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Welcome.US Announces Nazanin Ash as New CEO

Ash most recently served as Vice President of Global Policy and Advocacy at the International Rescue Committee

Washington, D.C. — Today, [Welcome.US](https://www.welcome.us) announced the appointment of Nazanin Ash, a global humanitarian leader with nearly two decades of experience, as Chief Executive Officer. Ash will lead the nonprofit, bipartisan initiative, which launched two weeks ago with a mission to engage and mobilize all Americans to welcome and support refugees, beginning with the individuals and families who fled Afghanistan.

Ash most recently served as Vice President of Global Policy and Advocacy at the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a global humanitarian organization serving people in crisis in 40 countries and resettling refugees in 25 U.S. cities. Ash also held senior positions at the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, where she helped drive transformational changes in policy, strategy, and programs related to the protection of vulnerable populations, the advancement of human rights, and promoting economic opportunity for those left behind. She also served as a member of the Policy Planning staff for Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice, and on the leadership team for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), an initiative that has saved more than 20 million lives.

"I'm honored to join Welcome.US at such a critical moment in our country's proud history of refuge and welcome," **said Welcome.US CEO Nazanin Ash.** "Over the past few weeks, I have been deeply inspired by the individuals, community and faith groups, Afghan leaders, refugee leaders, veterans, mayors and governors, and businesses that have come together in common purpose to support our new Afghan neighbors. This reflects the best of who we are as a nation. When we support refugees to rebuild their lives, we enrich our communities, our societies, our economies — and ourselves. I'm proud to see Americans meeting this moment — and excited for Welcome.US to build upon it as we revitalize our spirit of welcome."

"We are thrilled to announce Nazanin as the new CEO of Welcome.US," **said Welcome.US Co-Founders Cecilia Muñoz and John Bridgeland.** "She has years of experience working on domestic resettlement issues and is a master of developing public-private partnerships,

mobilizing the American people, and building cross-divide movements grounded in the real needs of refugees.”

Leaders across the humanitarian, private sector, veteran, and refugee communities welcomed Ash's announcement.

“There could be no better choice than Nazanin Ash to lead Welcome.US,” **said David Miliband, President and CEO of IRC.** “After five years of tremendous achievement at IRC, we are sorry to see her go, but know that we will be working closely together so that America lives up to its founding ideals. Nazanin knows that bipartisan commitment to welcoming refugees and immigrants is at the heart of America’s story of renewal. That commitment is needed more than ever, and we know that Nazanin’s leadership, experience, and motivation will provide the focus that this campaign needs.”

“Veterans-serving organizations are excited to partner with Welcome.US and its outstanding new CEO, Nazanin Ash,” **said Kathy Roth Douquet, CEO of Blue Star Families.** “Our Afghan allies worked by our side to keep us safe for two decades after 9/11, and we are working by their side every step of the way with Welcome.US to help them resettle in the United States.”

“I’m thrilled that Nazanin Ash has agreed to take on the role of Chief Executive Officer of Welcome.US,” **said Eric Schwartz, President of Refugees International.** “She is a remarkably thoughtful, creative, kind, and dynamic leader with a wealth of experience on refugee resettlement and the critical role of communities in welcoming new arrivals. I cannot think of a better champion for the cause of inclusion.”

“At Airbnb.org we’ve seen firsthand Nazanin's passion for helping people in need and her ability to bring together diverse stakeholders to advocate on behalf of refugees and other vulnerable communities around the world,” **said Joe Gebbia, Airbnb Co-Founder and Chairman of Airbnb.org.** “Her expertise leading initiatives across the government and non-profit sector will be an invaluable asset as Welcome.US works with its coalition of businesses, community organizations, and others to welcome Afghan families resettling in the US.”

“Nazanin is an effective leader who knows how to get things done and make transformative change happen,” **said John Slocum, Interim Executive Director of Refugee Council USA.** “She is an ideal choice to lead Welcome.US, as she combines experience in government with thorough knowledge of refugee resettlement and an expansive vision for the future of this sector. I so look forward to working with Nazanin in her new role as CEO of Welcome.US.”

“Nazanin Ash is a truly incredible choice for the role of Welcome.US CEO,” **said Nadia Hashimi, Afghan American author, activist and pediatrician.** “Ash is a longtime advocate for refugees and displaced peoples who has helped millions of people over the span of her career. Her experience and vision will be invaluable to the organization. As an Afghan American and a member of the US-Afghan Women’s Council, I’m excited to see Welcome.US grow to new heights and create a more welcoming environment for refugees in this country under Ash’s leadership.”

“We are thrilled to see the appointment of Nazanin Ash as CEO of Welcome.US,” **said Lourena Gboeah, Chair of the Refugee Congress Board of Directors and Board Member at Refugee Council USA.** “As a longtime champion for equity and partnership with refugee leaders, we know

she will build upon the meaningful impact that Welcome.US has already had, growing and strengthening the platform as a space of welcome for refugees and asylees seeking safety in our communities.”

About Welcome.US

Welcome.US is a new national effort that launched on September 14 to welcome refugees, beginning with new Afghan families as they get settled and build new lives in the United States. Welcome.US provides a single point of entry to channel the outpouring of support from Americans who want to get involved by donating supplies, money, or time to frontline organizations; offering temporary housing; or sponsoring refugees. President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama, President George. W. Bush and Laura Bush, and President William J. Clinton and Secretary Hillary Clinton serve as honorary co-chairs.

In addition to encouraging Americans to donate to frontline organizations, Welcome.US created the [Welcome Fund](#), which will provide emergency grants to nonprofit organizations working to address the most urgent needs facing Afghan refugees.

Welcome.US is co-chaired by Cecilia Muñoz, senior adviser to New America and former director of the White House Domestic Policy Council under President Obama, and John Bridgeland, CEO of the COVID Collaborative and former director of the White House Domestic Policy Council under President Bush.

To learn more about Welcome.US, please visit welcome.us.

For press inquiries, please contact press@welcome.us.

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