Community Partner
I volunteered with Cross-Cultural Solutions, an NGO acting at Ritsona to restore dignity to residents through meeting basic needs.

Project Information
In my three weeks at Ritsona, I worked in CCS’s four core areas: food and hygiene distribution, laundry, shop operation, and female-friendly space (FFS) restoration.

Skills Developed
- Program evaluation (assessment; feedback; use of funds)
- Community organizing (understanding and integrating with communities; getting buy-in and feedback from residents)
- Appropriate assertiveness, both in upholding CCS’s protocol at camp and in training new volunteers
- Engaging with people of all ages, from different backgrounds and countries, and sometimes across a language barrier

Lessons Learned
- The success of an organization depends on how committed each individual is to the overall mission
- The benefits of a social work lens in humanitarian work, and the privilege and influence I will carry as a social worker
- The best-laid plans will still have their hiccups, so be flexible!

Greece
Centrally located on the Mediterranean Sea, Greece is the crossroads between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Over 1.2 million people have sought refuge in Greece since 2014.1

Volunteers stayed in Chalkida, a small city in central Greece (roughly 1 hour north of Athens). We worked at the Ritsona Refugee Camp, which opened in 2016 at a former Air Force base.

Context
Refugee population: Mostly from Arab and African nations (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and others)

Service delivery: Greek and EU systems

Actors at camp: UNHCR, IOM, international NGOs

Languages spoken at Ritsona: Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Greek, French, and English
