



# NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

## 2019 Annual Report

In 2019 the Board of Directors made the necessary decision to scale back No One Left Behind's (NOLB) operations, personnel, and administrative overhead to focus on the organization's strengths. After founding NOLB six years ago and nurturing it through its early struggles, Matt Zeller is now pursuing other opportunities. The Board is confident that it has assembled an organization that can carry on the NOLB mission and it wishes him every success in his future endeavors.

Many nonprofits face growing pains early in their growth, and many do not survive them. The Board made the difficult decision to right size the operation and return to an all-volunteer organization to preserve our mission of caring for and advocating for Special Immigrant Visa recipients (SIVs). The Board accepted that NOLB is not able to support paid full-time chapter presidents in cities across the country. The Board decided to close the active chapters in Seattle, San Francisco Bay Area, San Diego, Omaha, Pittsburgh, and Rochester and the dormant chapters in Denver and Chicago. The Board offered to work with the volunteers to create their own local 501c3s. The Washington D.C. chapter remains in operation as it is the home to the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest SIV community in the United States. The Advisory Board endorsed these actions.

NOLB will continue forward with a mission of serving as a source of information for SIV applications, service members, the U.S. government, and the media. It will continue to educate policymakers and the public about the importance of the SIV programs. NOLB still plans to help financially with some aspects of resettlements and emergencies, as funds are available, and it will continue to build relationships with corporations to directly assist SIVs. By focusing on what the organization can execute effectively, NOLB remains committed to advocating for the SIV community for years to come.

To date NOLB has assisted over 8,000 SIVs and family members with everything from SIV application guidance to donated furniture when they arrive to emergency housing assistance to legal guidance. In 2019 NOLB's volunteers in 7 chapter cities helped furnish apartments for 79 families, helped 145 apply for work, 43 enroll in school, donated 13 cars, and assisted 135 in receiving drivers licenses.

Despite these efforts, NOLB's resettlement operations have experienced limited sustainable success. SIVs continue to resettle in California, Texas, and Virginia because of family ties within firmly established SIV communities.<sup>1</sup> Our efforts to convince SIVs to resettle in more affordable parts of the country was largely unsuccessful with the exception of Rochester. That success is largely do the incredible work of dedicated local volunteers. Furthermore, NOLB was unsuccessful at creating sustainable agreements with the other resettlement agencies or similar charities who support the resettlement of SIVs in order to coordinate our operations.

Another impediment to NOLB operating as a national resettlement organization was our mission to exclusively serve the SIV community. Our focus remains too narrow to receive government funding from the Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). In May 2017 PRM

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/11/afghans-who-worked-for-u-s-government-make-up-growing-share-of-special-immigrant-visa-recipients/>

requested No One Left Behind make every effort to expand our operations into Sacramento, Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin given the current overwhelming need for SIV services in those areas. In 2019 NOLB solicited PRM's input about becoming the 10<sup>th</sup> Voluntary Agency (VOLAG) to carry out SIV resettlement operations. NOLB was informed that we would not qualify for government funding because our mission does not include other types of refugees. Given that SIVs have the needs of both refugees and U.S. veterans, the decision was made to solely focus on SIV care and forego a larger scope.

When compared to the 9 current VOLAGs: Church World Service (CWS), Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and World Relief Corporation (WR), NOLB provided similar resettlement support on a case by case basis for a longer period of time with a drastically smaller budget.

Most VOLAGs only commit to a few months of aid whereas NOLB attempts to provide continual assistance. With the exception of IRC, which receives \$494M in government funding, the average VOLAG receives close to \$50M in government grants.<sup>2</sup> As noted, the VOLAGs service all refugees to include SIVs; however, with the administration reducing the refugee cap to a historic low of 18,000 (4,000 of which are reserved for Iraqi combat translators since the Iraq SIV program stopped accepting new applications at the end of 2014), these organizations now have more resources available to care for new immigrants. Afghan and Iraqi SIVs currently make up a significant portion of new arrivals.

It is important to note Afghan SIVs by law are not counted in the refugee cap, but their arrival numbers have still substantially decreased because of the slowdown in the distribution of visa and enhanced vetting procedures. It is also important to highlight that each VOLAG has closed dozens of refugee resettlement offices around the country because of the administration's immigration policy.<sup>3</sup> NOLB's re-posturing is not unique.

