

“
OUR
#1 PRIORITY IS
TO CONNECT
PEOPLE TO
RESOURCES.
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CUSTOMER:

International Institute of St. Louis

CHALLENGE:

One of the largest influxes of refugees in the Institute's more than 100-year history, including more than 600 Afghans in one year. So many people arrived within a short period of time, the Institute struggled to keep track of everyone.

SOLUTION:

Premier Wireless' CPR³ solution, powered by T-Mobile, provided each refugee with a smart device, unlimited connectivity, and pre-programmed resources to more smoothly transition to life in St. Louis.

RESULTS:

Internet access for the whole family provided a sense of normalcy and enabled connection – to family, community, and resources. IISTL service delivery was greatly improved, and refugees reported an improved quality of life.

PRODUCT:

The CPR³ solution provides 24/7 connectivity for the whole family; children have internet for schoolwork, studying, and entertainment; and parents can access IISTL resources, connect to friends and family in Afghanistan through WhatsApp, as well as services in their new community.

Empowering Refugee Families with CPR³ & Enhancing Services

RECOGNIZING THE CHALLENGE

In 2022, the International Institute of St. Louis (IISTL) received 600 Afghan refugees, one of the largest influxes of refugees in the Institute's more than 100-year history. Historically, IISTL purchased a relatively inexpensive phone with a couple months' worth of minutes and data for each refugee to remain in contact with the Institute; however, this proved to be insufficient and largely ineffective for the Afghan refugees. Once their minutes ran out, refugees struggled to pay for additional minutes or to follow the directions (in English, a language they are learning but often not proficient in) to load more minutes onto their phones' SIM cards. "The crisis we were facing was that we had too many people come, in too short a time, and we struggled to keep in touch with everybody," explained Arrey Obenson, President & CEO of IISTL.



Finding the Right Solution

Recognizing the need for a more sustainable solution, IISTL and T-Mobile began discussing ways to provide refugees with reliable communication. IISTL chose a solution that not only answered their need for phones and connectivity, but one that provided refugees with critical resources to provide a smooth transition to living in their new home of St. Louis.

The innovative solution IISTL chose was Premier's Wireless CPR³ platform, named for Connecting People to Resources. "Designed in languages they knew, Dari and Pashto, it went beyond just having a phone but having a tool, a package of resources that we put in their hands for them to use. Right from the beginning, they knew what hospitals to go to, the bus routes, the government services, and the phone numbers to call in case of emergency. All those things came in the package provided to them from Premier," reflected Obenson.



High speed, 5G Internet access was essentially provided to the whole family; children had education and entertainment options and parents had easy access to resources through IISTL as well as to the community-at-large. Importantly, family members that were unable to remain together, either because they stayed behind in Afghanistan, were resettled in other cities in the US, or sought refuge in other countries altogether, were able to stay in communication. This significantly improved refugees' quality of life and allowed them a sense of normalcy.

Seeing the Results

Premier's CPR³ devices can also be used as a hotspot, allowing family members to connect to the internet with additional devices. This has proven especially useful for Afghan women. Before the partnership, women would commute by bus up to 45 minutes each way, to participate in English language classes at IISTL. Culturally, this was an issue, as many families didn't encourage Afghan women to leave home without their husbands. With connectivity at home through the provided devices, women could participate in online classes without having to leave their children or their homes.

ABOUT PREMIER WIRELESS:

Premier Wireless a leading provider of technology solutions designed to enhance safety, drive innovation, improve communication, and facilitate transformation; notably, our CPR³ solution stands out as a purpose-driven device specifically customized to deliver vital resources to individuals in critical situations.

For more information about Premier's technology solutions, don't hesitate to contact us at sales@pwbts.net; our dedicated team is ready to assist you.

Looking to the Future

Mr. Obenson says the IISTL is committed and invested in this program, "It doesn't level the playing field, but it gives refugees a pathway and takes some challenges off the table." Mr. Obenson sees a significant need to bring 10M foreign-born individuals into the US to fill jobs. In the St. Louis region for example, there has been a declining population that's left numerous jobs unfilled. He sees the refugee population primed to solve that problem. He hopes to offer CPR³ devices to all future Afghan and other refugees that resettle in St. Louis.

“The most successful and fastest-growing metropolitan regions in the United States have a higher percentage of foreign-born residents than the national average. They are known as places of opportunity where immigrants can thrive. St. Louis needs an influx of immigrants and refugees to grow and energize our population, revitalize our city, strengthen our workforce and supply chain, ignite our region's economy, and elevate St. Louis' standing on the national and world stage.”

– *International Institute of St. Louis 2022 Annual Report* ”

In partnership with Premier and T-Mobile, and with the support of the St. Louis community, IISTL is well-prepared to make that vision a reality.

