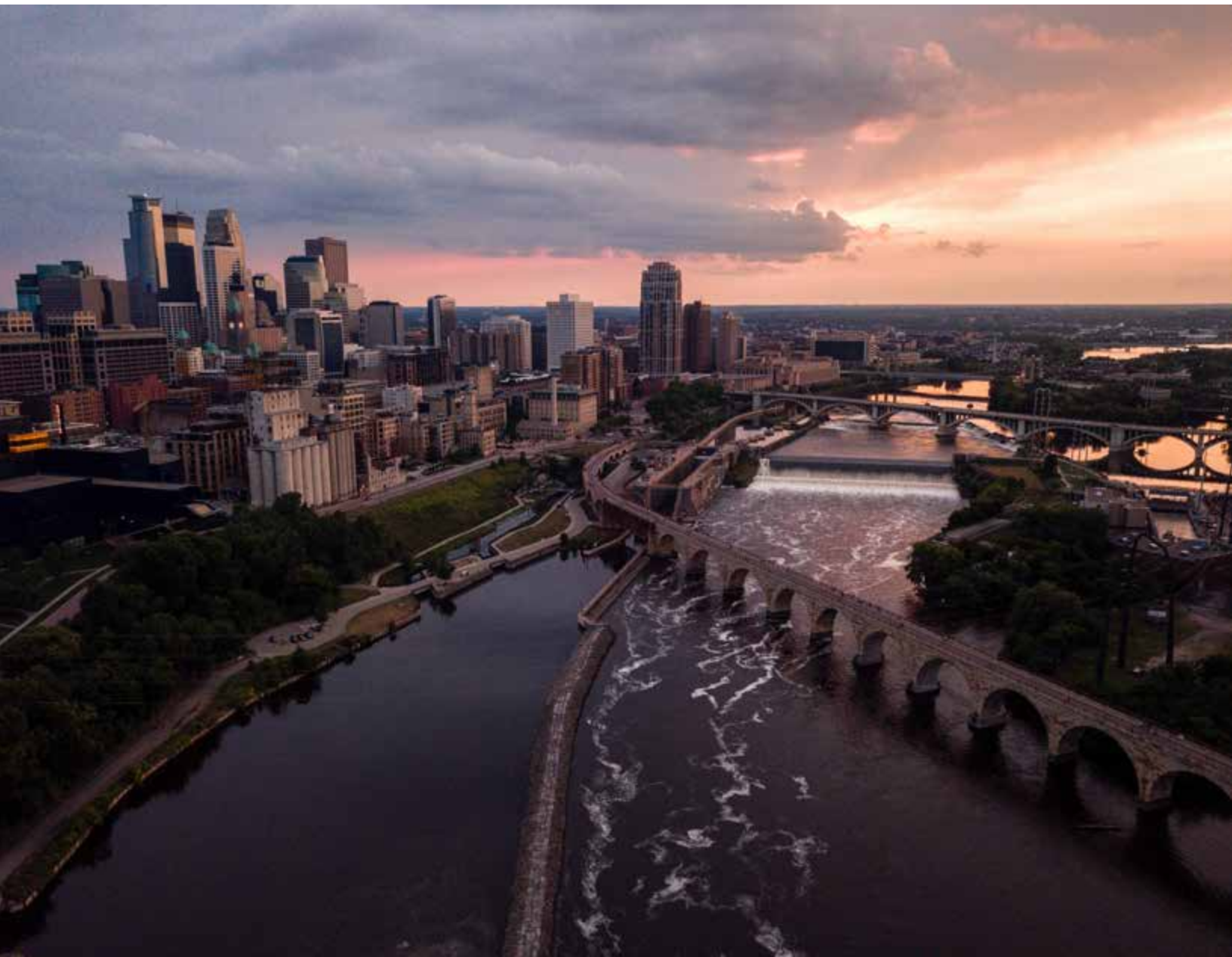




Twin Cities

ENVISION HANDBOOK





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Introduction

ABOUT THE SITE

The Twin Cities has become home to many displaced people groups. 1 out of 3 people in the Twin Cities are first- or second-generation immigrants. Refugees have arrived in Minnesota from Somalia, Burma, Iraq, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Congo, Ukraine, Syria, Liberia, the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan, and more. There are an estimated 83,000 Somali people in the Twin Cities—more than anywhere else in the country. St. Paul has the largest Hmong community in the U.S., and the Liberian population in the Twin Cities is one of the largest in America. St. Paul has a growing population of Karen, a minority group from Burma—currently the largest in the U.S.

The purpose of Envision Twin Cities is to *create partnerships and environments that transform and empower refugees and other immigrants*. Our desire is to equip and assist churches to reach out to the refugee communities with the love of Jesus Christ.

Meet the Team



RICK & KIRSTEN

Rick and Kirsten have been involved in ministry with The Alliance for 33 years. Before joining the Envision team, they served in youth ministry for 30 years in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Minnesota. Rick was born and raised in western Pennsylvania, just outside of Pittsburgh. Kirsten was born in New York City and grew up in Colorado and Wisconsin. They met at St. Paul Bible College (Crown College) and were married after their junior year. They have three adult children and four grandchildren.

In 2011, Rick went on a sabbatical and asked the Lord to do something new in his life and ministry. Right after he came back, God began to answer his prayer by opening the door for them to work with refugees through a basketball outreach. Over the next several years, more doors were opened to work with refugee families in their area and alongside their church. Sensing that the Lord wanted them to work with refugees and other immigrants full-time, Rick and Kirsten joined Envision in 2018 to help local churches meet the needs of refugees and other immigrants.



