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For Immediate Release

### **Washington Revels Partners with RefAmerica to Welcome Syrian Refugees on July 4**

**Silver Spring, MD, June 7, 2018** – This Fourth of July, Washington Revels joins hands with **RefAmerica** to share a quintessentially American experience with recently resettled teenage Syrian refugees: marching in a small-town Independence Day Parade.

The Syrian teens and members of their **RefAmerica** host families will join the Washington Revels parade unit when it performs in the 129<sup>th</sup> annual Takoma Park Independence Day Parade. Prior to July 4, the **RefAmerica** participants will receive a Revels welcome package and will prepare for the parade with members of the Revels community.

Washington Revels has been a fixture of this parade since 2007, entertaining crowds with colorful costumes, bright banners, whimsical puppets, children's dances, and traditional summer songs. For the refugees, marching with Revels offers a window onto a slice of American life and an affirmation that they are welcome to participate fully in the fabric of their new home. This is the second consecutive year of parade collaboration between **RefAmerica** and Washington Revels. At the heart of each organization's mission is the belief that cultural sharing brings people closer together.

**RefAmerica** works toward the full inclusion of recently arrived refugees by connecting them with American counterparts through leadership and public-speaking training, cross-cultural exchange, team-building, and the sharing of stories and experiences. In public appearances, local and refugee participants work together as young leaders to help foster cross-cultural understanding through the power of personal narrative. Washington Revels is a multi-generational performing arts community that presents traditional music, dance, storytelling, and drama. Revels is best known for its annual *Christmas Revels* productions, which unite cast and audience around the winter traditions of a different culture each year. Recent traditions include French Canadian; Scandinavian; Bulgarian, Greek & Turkish; and Jewish, Arabic & Spanish.

Participation in the Revels parade unit is open to everyone! Want to find out how you can march alongside Revels and **RefAmerica** this year? Learn how to sign up at [RevelsDC.org](https://bit.ly/2xN3sYP). For more information on **RefAmerica**, check out the Montgomery County Volunteer Center's website and **RefAmerica**'s CrowdRise fundraiser, or read their prize-winning essay at: <https://bit.ly/2xN3sYP>