciting work they are helping us with.

[Learn More](#)



Originally born in Somalia, Abubakar Abdirahman came to the United States from Ethiopia, where he was living in a refugee camp, in August of 2013 when he was 18 years old. He came here with his parents and two younger siblings. After leaving his school and being placed in a school in Rochester, he went from being a senior in Somalia to a freshman in 9th grade here. He realized that he was getting too old for school and decided on a different route—he went to JobsCorps for 6 months where he was able to get his GED and then to MCC after that. He is currently in his last semester of school and is interning with the city of Rochester Police Department. Growing up, he recalls playing games like cops and robbers, and he always wanted to be the officer. He knew that he wanted to help others saying that “the most rewarding part of working with RPD is helping the community.”

Abubakar took the police officer entrance exam in September and will know by January if he passed and will be able to become an officer. He will become the first Somali-American police officer in the RPD. Following in the footsteps of his father who was a police officer in Somalia, he hopes to be able to be a link between the police and with all immigrants, not just Somali-Americans. He said that he “recognized that there is not a lot of connection between the immigrant community and with the police. I want to change that.”

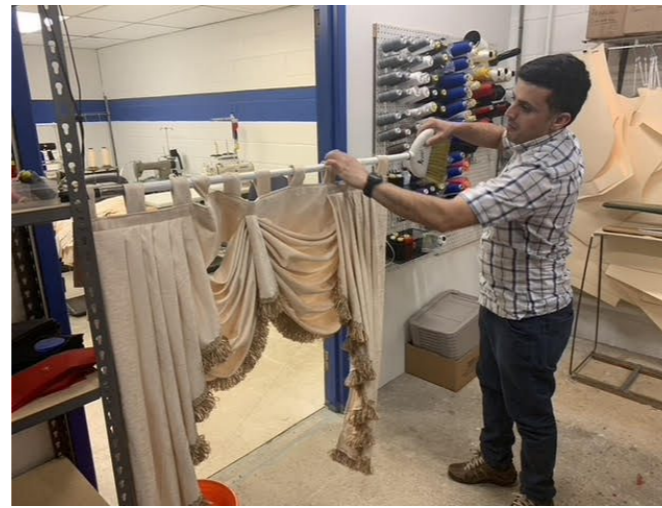
Abubakar has also recently purchased a house for him and his family. After years of renting, he decided that he wanted something that would be his. He started working a fulltime job, while being a fulltime student, and helping make deliveries on the weekends. After saving all of his earning for almost two years, he was finally able to have a large enough sum for a decent sized down payment for him and his family to have a home of their own. He said that his family has always helped him so now it is his turn to help them.



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### Rochester Refugee Sewing and Repair

Rochester Refugee is proud to announce the launch of Samim Rahimi's new venture, King and Queen Curtain. Samim started working with Rochester Refugee as a machinist and manager in 2020, where he helped make over 15,000 masks for the Rochester community. He has since moved on to a full-time position at a large local sewing manufacturer, where he hopes to become a manager and prototype machinist. Before coming to the US, Samim ran the top curtain shop in Afghanistan for over fifteen years. His notable clientele includes even the President of Afghanistan, Dr. Ashraf Ghani. Rochester Refugee will help Samim incubate his new venture as he gains clients and builds his business. We couldn't be prouder than to help this new American bring his considerable talents to our community



[Check out RRSR](#)

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### As always, thank you to our donors for your continued support

- St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Penn Yann. A very generous donation to support our efforts. This donation is special to us because it comes from an estate left to the church by a former refugee.
- The Devany Fund – supporting our high school to college program
- The ESL Foundation for supporting our high school to college program
- The Farash Foundation for supporting operations especially the Refugee sewing program
- The ESL Foundation for supporting our housing rehab
- Ongoing support from the City of Rochester and Action for a Better Community for contract programs
- The Greater Rochester Health Foundation for supporting the Deaf Refugee Advocacy program
- Sussman Family Fund at Rochester Area Community Foundation for supporting our asylum program

Our organization cannot exist without community support. Through the several years that we have existed we have seen generosity and compassionate support that has been amazing. It speaks to the nature of our Rochester community: welcoming, supportive, interested and open arms. Please join the hundreds of others who have helped keep this mission going.

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**“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have hosted angels unawares.”**

Hebrew 12:2