INTRODUCTION
A collaborative group project addressing the refugee housing dilemma in Salt Lake City. After researching current refugee housing and interviewing refugee caseworkers, we have discovered many of the needs that the refugee population in Salt Lake City face. The following is our solution to address these problems: First, these families need sustainable, comfortable, clean, reliable, and affordable housing where they can feel at home and find comfort in having their own home. We will be exploring the idea of creating a safe haven community for these refugees, a place that will help them integrate into the community and have the opportunity to socialize with locals and become an integral part of Utah.

RESEARCH
"A refugee, by definition, is someone who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (Cultural Orientation Resource Center, 2017). Refugees are legally brought to the United States by the U.S. Department of State. They may become permanent residents after working for a year and can apply for citizenship after five years. They can legally work in the U.S. as soon as they arrive (CORC, 2017).

Previous to arriving in their country of refuge, many of these refugees live in refugee camps along the borders of their homelands or in a neighboring country. By the time a refugee makes it to Utah, he or she might have lived in a refugee camp for many years. Some younger people have even been born in one of these camps. Before a refugee comes to the U.S. or he or she can request to be settled in an area where they already have family or friends living. This process creates some communities that are made up almost entirely of refugees (Utah.gov, 2016).

In 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump issued an executive order on refugees, limiting the number of refugees that could enter the United States. This order cut the admitted number to more than half, from 110,000 to 50,000 a year. This order also completely stopped immigration from Syria. According to Patrick Poulin, Salt Lake IRC Executive Director, Utah welcomes somewhere between 30 - 50 new refugees each month from countries around the world. In the last 14 years, the majority of Salt Lake’s refugees came from Burma, Iraq, Bhutan, Somalia and Eritrea (IRC, 2017).

In 2017, the 39,000 refugees were coming from Muslim countries; the Democratic Republic of Congo had 16,375, Iraq had 12,347, Iran had 9,880 and Somalia had 9,020 refugees (Krogstad, J. M., & Radford, J.). Today, 60,000 of those refugees live in Utah; over half of these are women and children. Most refugees living in Utah live in Utah county or Salt Lake county. When these refugees come to Utah, there are two main nonprofit agencies that assist them and get them on their feet (International Rescue Committee [IRC], 2017).

One of the nonprofits helping refugees is the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The IRC helps refugees feel welcome and comfortable when they first arrive. Before the family arrives, housing and furniture arrangements are made for them. For the first 30 days they are in the US they are completely provided for, after which they are on their own. They are picked up from the airport, given food, clothing and other necessities to start their new life (IRC, 2017). The IRC contacts with the Department of State to provide for the refugee’s food, housing, employment, health care, education, counseling, ESL classes, and other services to help the refugee make a rapid transition to economic self-sufficiency.

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References

SOLUTION
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