According to the Department of State's Refugee Processing Center, Afghan SIV arrivals have decreased significantly since FY17:

FY17: 16,866

FY18: 9,651

FY19: 7,698<sup>4</sup>

Because of these reasons and our current level of funding, we cannot continue our mission as a national resettlement organization.

NOLB will continue to work with the administration to address the slowdown in arrivals. In 2019 NOLB helped our coalition of Congressional partners and advocates re-define SIVs as a national security issue, attract the most bipartisan support for the Afghan SIV program in the House of Representatives (39 co-sponsors) in its 10 year history, get 4,000 visas returned to the FY20 National Defense Authorization

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<sup>2</sup> <https://cis.org/Rush/Private-Refugee-Resettlement-Agencies-Mostly-Funded-Government>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/12/759967768/popular-refugee-resettlement-programs-closing-under-trump-administration>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/>

Act (NDAA), receive a favorable U.S. District Court decision, and accomplish the following wins with the administration:

1. \$52M increase to the Afghan SIV program in the FY20 President's Budget
2. 4,000 visas for Iraqi translators that were effectively closed off 2 years ago
3. SIVs exempt from restrictions on immigrants who can't show proof of health insurance
4. The President publicly recognized and thanked Afghan translators at two Medal of Honor ceremonies

NOLB is cataloging all of this at [www.nooneleft.org/advocacy](http://www.nooneleft.org/advocacy)

Sen. Mark Warner recently introduced a bill creating a new SIV program for Syrian allies. A complimentary bill was introduced in the House by Rep. Jason Crow (CO-6), who has an Iraqi SIV on staff, and Rep. Mike Waltz (FL-6), who personally sponsored an Afghan translator he served with. The Syrian Allies Protection Act (S. 2625) and the Syrian Partner Protection Act (H.R. 4873) would be the third SIV program the Congress has created in the past 12 years. Additionally, a feature length documentary, *The Interpreters*, on No One Left Behind and the Special Immigration Visa program aired on PBS in 2019. The documentary was filmed over 2014-2016 by journalists working in partnership with NPR's StoryCorps.

An overview of our expenditures is presented below. Please note Travel Related expenses are displayed separately even though those expenses are included within the Program Expenses amount. That is why the %s add up to over 100%. Also, please note the 70% attributed to Personnel Spending is attributed to the temporary suspension of fundraising and operations and NOLB off-boarded full-time personnel to return to an all-volunteer organization.

- Total Income (Jan-Nov) down 67% (\$362,423 in 2019 vs \$1,102,703 in 2018).
- Total Expenses (Jan-Nov) down 46% (\$499,493 in 2019 vs \$924,147 in 2018).
- Program Expenses (Jan-Nov) down 52% (\$96,531 in 2019 vs \$202,619 in 2018). In 2019 this was **19%** of total expenses.
- Personnel Spending (Jan-Nov) down 44% (\$347,543 in 2019 vs \$619,080 in 2018). In 2019 this was **70%** of total expenses.
- \$18,148 was spent on Professional Services (accounting, tax and other consultants). This represents **4%** of total expenses.
- Travel and meetings (cost included in Program above), spending was down 85% (\$10,793 in 2019 vs \$71,643 in 2018). This was **2%** of expenses.
- Marketing and Fundraising (including Events) spending was down 62% (\$14,218 in 2019 vs \$37,851 in 2018). This was **3%** of expenses.
- Business Operations (General & Administrative excluding personnel and professional services), spending was down 94% (\$23,052 in 2019 vs \$44,675 in 2018). This is **5%** of expenses.

An overview of our fundraising is presented below:

- \$362,423 (total for all of 2018 was \$1,102,703)
- 586 donors (49 of which are monthly sustainers); total for 2018 was 709
- 15 foundations (24 foundations in 2018)
- \$100 was the most common donation amount (126x); most common donation amount for 2018 was \$50 (234x)

- \$1,533.34 came in through Amazon Smiles (\$146 in 2018)
- \$8,448.01 came in through Facebook campaigns run by NOLB or supporters (\$16,716 in 2018)

Breakwater Accounting conducted an internal financial review to identify designated funds attributed to each chapter. The Board committed to distributing funds to volunteers who started their own 501c3 or identified a local 501c3 that supports SIVs. The Board commissioned Warren Averett CPAs and Advisors (Montgomery, AL) to conduct a Needs Assessment of our current accounting processes. 10 action items were identified that will align NOLB with Guide Star and Charity Navigator's highest standards.<sup>5,6</sup> A full financial review will be conducted by Renner & Company CPA (Alexandria, VA) in early 2020. This also meets the requirement for a number of grant proposals NOLB applied to earlier in the year.

