

PRSG Newsletter

December 2020

Letter from the Board



Nura Elmagbari



Jenny Shareef



Eva Khan



Tahia Abdulrahman

Hello PRSG Family! The PRSG newsletter is back (hopefully!) to stay and we are excited to be able to share our news with you once again. 2020 has been a challenging year and as it draws to a close, we all look forward to a happy winter season even as we see the devastating toll the corona virus has taken both locally and globally. The PRSG team has worked through this crisis to make sure our families have stayed informed and that their needs are being taken care of. We have added information on COVID-19 to our website and are updating regularly to stay current with state guidelines and we continue to assist with direct support for families in need.

In November we distributed much needed food boxes with the help of our amazing partner, Beaverton Foursquare Church. We recently got our popular Bake Sale back up and running as an online event, and we have again been selected to take part in Willamette Week's [Give!Guide](#). Our amazing volunteers, supporters, donors, and incredible community partners continue to be the main reason we are able to stay afloat during these difficult times. We have so much to be grateful for, most especially the opportunity to work together to help others in our community. If you are wondering how you can help, check out the "How to Help" section of this newsletter, visit us online at www.pdxrsg.org, and follow us on social media.



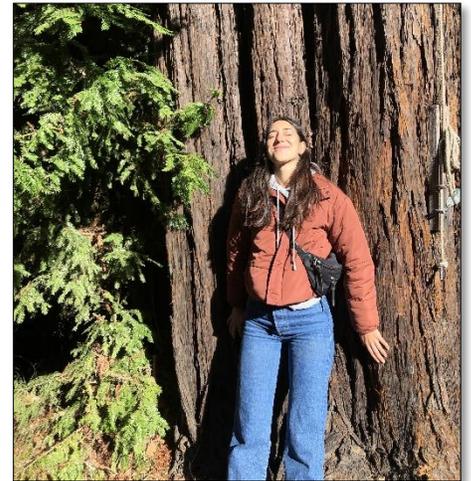
Portland Refugee Support Group

We wish you a happy and healthy new year!

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet Paola!

Paola Pereira has been a core volunteer with PRSG for over a year now and says that PRSG has given her the ability to not only help a family acclimate to life in America, but grow as an individual as well. As an only child of Brazilian immigrants, and first generation American, Paola became a core volunteer to Sarah and her 9-year-old son Ahmed, who she now sees as her little brother. Over time she has come to love this family as her own and says that she cannot imagine her life without them. She says that Sarah and Ahmed have helped her learn how to be centered in her hardship and how to cultivate joy.



“PRSG reminds me of these truths: that we all have something to learn from each other and we all have something we can share.”

Paola tells us that she joined PRSG because she values that the organization is 100% volunteer based and that she has autonomy to help her family in the way they need to be helped. Recently Paola hosted a fundraising event and helped Sarah, who is disabled, raise enough money to buy a mechanical wheelchair which has changed Sarah’s life by allowing her to be more mobile and spend more quality time with her son. Volunteering with PRSG has reminded her of the importance of honoring people as the experts of their own lives.



When she is not juggling her work with Latinx immigrant populations at her job, or studying for her master’s in social work, Paola loves spending time outdoors, cooking, dancing, spending time with friends and her kitty Luca. She also loves to celebrate her Brazilian heritage through music, dance, and food.

Paola hopes to stay with PRSG for a long time and work with even more families. We at PRSG are honored to have Paola as part of our team.

Highlights

The PRSG Bake Sale

Four years ago, Kirsten Burt was telling fellow PRSG volunteer Sonia Halverson about the amazing baked gifts she received from PRSG clients in appreciation for her friendship and the work that she did with PRSG. That conversation sparked a wonderful idea between the two ladies about how they could share these goods with the public all while helping to empower refugee women. After some great brainstorming, planning, and a newly developed partnership with RIHO (Refugee and Immigrant Hospitality Outreach), the PRSG/RIHO Bake sale was born. Kirsten, Sonia and the PRSG team had two goals for this project. 1) Create opportunities for refugee women to earn extra income while learning how to run a small business, improve their English, and meet new people, and 2) Provide Portlanders an opportunity to purchase delicious home-baked goods from all over the Middle East, Asia and North Africa.



Over the next few years, several successful bake sales helped empower our refugee bakers by teaching them business skills, providing extra income, and connecting them with a community hungry for the worldly delicacies that are so difficult to find in the Portland area. It's been amazingly rewarding to watch these women grow. Sadly, because of the pandemic, the bake sales were brought to a halt, but after a long hiatus, we are excited to announce that we will continue to bring our bake sales back using a COVID-safe online ordering and open air (masked and 6 foot distanced) pick-up and delivery system. Please join us for our next (virtual) Bake Sale, December 20th. For more information about the bake sales contact Kirsten at



donations@pdxrsg.org or Sonia at social@pdxrsg.org

Thanksgiving Boxes

For the 4th year in a row PRSG has been honored to take part in the Beaverton 4Square Church Thanksgiving box giveaway. This year, forty of our families received boxes filled with food essentials such as flour, sugar, eggs, oil and, thanks to the thoughtfulness of local and global outreach pastor Mark Nicklas, two Halal chickens were included in each box as well. Thank you, B4 Church for your unwavering support of PRSG.



Our World

Libya – Population 6.7 million

This month we are highlighting the country of Libya. Libya is one of the largest countries in North Africa boasting beautiful landscapes, one of longest coastlines in the world as well as the largest desert in the world, the Sahara. Nestled against the Mediterranean Sea, Libya is still struggling to recover from the 2011 war which sent the country



into chaos economically and politically as well as creating a refugee crisis. According to the International Refugee Committee, between March and September of 2020, over 5,800 people risked their lives trying to flee Libya by sea, including 19 pregnant women and over 500 children as it remains the main departure point to Europe from Africa for migrants seeking safety and



Seba Oasis near Sebha Libya – Adobe

opportunity. Although Libyans continue to struggle both inside and outside of Libya, they hold on tightly to their rich and beautiful culture and heritage. Libya has a vast and eclectic history having been ruled and occupied by the Greek, Roman, Ottoman and Italian empires which accounts for the many backgrounds that can be found in Libya as well as the many traditions. To learn more about Libya, including many delicious recipes, check out the links below. [The Culture Of Libya - WorldAtlas](#),

[Libyan Food and the main dishes & meals in Libya \(temehu.com\)](#), [Libya | History, People, Map, & Government | Britannica](#), [Leptis Magna - Ancient History Encyclopedia](#)

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