



Agenda: *The Strategic Case for Refugee Resettlement*

9:45-10:15	Check-in and registration; Breakfast
10:15-10:30	Welcome and Introduction
10:30-11:15	Panel 1: The Strategic Case for Refugee Resettlement Kristie De Peña, Moderator , Niskanen Center Linda Chavez , Niskanen Center Senior Fellow & Executive Director of Becoming an American Initiative Scott Cooper , National Security Outreach Director, Human Rights First Idean Salehyan , Professor of Political Science, University of North Texas
11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:15	Panel 2: Sponsorship of Refugees Matthew La Corte, Moderator , Niskanen Center Jennifer Bond , Chair, Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative Chris George , Executive Director, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services Chris Gersten , Fmr. Director of Office of Refugee Resettlement 1989-1993
12:15-12:30	Closing Remarks



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Speakers



Jennifer Bond holds degrees in law, literature, and business and has been called to the Bars of Ontario and British Columbia. She completed her graduate work at the Yale Law School as a John Peters Humphrey Fellow in International Human Rights Law. She is currently serving as Chair of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative and is Founder and Managing Director of the University of Ottawa Refugee Hub. In 2015/16, Professor Bond served on a full-time basis as Special Advisor to Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship on Canada's Syrian Refugee Initiative, a project which engaged over two million Canadians and brought over 40,000 refugees to Canada in under four months. Professor Bond has also provided strategic advice to Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). She co-founded each of the Refugee Hub's flagship initiatives, including: the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, a partnership that promotes and supports the adoption of community sponsorship programs all over the world; the Refugee Sponsorship Support Program, a national project that mobilizes pro-bono legal support for private sponsorship groups in Canada.



Linda Chavez is a Senior Fellow at the Niskanen Center and president of the Becoming American Institute, a non-profit public policy organization in Boulder, CO. She writes a weekly syndicated column and is a political analyst for FOX News Channel. Chavez authored *Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation* (Basic Books 1991), which the Denver Post described as a book that "should explode the stereotypes about Hispanics that have clouded the minds of patronizing liberals and xenophobic conservatives alike." National Review described Chavez's memoir, *An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal* (Basic Books 2002), as a "brilliant, provocative, and moving book." In 2000, Chavez was honored by the Library of Congress as a "Living Legend" for her contributions to America's cultural and historical legacy. In January 2001, Chavez was President George W. Bush's nominee for Secretary of Labor until she withdrew her name from consideration.

Chavez has held a number of appointed positions, among them Chairman, National Commission on Migrant Education (1988-1992); White House Director of Public Liaison (1985); Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1983-1985); and she was a member of the Administrative Conference of the United States (1984-1986). Chavez was the Republican nominee for U.S. Senator from Maryland in 1986. In 1992, she was elected by the United



Nations' Human Rights Commission to serve a four-year term as U.S. Expert to the U.N. Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.



You can follow Linda on Twitter @chavezlinda



Joe Coon is senior vice president and co-founder of the Niskanen Center, where his role includes overseeing coalition efforts, fundraising, and strategic planning for the Center and its staff. His previous positions include director for development at Students for Liberty, the largest organization dedicated to identifying, training, and supporting pro-liberty students; director of sponsor services, and director of student programs, at the Cato Institute; and treasurer of Purple PAC, a libertarian super PAC. Mr. Coon was a sergeant in the U.S. Army National Guard, where he served for six years, including a one-year tour of duty in Iraq as a Cavalry Scout. He studied economics and philosophy at Portland State University.



You can follow Joey on Twitter @JoeyCoon



As the Director of National Security Outreach, **Scott Cooper** is Human Rights First's chief ambassador to the national security community. He leads Human Rights First's efforts to build partnerships with members of the military and national security communities as well as national security-focused think tanks and research institutions. He also leads the project, Veterans for American Ideals, a nonpartisan movement of military veterans who advocate American leadership on human rights.

Prior to joining Human Rights First, Scott spent a career in the Marine Corps. He flew the EA-6B Prowler, serving five tours in Iraq, two in Afghanistan, one in Europe, and one in the Western Pacific. He flew the Bosnian and Iraqi no-fly zones, the Kosovo air campaign, and in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. He also served on the ground as a Forward Air Controller in Iraq and Afghanistan. He commanded an EA-6B Prowler squadron and finished his career as the speechwriter to the head of Marine Corps Aviation.

An expert on civil-military relations, air power, and national security issues, he has published work in the Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, The American Interest, War On The Rocks, Task &

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Purpose, the Washington Quarterly, Policy Review, DefenseOne, Proceedings, and the Marine Corps Gazette. Scott holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from the United States Naval Academy and a Master of Arts in International Relations from the University of Maryland at College Park. Scott was named as one of We Are the Mighty's Mighty 25: Influencers Supporting the Military Community in 2018.



You can follow Scott on Twitter @Scott_A_Cooper



Kristie De Peña is the director of immigration and senior counsel with the Niskanen Center. She focuses on immigration and national security law and policy and earned her J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law, and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in national security and foreign policy from George Washington University School of Law. She consulted with the Department of State on immigration, healthcare, and security issues prior to her work at the Niskanen Center. Her work has recently been featured in the Washington Post, Washington Examiner, RealClearPolicy, National Review, The Hill, The American Conservative, Huffington Post, Newsweek, and Reason.



You can follow Kristie on Twitter @kdpindc



Chris George is the Executive Director of IRIS, founded in 1982. IRIS has undergone dramatic growth and transformation over the past 35 years, but its goal has remained constant: to provide a new haven to refugees and other immigrants. Throughout its history, IRIS has helped refugees from all over the world, but the numbers and nationalities of clients have fluctuated.

