

Human Rights First

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

<https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/blog/lance-sellon-veteran>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Work With Asylum Seekers

If you are seeking asylum, we can help

Areas of Focus

Current Initiatives

Meet Major Lance Sellon. Hes an Army National Guard Chaplain with deployments to Afghanistan and Africa. Hes also a youth minister, a husband, and a father. And hes speaking up for the millions of families that have been displaced by the world refugee crisis.

Sellon first enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving as a Drill Sergeant and later as a Company Commander. But seeing the devastation of war and meeting those affected struck Major Sellon so profoundly that he found his calling. He was a soldier and he would continue that to perform that role, but from then on, he would also be a man of the cloth. He became a Christian chaplain.

Sellon recounts that turning point in his life: One of the most impactful things for me was our first visit to a refugee camp . . . it was completely riddled with bullet holes, and there were families, hundreds of families living in this building.

[It] changed a lot of my perspectives, said Sellon. Trying to realize how families live in that. What would it be like for me as a husband or a father to try and provide for my family in those conditions.

As a man who took an oath, as soldier and an officer, protecting the United States of was not only Sellons duty, it also meant fighting for the fundamental freedoms of all people including the refugees.

As a chaplain and as a person of faith, when it comes to refugees, when it comes to people in desperate circumstances advocating for that is a no brainer, says Sellon. America was built on political refugees, built on religious refugees, regardless of faith group.

Sellon is no stranger to practicing what he preaches. Besides his work with refugees overseas, he also uses his position as a faith leader to [build bridges](#) between Christian and Muslim communities in America. Sellon believes there is room for all to live and worship freely so long as there are those willing to protect that freedom.

This is what I understand America to be.

[Veterans for American Ideals](#), a project of Human Rights First, empowers veterans to challenge the United States to live up to the ideals that inspired them to serve in the first place. We are focused on protecting refugees, preserving the Special Immigrant Visa program for interpreters and translators who served U.S. forces, and countering anti-Muslim bigotry.

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