

# Seize the opportunity to help during the global refugee crisis

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I'm so proud to be a resident of Halton Hills right now.

The way our community is stepping up to help bring Syrian refugees to Canada is nothing short of amazing. What better way to embody the season's spirit of giving by helping those who are in need of a fresh start at life?

My November column also focused on this topic, and I waited with bated breath after it was published to see if the people who've been so vocally opposed to Syrian refugees via social media would take the time to contact me.

Fortunately I only received one such response from a person accusing me of having blatant disregard for law and order by endorsing the notion of Syrian refugees coming to Canada, citing examples of them breaching other country's borders during their escape from a warzone.

But this type of message, or any other negative commentary that I read, fail to sway my opinion. In fact, they strengthen my resolve to help the Syrians and any other refugees in need, for that matter. As if these people aren't up against enough hardship— horrors that



## The View From Here

we will likely never fathom — they're now being persecuted by total strangers.

And for what? Because of their actions when faced with the choice of life or death? We simply can't sit here and judge what these desperate people are doing. They're trying to survive and escape the best way they know how from a place that I can only imagine is hell on earth. We might be surprised at our own behaviour if placed in the same situation.

What we can do is seize the opportunity we've been given to help. That's exactly what Georgetown resident Josh Brake did, taking his idea to help sponsor one Syrian family and turning it into an umbrella organization known as the Halton Hills Coalition for Refugees (HHCR) to facilitate the sponsorship of multiple families approved by the Canadian government.

Through the coalition, groups of 15 families are joining forces and each committing to give \$1,000 to help sponsor one family

and be involved in their resettlement process. A matching \$15,000 is then being raised through a GoFundMe page (<https://www.gofundme.com/HHC4R>). All funds will be used to provide the necessities of life for the family for one year.

What an amazing, grassroots idea.

I look forward to the arrival of our first refugee family and encourage everyone to get behind the cause.

As Brake said, "We have the capacity to help right now, and I think we should."



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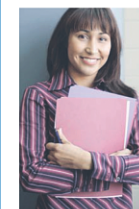


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