In 1982, the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut (now the Episcopal Church in Connecticut) created the Diocesan Refugee Services Committee. Its charge was to explore whether Connecticut parishes might be interested in welcoming and resettling Southeast Asians fleeing communist regimes that rose from the ashes of the Vietnam conflict. During its first year of operation the refugee program was staffed by a single individual whose primary task was to find churches willing to resettle newly arriving refugee families. The Diocesan Refugee Services Committee changed names twice before becoming Interfaith Refugee Ministry (IRM) in 1990, and moved from Cheshire to Bridgeport to Ansonia before making New Haven its home in

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1995. IRM moved from Wooster Square to its current location in the East Rock neighborhood in June 2006, and officially changed its name to IRIS- Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services in summer 2007. This name change reflected IRIS's growth and the decision to extend some services to address the critical needs of immigrants. The iris flower, which thrives all over the world, is a symbol of hope and faith.

The refugees IRIS is bringing into Connecticut are comprised almost entirely of those Afghans and Iraqis who have worked with U.S. troops as interpreters, translators, drivers and in logistics support, as well as some from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

George, who speaks fluent Arabic, has long been involved in humanitarian work, starting with the Peace Corps in 1977 and then working in postwar Lebanon and the Israeli-occupied territories of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.



Christopher Gersten served between 1980-1983 as Special assistant to the general president, International Union of Operating Engineers. Beginning in 1984, he became the Political director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, before becoming the Executive director of the National Jewish Coalition. In 1989, Gersten served as the Director of Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services, a position he held in 1993. In 1997, Gersten founded the Institute for Religious Values. Between 2001-2005, Gersten served as the Principal deputy assistant secretary for the Administration for Children and

Families in the Department of Health and Human Services. After leaving, he was the founder and chair of the Fatherhood and Marriage Leadership Institute.



Matthew La Corte is the immigration policy analyst at the Niskanen Center. He leads the immigration department's legislative outreach efforts, focusing on DACA, work visas, and refugee resettlement. His writing has been published in many outlets, including the Wall Street Journal, USA Today, the Financial Times, and many others. His research and commentary has been featured in the New York Times, the Washington Post, Bloomberg, McClatchy, and others.

Matthew graduated from Hofstra University in New York with degrees in Political Science and Economics.



You can follow Matthew on Twitter @MLaCorte_



Dr. Idean Salehyan is of Professor of Political Science at at the University of North Texas and the co-Director of the Social Conflict Analysis Database project. He is also affiliated with the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at the University of Texas at Austin, the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, and the John Goodwin Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Methodist University.

Professor Salehyan's research interests are diverse, but focus primarily on topics related to international & civil conflict, international migration, and politics & the environment. In addition, he teaches courses on international relations, comparative politics, civil war, and ethnic politics.

Professor Salehyan is the author of *Rebels Without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics* (Cornell University Press, 2009), and his articles appear in journals like the *American Journal of Political Science*, *International Organization*, *International Studies Quarterly*, the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, the *Journal of Peace Research*, the *Journal of Politics*, and *World Politics*.

Idean grew up in California and received his Ph.D. from UC San Diego in 2006. He currently resides in Highland Village, TX.



You can follow Idean on Twitter @IdeanSalehyan



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Human Rights First is an independent advocacy and action organization that challenges America to live up to its ideals. We believe American leadership is essential in the global struggle for human rights, so we press the U.S. government and

private companies to respect human rights and the rule of law. When they fail, we step in to demand reform, accountability and justice. Around the world, we work where we can best harness American influence to secure core freedoms.

Website: <https://www.humanrightsfirst.org>

Twitter: @humanrights1st



The International Refugee Assistance Project – IRAP – organizes law students and lawyers to develop and enforce

a system of legal and human rights for refugees through a combination of direct legal aid and systemic advocacy. We are the first organization dedicated to providing comprehensive legal aid to refugees seeking resettlement, providing representation for those who have none and helping vulnerable families and refugees navigate the complex rules and processes of the international resettlement system. We leverage our work with refugees into advocacy for broad systemic reforms within national and international refugee resettlement processes so that refugees globally may better enforce their human rights. We have resettled more than 2,000 refugees to eight different countries and achieved major policy changes affecting hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Website: <https://refugeerights.org>

Twitter: @RefugeeAssist

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The Bishops' Committee on Migration sets broad policies and direction for the Church's work in the area of migration. The above MRS offices represent the bishops' interests in policy formulation and communication, advocacy, education, refugee resettlement, and other specialized services to at risk and

vulnerable populations, such as victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. The Committee actively promotes the U.S. bishops' migration-related interests with public policy-makers at the national and international levels. Committee members and MRS staff periodically testify before Congress and meet with Administration officials to advocate the bishops' positions. Among the high priority policy concerns of the Committee is refugee protection and finding durable solutions to their plight. In this context the Committee occasionally arranges site visits to refugee areas of the world to witness the conditions of the refugees and to call for adequate responses on the part of the international community.

Website: <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/>

Twitter: @USCCB



Founded in 1982, the National Immigration Forum advocates for the value of immigrants and immigration to our nation. In service to this mission, the Forum promotes responsible federal immigration policies, addressing today's economic and national security needs while honoring the ideals of our Founding Fathers, who created America as a land of opportunity.

For 30 years, the Forum has worked to advance sound federal immigration solutions through its policy expertise, communications outreach and coalition building work, which forges powerful alliances of diverse constituencies across the country to build consensus on the important role of immigrants in America.

Website: <https://immigrationforum.org>

Twitter: @NatImmForum