

# Acupuncturists Without Borders

Fall 2018

## Refugees, Migrants and Asylum Seekers...

...are people looking for shelter from war, abuse, bigotry, poverty, social inequality and environmental devastation. Trauma is often their shared experience, resulting in despair, insomnia, anxiety, depression, drug use, and suicide. For many, trauma is passed from one generation to the next.

AWB believes that unresolved trauma is often at the root of human suffering and conflict, affecting individuals, families, communities, and nations. Luckily, trauma is not a “static” state. With intervention and support, healing can happen. Hope, resilience, problem-solving, and empowerment have a chance to emerge. People can think better, handle challenges, connect with one another, and move forward with their lives.

Acupuncture can help people recover from trauma by regulating the body and emotions, creating greater peace and stability for themselves, their families and communities.

**Here's what AWB is doing to bring what we call the *Medicine of Peace* to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the United States and internationally...**



- **68,000,000 people in the world are forcibly displaced.**
- **One in 110 people globally is a refugee.**
- **Over fifty percent are children.**

## Refugee Support Project Update

## Trauma healing for refugees in Greece.

AWB is the first organization that we know of that has brought trauma reduction acupuncture to refugees in Greece, where over 60,000 refugees reside in dozens of squalid camps. Conditions in the camps have degraded in the past two years, as migrating people continue to arrive in Greece every day to escape war, poverty, and environmental devastation in the Middle East and Africa.

Nine teams of AWB volunteers have done thousands of treatments in the EKO Station, Piraeus Port, Ritsona and Oinyfyta refugee camps since May 2016.

**In 2016-17**, AWB trained a core group of Greek acupuncturists to work locally in camps and refugee projects on a regular basis.

**In 2018**, we expanded AWB's work from the camps into community centers serving refugees in transient housing. AWB currently offers weekly treatments at the Melissa Network, and at the Oiyntyta Wares Community Center, a community center and refugee business project near Athens.



***Click on the video above to learn about AWB's trauma healing work at the Melissa Network!*** The Melissa Network is a community organization in Athens, Greece that provides essential social services to women and children migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees from over eighteen countries. AWB provides weekly treatments for the staff and Melissa participants.



## Trauma Healing for Immigrants and Refugees in the US.

For the past five years, AWB has brought trauma healing acupuncture to refugees and immigrants in the United States. We have trained acupuncturists to work with people in free community service clinics in places like Tucson, AZ with the International Rescue Committee, and in Cleveland, OH with the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

Current immigration and asylum policies have made it harder for people seeking safety to come to the US, and have added to high stress levels among undocumented people, migrants and their families.

**In 2018**, AWB created trauma clinics in highly impacted communities through local projects like:

- Acupuncturists Without Borders of the National Capitol Area (Washington, DC), offering “free acupuncture treatments for immigrants, refugees, and neighbors in need.”
- Treatments in Silver Spring, MD for Middle Eastern/African immigrants
- Services in Hyattsville, MD for migrants from Mexico and Central America

**In 2019**, AWB hopes to create similar projects in communities throughout the US, particularly in border states like Texas, Arizona and California where migrants and their families are faced with detention and deportation.



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