



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



DORCAS INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF RHODE ISLAND

A Letter from the Executive Director



Dorcas International's 100th year was unlike any that came before.

Where 2020 tested the very limits of our strength as individuals and as a community, 2021 brought about many reasons to be hopeful for the future. Our centennial year also reminded us – in more ways than one- that making meaningful progress is seldom easy but always worth the effort.

This year, we saw our amazing community of service providers and educators continue to fulfill our fundamental mission, helping people overcome challenges when they are vulnerable and empowering them to succeed and thrive here in Rhode Island.

Our 100th year saw us navigate a world that is learning how to move forward and adapt to a “new normal” that isn't all that new and certainly isn't normal. We found new ways to continue helping people in need, despite being unable to rely on tools that we took for granted just a few years ago.

We helped people get vaccinated to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. We helped them overcome hesitation about getting vaccinated brought about by fear, misinformation, and lack of trust that government will do right by them.

We watched in horror as people in Afghanistan were rocked by upheaval, and our hearts are heavy for those who continue to suffer. We acted quickly to mobilize our network of supporters to assist those who seek safety in Rhode Island, and we will help support them as they begin to rebuild their lives.

In this report you will read about this work and more. You will hear about the people we have helped and the people who helped them. Their stories embody the work that we do and the reasons why we do it.

At Dorcas International, we believe everyone deserves a chance to succeed- everyone deserves a place where they know they are safe and supported by people who care about them.

We believe everyone deserves a chance to be happy and lead a fulfilling life with family, friends and neighbors who share these values, even when their opinions differ.

We do this because we know that these chances exist for some and not for others.

Perhaps most of all, we do this work because we know that, together, we have the power to give people a chance to live the life they deserve. We do it all the time.

We are only able to do this work because of our incredible community, those of you who work beside us every day, those of you who volunteer your time whenever you can, and those of you whose generosity enables us to continue helping people in our 100th year and beyond. I am grateful for and proud to stand with each of you.

Kathleen Cloutier

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Executive Director
Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island

Conducted
7,667
interpreting
appointments



Worked with
495
people to secure jobs, a

110%
increase in
those looking
for work

Reunited
56 unaccompanied
children from
Central America
with their US
sponsors

Resettled **16**
newly arrived
refugees & **14** asylees
from Columbia, Ukraine,
Haiti, Turkey, Guatemala,
China, Eritrea,
Democratic Republic
of Congo, Syrian
Arab Republic,
Jordan & Rwanda

Served **227**
refugees from
31
countries



Helped
749
immigrants navigate the
immigration process
with a **95%** approval
rate for status adjustment

Taught
907
adults
to learn & improve
their English, earn a
high school diploma
& gain new job skills



A Rite of Passage

Empowering Youth through Traditional African Culture & Music

by Alli-Michelle Conti

For Ada and Chance Boas living in Tanzania's refugee camps meant surviving in very difficult conditions. A great deal of their time was spent waiting for food rations, clean drinking water - and especially - waiting decades for a permanent home. Despite the struggles, life went on amid the suffering. Daily rituals like schooling and celebrations for milestones such as births and marriages created a sense of belonging, and community spirit, that made life more meaningful.

And what they miss most.

"I miss the interaction with the elders. They are really beautiful people. The whole village loved me. It's very rare people recognize you for just being a human being," says Chance.

He especially misses tales told by the Burundi, griots, a French name given to African musical storytellers. It's what inspired Chance to create his arts and cultural organization, Providence World Music.

"It came to me earlier on where I realized that as we moved into this country, some of our heritage might not be carried onto future generations. So I wanted to be able to preserve that so those future generations have a place to come and learn what it means to be Burundian or African."

Ada raised her six children including the youngest, Chance, between Katumba and Mtabila refugee camps in Tanzania. Having fled civil war in her home country of Burundi in 1972, she lived for 36 years at the mercy of the Tanzanian government and goodwill organizations such as the UN Refugee Agency.

In 1993, they had the opportunity to return home to Burundi when a new president was democratically elected. Only to be forced to once again flee when Burundi's President Melchior Ndadaye was assassinated in 1993 and ethnic violence erupted.

Not one to dwell on her troubled journey, Ada says thanks to the grace of God, they were able to come to America.



photo by Jack Wang

"Even though we lived in a refugee camp, God really helped."

After arriving in Providence, in 2008, they settled into a small house. Chance immediately pursued his education. He was a young, gifted 16-year-old student in the 12th grade when the Tanzanian government suddenly closed schools in Mtabila refugee camps. Most believe this was a forced repatriation by the Tanzanian government.

When Chance got the opportunity to resume his studies in America, he immediately chose to finish high school to make up for lost ground.

At the age of 19, he took a high school placement test and aced the math requirements. His fluency in French aided him to miraculously pass the English proficiency portion too.

He says his trajectory could have been a lot different if he hadn't received guidance from Dorcas International (The International Institute, at the time).