Meet the Team (continued)



**CHRISTINA
WAHLEN**

Christina Wahlen started with Envision Twin Cities in February 2021. She loves Envision’s desire to equip the next generation for ministry, specifically in the area of spiritual formation and cultural awareness.

She and Erik and their three kids served with The Christian and Missionary Alliance as international workers in Mongolia for nine years. Their family now lives in Fridley, Minnesota. Christina serves with Erik at Rose Hill Alliance Church where Erik is the lead pastor. She is passionate about seeing interns going deeper with Jesus, finding healing for their souls, and coming alongside churches who desire to reach their immigrant and refugee communities with English.



SHELLY KRAGT

Shelly Kragt and her husband, Jerry, met at Crown College in the 80s and were blessed to serve in the U.S. in two churches—in the Chicago area and the Twin Cities—before moving overseas in 1998 to church plant in Berlin, Germany. After 13 years of life and ministry in Berlin, they transitioned to a regional leadership role, overseeing C&MA teams in Europe and the Middle East. Following the leadership role, they spent two years at Crown College teaching and working to promote global work in various ways. They recently moved to St. Paul where they are church planting an English language church alongside an Ethiopian church. Shelly’s passion for the displaced peoples of the world grew when floods of refugees were pouring into Germany in 2015–2016. She also gets excited about mobilizing others to be engaged with the least-reached peoples of the world in the community where she lives and networking with others.

She loves her three kids and grandkids deeply, enjoys drinking a warm cup of tea with friends, and is always up for an adventure.



General Information

TEAM COSTS

The cost is \$525 per individual for seven days. The expenses cover meals and lodging. Primary care health insurance is required for every individual that visits the site. Airfare/on-the-ground travel expenses are not included.

INTERN COSTS

The cost is \$1,100 per intern for each month. The expenses cover meals and lodging. Primary care health insurance is required for every individual that visits the site. Airfare/travel expenses are not included.

HOUSING & FOOD

Groups will be housed at local universities or hotels, and interns will stay with host families or in one of our Envision houses. Food will be provided for groups, including meals from different cultures that are represented in our diverse community



AIRPORT & ARRIVAL INFORMATION

If you are driving, you will be given the address of your accommodations in advance. Please be in contact with the site coordinator so that they can greet you upon your arrival. If you are flying, book flights to MSP airport, which is a 20–30 minute drive from where you will be staying. Your most reliable source of transportation for the week would be to rent a vehicle.

COMMUNICATIONS

Wi-Fi is available—our site coordinator would be happy to share that information with team leaders upon your arrival, and it will be the leaders' choice whether they feel the need to share the Wi-Fi information with the participants. We encourage teams to be aware of how much time they are spending on their phones during their time at Envision Twin Cities. As the use of screen time is increasing in today's culture, we ask that you break that pattern and limit your use of phones. We do follow a cell phone policy stating that during service projects, team meetings, church, and meals, cell phone use is not permitted with the exception of emergencies and the approved use of the phone camera. Please take this request to heart as it is our goal for you to be fully present during your time at Envision Twin Cities in order to listen and learn from how the Lord is at work here in our city.

A packing list and dress code will be provided by our site.



Ministry

We believe in partnership. Our desire is to partner with local churches, organizations, and nonprofits to help meet the holistic needs of refugees and other immigrants. All our programs are done in cooperation with our partners.

PROGRAMS

Community Gardens
English and Citizenship Classes
Youth Basketball
Soccer Camps
Homework Help and English Tutors
Park Outreach
Essential Supplies Distribution
Somali Mall and Hmong Village Visits
Culture Tours

Schedule

TEAMS

Envision Twin Cities will be in contact with you in advance for details on projects and ministry opportunities. It is important to note that this is a tentative schedule, and things are subject to change. We do not like to put God in a box, and we believe that sometimes the best opportunities to share the gospel come up at the last minute.

7:00 a.m.	Wake Up, Breakfast, Get Ready
8:00 a.m.	Prayer, Devotional/Training Time
8:30 a.m.	Travel Time
9:00 a.m.	Work Site/Ministry Site
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Work Site/Ministry Site
4:00 p.m.	Clean Up
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Park Ministry
9:00 p.m.	Debrief/Group Time
10:00 p.m.	Downtime
11:00 p.m.	Lights Out

INTERNS

Depending on your passions and skills, your schedule will vary. You will work with the site coordinator and ministry directors to develop a schedule. Our hope is that you have the space to incorporate your passions into your internship so that we can help develop and disciple you into the unique individual God has intended you to be.



Cultural Sensitivity

Minneapolis and St. Paul are culturally rich metropolitan cities. Over 100 different languages are spoken in the Minneapolis/St. Paul public schools. Many of these students call a language other than English their home language, and many of the families we connect with speak English as a second language and are first- or second-generation immigrants to the U.S. When we think about cultural sensitivity in the Twin Cities, we must keep in mind the diverse background that our community has. Even though you are still in the U.S., this will be a cross-cultural experience. The people in the Twin Cities may look, speak, and behave differently, but always remember that they are every bit as capable and valued as your team members. We always recommend coming in with the posture of a listener and a learner. Before making assumptions, see what you can discover by observing the interactions happening around you. Take notes from our staff and their posture with the communities we serve. Avoid language that tends towards an “us/them” mentality. Your interactions will have a long-term impact on the relationships we are building here on the ground, so be thoughtful with them!



Contact Info



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