

Freeze for Food Final Report March 4, 2017 Event

Wisconsin's winter weather seldom disappoints participants in the Freeze for Food 5K/10K fundraiser. On March 4, 2017, an almost record number 273 properly-dressed runners and walkers turned out in comparatively balmy 36°F weather to support food security projects. Since an actual 305 people pre-registered, their pre-registration fees also gratefully support Open Doors for Refugees, the event donee.

The brisk ESE wind off Lake Wingra and overcast skies did not hinder the racers. The clear sidewalks made for manageable footing. Congratulations to the many winter-hardy Wisconsinites and to these overall finishers (full race details available at [ItsRaceTime](#)):

	Name	Gender	Age	Time
5K	Michael Nuenninghoff	M	20	19:39.3
	Susanna Ciucci	F	16	22:41.7
10K	Travis Bashaw	M	37	35:27.6
	Krista Jahimiak	F	31	38:23.1



International exchange students Lasse Buchholz from Germany (at school in Beloit) and Guðný Björk Halldórsdóttir from Iceland (at school in Winter) show off their 5K first place ribbons.

Every year has a special story or two to share. This year we welcomed 20 high school exchange students from the Council for International Educational Exchange, [CIEE](#). They came from countries including Germany, Tunisia, Gaza, India, Iceland and Turkey. The six students here were part of the group, hailing from a wide range of countries on



US Dept of State grant programs: [FLEX](#), [YES](#) and [CBYX](#) . *Left to right:*

Fabienne Ehresmann, CBYX, Germany / Mohammed Medhioub Azziz, YES, Tunisia / Ameer Yacoub, YES, Gaza \ Emilia Keric, CBYX, Germany / Abdul Salam Majeed, YES, India / Alperen Kul, YES, Turkey

This was the 36th annual Freeze for Food, which has raised over \$78,000 since 1982 for the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Wisconsin-Madison to donate to groups, including Oxfam and the Colombia Support Network. Numbers of participants have climbed as well, from 45 runners and walkers in the first year to a high of 282 in 2016. The event attracted people not only from all parts of Wisconsin, but from around the Midwest: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Michigan – as well as this year’s international students.

Good promotion for the event plus the refugee connection resulted in coverage from both WISC TV (Channel 3) and [WKOW \(Channel 27\)](#) television stations for their nightly newscasts.

Over 30 volunteers showed up to make the day successful. As in the past, the RPCVs of Madison covered \$1,000 of race expenses. Event coordinators Tom Felhofer and Stephanie Shelton wish to thank the generous sponsors of the fundraiser who helped support this endeavor,

through donations or goods in kind: Capital Insurance, Colectivo Coffee, East Mortgage, EF Electric, Felhofer CPA, Hotel Red, Kwik Trip, Monroe Street Family Dental, Panera Bread, and Willy St. Co-op.

Open Doors for Refugees, a group formed in 2016 to support and welcome refugees to Madison, is the beneficiary of \$6,138 raised by the 2017 Freeze for Food. The dollars are specified to be used for food relief to Madison's recent refugee population. While Jewish Social Services and Lutheran Social Services have federal contracts to assist refugees during their first three months, the new-comers struggle for many years after their arrival with finding living wage jobs, finding affordable apartments, learning English, learning to drive, and other, less tangible issues of cultural adjustment.

Following the U.S. President's Executive Orders which will limit the numbers of refugees accepted for resettlement in the U.S., Open Doors for Refugees hopes to help those who've arrived not just this year but in the past several years, and to remain visible to advocate that both Madison and the U.S. take in its share of the world's estimated 65 million refugees.

Watch for details for the 37th annual Freeze for Food, temporarily set as March 5, 2018. Follow the event on [Facebook](#).