

A personal quest to help Ukraine: Ivan Lebed in DTS shares his story

Kathleen Gorman, Internal Communications (March 22, 2022)

As he follows news of the crisis in Ukraine, Ivan Lebed, a software engineer with DTS, is most worried about his grandfather in Kharkiv.

Ukraine's second-largest city has suffered relentless bombing during the recent Russian attack. Shelling blew out the windows of the apartment building where Ivan's 80-year-old grandpa lives. He stuffs pillows into the gaps, wraps himself in heavy blankets and drinks tea to survive the frigid temperatures. His wife died a few months ago from COVID-19, but he has a dog and cats and doesn't want to leave Kharkiv. Plus, he asks Ivan when they talk, where would I go? *"This is my home. If I get covered by the rubble here, this is where I'm going to stay."*

From his home outside Seattle, Ivan calls frequently. He sent money until his grandfather could no longer receive it. Meanwhile, other family members are faring better – his mother is in a Ukrainian city far from the bombing. His aunt and sister escaped to Germany with their children. As refugees, their struggles are far from over, however.

"They were lucky to be healthy enough to handle the sleepless multi-day journey with little children through Kyiv, Lviv, and the border to Poland," Ivan said. "They were also lucky to have already been trying to immigrate to Germany for years and navigating the bureaucracy and arranging things. They are certainly lucky to have family to pay for travel, fees, and a security deposit for an apartment. Even with all this luck and support, they still face a long road of adjusting to a new country, learning language and culture, and working through PTSD and the shame of leaving loved ones behind.

"Many people aren't so lucky. Many people don't have family overseas and lost everything."

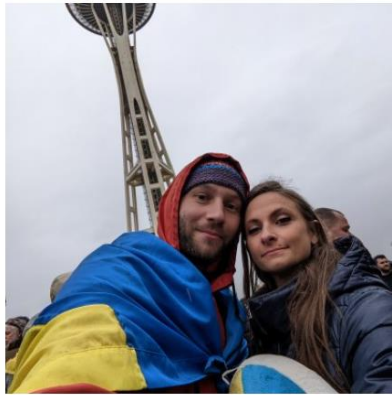
Ivan grew up in Ukraine but emigrated to the United States in 2006 after his father – also a software engineer – obtained a green card. He started at Cambia as an intern in 2012 after clicking on the Cambia web site and seeing what looked like "a happy family" doing good work for others. "I thought, 'Wow, that looks like something I'd like to do. I'd like to make a difference with my life.'"

In times of crisis, it's natural to feel anxious and helpless. Ivan recalls previous Russian aggressions, and he's talked with people about similar heart-breaking crises in other countries. He decided to channel those feelings into trying to help. He and his spouse are setting up a nonprofit "Heroiam Slava" (Glory to the Heroes) to aid Ukrainian refugees and those who stayed behind to rebuild their lives.

He has been encouraging colleagues to give to international relief organizations through [Cambia Gives](#). "The relief organizations are helping refugees in Poland who crossed the border, and they will help evacuate people from active war zones. They will also be critical in organizing post-war response – rebuilding my home city and helping people in the region. As sanctions roll out, people in Russia are losing jobs, can't withdraw money from banks, are losing the ability to leave.

"I'm hopeful that this ends fast with the least amount of suffering, but I'm ready to support these international organizations for the next few years to ease suffering in the region. With Cambia's 50% match we get the most bang for the buck with these donations."

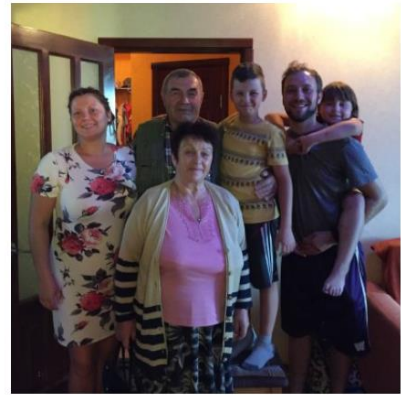
More details on how to donate through the Cambia Health Foundation can be found [here](#). Our community and social impact team has curated a list of organizations supporting Ukrainians [on Cambia Gives](#). The Cambia Health Foundation is also making a \$50,000 donation -- \$25,000 to [Medical Teams International](#) and \$25,000 to the [International Rescue Committee](#) -- to address needs abroad and at home for refugees in our communities. Donations made by benefits-eligible employees to U.S.-based nonprofits can be matched at 50% by the Cambia Health Foundation. If you have questions about giving, email impact@cambiahealth.com



Ivan and Jennifer in Seattle



Ivan, his grandpa and his dog Buddy



Ivan's sister Dasha, grandpa, his grandpa's wife Raisa (died from COVID last year), his nephew Vadim, Ivan, his cousin Dasha



Ivan's grandpa



Ivan's grandpa