

# San Diego Refugee Forum

General Meeting Minutes – February 17, 2009

## *I. Call to order at 10:40 am*

*Hamse Warfa*

**Present:** Ralph Achenbach, Lejla Voloder, Sara Vaz, Abdi Mohamoud, Deqa Sayid, Morgan Congdon, Dan Breuninger, Lisa Bright, Ester Herrera, Donna Peterson, Samantha Hurst, Simin Khadivi, Effere Befla, Besma Coda, Hamse Warfa, Karma Bass, Diana Ross, Ahmed Sahid, Sid Voorakkara, Heather Bennet, Barbara Jimenez, Tami Gaines, Tammy Lin, Mallory Cochrane, Mikaela Wallinder, Dilkhaz Ahmed, Brent Freeman, Kathi Anderson, Juana Duenas, Mary Cutchin, Michael McKay, Sean Riordan, Ayaan Khalif

## *II. Introductions*

## *III. Minutes and Announcements*

- Since there was no meeting in January, there were no minutes. The minutes of the November meeting had been approved at the December meeting. The December meeting was a celebration of the year 2008 with no agenda items, so no minutes are available.
- Mallory Cochrane of the IRC invited to a presentation given by the Coalition for Abused Refugee and Immigrant Women on Thursday, March 12, from 1pm-2:30pm in the SDPD Multicultural Storefront Community Room at 5348 University Avenue.
- Deqa Sayid of the IRC urged representatives from the refugee communities and service providers to attend the next City Heights Redevelopment community meeting on Monday, March 9, 6pm at the Price Building, 4305 University Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> floor.
- Ralph Achenbach announced that the County Health and Human Services Agency is seeking a qualified trainer on Chaldean culture, and that interested parties can contact Karen Harris at karen.harris@sdcounty.ca.gov.

## *IV. Focus: Alliance Healthcare Foundation*

- Karma Bass, CEO of the Alliance Healthcare Foundation, shared the Foundation's new strategic outlook, stressing the importance of innovative use of technology and collaborative efforts in presenting requests for financial support to the Foundation. The presentation slides are available on the Refugee Forum website at [www.SDRefugeeForum.org/learn](http://www.SDRefugeeForum.org/learn).

## *V. Committee Updates*

- Diana Ross reported on behalf of the advocacy committee that the proposal to the California Endowment to collaborate with Horn of Africa on a national conference and a local event has been submitted. Sid Voorakkara added that the first review of the request will take place in March.
- Diana Ross, on behalf of the Refugee Forum, honored Kushbindar Lally for her selfless service to the refugee communities of San Diego and her contributions to the Refugee Forum advocacy committee.
- Mike McKay reported on behalf of the membership and outreach committee that the committee's review of the Refugee Forum website at their January meeting resulted in several recommendations, incl. the updating of the membership list and the publication of the different committees and committee members. The committee also suggests to dedicate the January meeting of every year to a social event such as a potluck lunch, to allow for more informal networking.

## *VI. Financial Report*

- Lejla Voloder reported the new account balance as \$1,566.87. In 2008, the Refugee Forum membership was comprised of eleven organizations and eight individuals.

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- Lejla reminded all existing and potential members that their dues for 2009 have to be paid by March. To date, two new members have joined: the East County Refugee Center, and the Community Research Foundation Step Forward.

## *VII. County Reports*

- Barbara Jiminez thanked those organizations that responded to the most recent request for information and encouraged all members to continue to keep the County informed and updated on all developments.

## *VIII. Provider and State Advisory Reports*

- Brent Freeman of the IRC reported that there were no updates from the State Advisory Committee.
- Mike McKay of Catholic Charities reported that the initial estimate for expected new arrivals to San Diego County in FY2009 has been updated from 3,600 to 4,800, of which the large majority will be Iraqis. This number includes SIVs, secondaries, and asylees. He alerted all members that this will likely result in an increase in demand for services.

## *VII. Adjournment at 11:50 am*

## *IX. Next Meeting: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am*