He remembers being driven to the test center by a case worker from the Institute. And wonders how they managed to communicate across a language barrier.

"The good thing about Dorcas International Institute was all these folks help you to feel safe and at home," says Chance.

He worked hard, sharpened his English, and went on to graduate with honors from Mount Pleasant High School. And then from CCRI and Bryant University with a degree in Accounting with a minor in Mathematics. He's now an accounting professional employed by Yale University.

“The good thing about Dorcas International Institute was all these folks help you to feel safe and at home.”

- Chance Boas

Chance flourished with the Institute's after school program in Burundi drumming. He says it kept him engaged and out of trouble.

He aims to give back the same sense of belonging he received as a newcomer. And wants to find ways to preserve his African culture through Providence World Music. He says it's a way to give kids a purpose and a link to their culture.

Through Chance's resolve, Providence World Music has hosted live concerts with a focus on traditional African, folk, jazz and fusion music. He also organized a celebratory Black history month featuring short films by African filmmakers with live musical performances.

Their signature World Music Series will showcase live African music on Westminster Street, Providence, each Saturday afternoon throughout 2021. This is made possible by a partnership with InDowncity, as part of its "Open Air Saturdays."

To carry out its mission, Providence World Music also collaborates with nonprofit organizations including Providence WaterFireArt, Wilbury Theatre Group, Providence Latin American Film Festival and Dorcas International.

"My goal is to figure out how to use my organization to provide either Swahili classes or traditional Burundi music classes to the community at large."

Upon first arriving, Ada, cared for the children at the Institute's daycare. As the founding member of the refugee school for primary aged children, she had a natural tendency for teaching. She was affectionally known as mwalimu. The Swahili word for teacher. And was sought out as a disciplinarian.

Ada continues to share her talents. She grows East African crops such as Muchicha (spinach), Nyanya ntore (tomato) on a city plot. And sells her produce at the Farm Fresh Farmer's Market at the Dexter Training Ground Park. She said it's gratifying that a wider audience was open to learning how to cook traditional African dishes.

Chance, similarly, strives to keep his heritage alive. He'd like to leverage his mother's nearly 40 years of teaching by providing her with the means to give Swahili instruction to the greater RI community.

"Young people can get lost," Ada says, "They don't remember traditions and need training so as they grow, they will grow knowing their heritage."

"It gives them the chance to stay on the right path."

“Young people can get lost... They don't remember traditions and need training so as they grow, they will grow knowing their heritage.”

-Ada Boas

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Dorcas International deeply values its generous donors who believe in the work we do. We could not uphold our mission without your continued support. Your commitment and gifts mean everything.

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photos by Mayker J. Duran

FINANCIAL REPORT

AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year ending June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020

OPERATING REVENUES

	2021	2020
Contributions	\$ 498,260	\$ 426,345
Tuition and Earned Income	2,039,444	1,821,797
Public Grants and Contracts	4,006,887	3,678,928
Foundation and Private Grants	514,242	364,951
Other Income	13,436	57,045
Investment Return	295,724	30,855
Net Assets Released from Restriction	4,834,046	1,143,462
Total Operating Revenues	12,202,039	7,523,383

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Services

Employment & Training	2,401,274	1,855,144
Refugee/Social Services	5,381,936	2,813,699
Translation Services	1,231,346	1,090,381

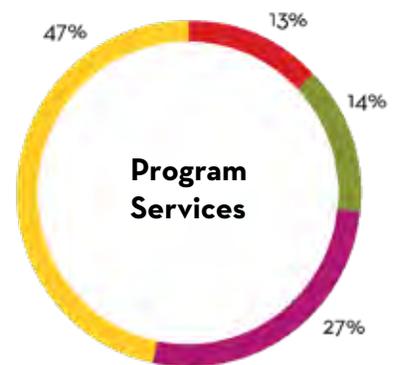
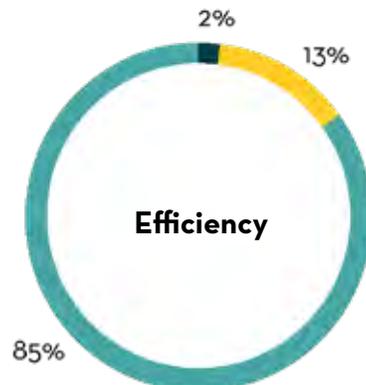
Supporting Services

Management and General	1,434,346	1,343,973
Fundraising	183,795	118,497

Total Operating Expenses	10,632,697	7,221,694
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Changes in Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	1,569,342	301,689
Changes in Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	(633,048)	86,295
Net Assets Beginning of Year	4,734,430	4,346,446

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	5,670,724	4,734,430
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- Program Services
- Management & General
- Fundraising

- Employment & Training
- Refugee/Social Services
- Translation Services
- Immigration Legal Services



DORCAS INTERNATIONAL
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