## **Plan For 2020**

### **Fundraising**

In 2019 we applied to over 150 grant organizations. We plan to follow-up with each in 2020. As noted above, we will undergo a financial review in 2020 which will put the organization on the right path towards passing a full audit in 2021. That will make NOLB eligible to apply for the Combined Federal Campaign <https://cfccharities.opm.gov/>.

We will continue our on-going dialogue with the following: General Dynamics, BAE, PAE, ManTech, SOSi, Amazon, Uber, USAA, Navy Federal, GEICO, BoozAllen, Boeing, Home Depot, Facebook, Raytheon, Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (SOLIC), and the Rumsfeld Foundation.

We will engage with the following companies who joined the White House at a 2016 Call to Action for Refugees: Accenture, Coursera, Goldman Sachs, Google, HP, IBM, JPMorgan Chase, LinkedIn, MasterCard, Microsoft, Trip Advisor, UPS, and Western Union.

### **Advocacy Goals:**

- Continue building a broad bipartisan, bicameral coalition
- Comprehensive SIV program
- Improve screening process using case studies from 1,500 Operation Lost in Translation requests
- Work with Middle East regional partner to house SIVs (Sen. Warner has offered this idea publicly) allowing State investigators to access safe and centralized population
- Formal recognition from Congress or White House
- DoD sponsored study on translator deaths
- 2020 State OIG Report
- DoD definition of local national translator or interpreter
- Working with California, Texas, and Virginia state governments to purpose state legislation similar to CA and CO's in-state tuition bills
- 2020 Capitol Hill event

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<sup>5</sup> <https://learn.guidestar.org/seals>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=5593#starcaculation>

- 2020 George W. Bush Center event

## **Operations**

As noted above, the year NOLB's volunteers in 7 chapter cities helped furnish apartments for 79 families, helped 145 apply for work, 43 enroll in school, donated 13 cars, and assisted 135 in receiving drivers licenses. We will undergo a programmatic review in 2020 to better align our efforts with the needs of the SIV community. To assist in this, we are identifying SIV Ambassadors who will be liaisons between the SIV community and NOLB.

NOLB is working to form operational partnerships with organizations who specialize in the needs of SIVs past resettlement. For example the law firm Healy, Hafemann & Magee, LLC (Savannah, GA) has successfully litigated on behalf of SIVs for medical treatment reimbursement from defense contractors as proscribed by the Defense Base Act. The International Education Research Foundation (Culver City, CA) is a 501c3 that conducts research on international education and prepares credentials evaluations for persons who have studied outside of the United States and who need a statement of educational equivalency. NOLB will highlight both entities and identify others as resources for SIVs on our website.

NOLB's direct support to SIVs will be limited to the following activities with the exception of emergency requests outside this scope on a case by case basis:

- Furniture and services to SIVs in DMV
- Emergency rent and food support to SIVs nationwide
- Car grants
- Corporate and Non-profit Partnerships
- Contact information for all SIVs in U.S.
- SIV application process information on website
- SIV resources on website (legal, transcript, employment, partnership, etc...)
- Airport Welcomes
- SIV mentorship
- Collection of SIV stories

## **Strategic Goals the Next Five Years (2020-2024)**

Our activities, fundraising, and resource allocation will support the following goals for our organization.

- 2 year
  - 5 SIVs hired as part time employees to execute mission to support other SIVs.
  - CRM is used for case management.
  - We have identified the majority of SIVs in the U.S. and have their current contact info.
- 5 year
  - 10 SIVs hired as part time employees to execute mission to support other SIVs.
  - Convert funds raised to an endowment for education and housing.
  - Strategic advisory/research fund to protect soft networks.
  - Engaged with every SIV holder in the U.S.