

Tom Armstrong
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My name is Thomas Armstrong. I live at 61 Madison Street in Bangor. Over a year ago, my wife Barbara and I became volunteers with the Maine Multi Cultural Center. We know first hand how immigrants bring strengths to Maine. They have skills to fill jobs we need filled, and the initiative to work hard and succeed. The family we work with has a young father, mother, and five children. The father soon found work here as a carpenter. The mom has a young one, under 3, and four other school age children. All are making great strides in learning English. They call the USA "Paradise" compared to the places they had lived in as refugees.

We as volunteers have aided them with transportation to medical appointments and English lessons, helped with setting up bank accounts, attended school meetings and functions with them. We have become their friends, providing information and support as needed. We are always impressed with their bravery and determination to become part of the Bangor community.

MMCC staff provides the guidance and systematic information volunteers need to properly help the families integrate into life in the USA. Although we as volunteers are willing and eager to assist the family to which we were assigned, without the staff guidance and training, we would not have known what was needed, and how to provide assistance to the family.

We encourage you to provide funding to Maine Multi Cultural Center to continue their work with refuge families so these families can become fully contributing members of our American society.