

Pass It On®...

The Language of Love and Inclusion.

Barron Prize Winner Mia Lee founded LingoX, a nonprofit that provides free language classes for refugees, when she was 18 years old. LingoX now serves 136 countries.

Mia Lee is a confident teenager with a sharp mind and a big heart. She also lives in a world where massive geopolitical transitions drive people from their homes, requiring them to learn new languages and new life skills to survive.

People, including refugees, migrate for various reasons, including being uprooted by civil unrest, poverty or just plain looking for better opportunities. They must adapt to new cultures, complete the required paperwork, find employment and care for their families.

Language proficiency is the first key to success, but resources are slim. Lee began meeting some of these demands by offering free language classes to refugees. She and her team spent months developing the curriculum and were often awake at 3 a.m., giving free lessons to students on the other side of the world.

Language is fundamental to survival. Being uprooted is traumatic enough. Having to re-learn to communicate can be frustrating. There are few resources, not many organized efforts and a structure that doesn't accommodate learners who also have to hold down jobs.

"We are ensuring that no one is left behind," Lee writes on her website. "We're not just teaching languages; we're opening doors to a world of opportunities. But more importantly, it can lead to greater self-confidence and a belief that dreams can become reality."

Teaching a language takes more than a video call or a few online courses. It requires the patient attention of real teachers. LingoX partners with teachers who lead the coursework. Students work through an engaging curriculum designed specifically for refugees.

Lee is proud of the work being done but sees much more to be accomplished. "We've partnered with educational institutions worldwide, collaborated with

dedicated volunteers and witnessed the transformation of countless lives. We still have more lives to impact, more barriers to break and more dreams to fulfill."

Beyond learning a new language, adjusting to a new culture and making plans for the future, many refugees suffer from trauma experienced in their journey to a better life. LingoX pays attention to the inner language of emotions as well as linguistics.

"We're not just about education; we're about holistic well-being. We've connected our scholars with extensive mental health support because we know that a healthy mind is just as important as a knowledgeable one," Lee writes.

The LingoX approach is seeing success. Over 100,000 hours of learning have been provided for free. And that translates into thousands of lives changed for the better.

Mia Lee understands that all members of the human family have something to offer — they just need the right words to get started.

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