



General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 21, 2017 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
International Rescue Committee (IRC) – 5348 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105

1. Opening.
 - a. Call to order at 10:30 am.
 - b. Rebecca Paida (Chair) opened the Forum meeting and welcomed attendees.
 - c. Refugee Forum Officers: Rebecca Paida (Chair), Bridget de la Garza (Secretary), Oren Robinson (Treasurer) were present.
 - d. Forum participants introduced themselves.
 - e. Membership and Financials. Oren Robinson (Treasurer) reported that there are currently 24 paid members (15 organizations and 9 individual members). The benefits of membership are having name on the SDRF website, members can post to and receive messages on the SDRF email distribution list, free resource table at the World Refugee Event in June 2017, and have the ability to vote on SDRF matters and. Online payment option is available. Survey will be sent out soon to elicit feedback related to cost of membership fees.
2. Community & Task Force Updates.
 - a. **Advocacy Task Force:** No updates.
 - b. **Asylee/Asylum Seeker Task Force:** No updates.
 - c. **Domestic Violence Task Force:** Successful event in beginning of March focusing on healthy relationships. 200 Syrian families were invited. The task force is planning similar events for this year.
 - d. **Employment Task Force:** No updates.
 - e. **Health Task Force.** The task force will focus on oral health this year. Next meeting is Tuesday, April 1, 2017 at 1 p.m. at Nile Sisters Development Initiative.
 - f. **World Refugee Day Task Force:** This year's World Refugee Day event will be Saturday, June 17th from 12 to 4:00 PM at the Officer Jeremy Henwood Memorial Park, 3700 Fairmount Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105 with performances at the City Heights Library Performance Annex. The task force would like to create a new flyer design for this year's event and invited anyone interested in designing new flyer to contact the task force chairs, Maggie Fenn or Laurel Dalsted. Next meeting will be March 28, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. at the IRC, Room 205.
3. County Agencies & Committees.
 - a. Reception & Placement. Resettlement Agencies (formerly VOLAGs) Arrival Data and Updates
 - i. Alliance for African Assistance: No updates.
 - ii. Catholic Charities: No updates.

- iii. International Rescue Committee: March 2017 numbers, 81 arrivals in Feb.; not many on the books right now. Most arrivals are SIVs coming from Afghanistan and Iraq
 - iv. Jewish Family Services: No updates.
 - b. County of San Diego (Oren Robinson reported for Abdi Abdillahi)
 - i. Total number of refugee arrivals for the month of February 2017 was 212.
 - ii. Refugees were from Iraq (38%); Syria (16%); Afghanistan (15%); and Other Countries (31%).
 - iii. Total number of refugee arrivals in San Diego County so far (October 1, 2016-February 28, 2017) during current federal fiscal year is 1,764
 - c. State Advisory Council (Mohammed Tuama): Conference call on March 9th. There were 9 applications for two openings on the State Advisory Conference. They are revising the procedure for elections because of the large number of nominations.
 - d. Refugee Health: No updates.
- 4. **Focus Presentation. Vision for Justice Collaborative Project. Annie Ruttenber and Roberto Sarmiento, San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program (SDVLP)**
 - a. SDVLP is non-profit law firm that provides free legal services. Mission. Practice areas. Impact. Location of offices. Immigration status does not matter.
 - b. Offers Family Law Clinic, assistance with filing restraining orders, guardianship matters
 - c. Contact information: Main office phone (619) 235-5656
 - d. Women's and Families Resource Fair, Sat., March 26, 2017 at Jacobs Center, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
 - e. Annie Ruttenber provided an overview of the Vision for Justice Collaborative (VJC)
 - i. Provides free legal help to refugees and immigrants for victims of a crime with civic legal services such as restraining orders, divorce, custody child/spousals support, immigration, employment.
 - ii. Works in partnership with License to Freedom and Casa Cornelia.
 - iii. Two free legal clinics: City Heights Walk-in Clinic, La Maestra in the gallery room. Translation is not provided; therefore, clients are encouraged to bring an individual who can interpret for them, and El Cajon Clinic (appointment only).
 - iv. Contact: (619) 564-6944. For help in Arabic, Kurdish, or Farsi, call (619) 401-2800
- 5. **Spotlight Presentation:** Shlyn Guarian, Community Outreach Liaison, Child Welfare Service, Country of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency – Central Region.
 - a. Vision for Live Well San Diego
 - b. Neighborhoods for Kids and Child Welfare are the same program is about keeping kids in familiar environments and enhancing relationship building in neighborhoods.
 - c. Started with school project 2001/2003. Social workers located at schools.
 - d. Described the model of four clusters used in the central region.
 - e. If a community organization would like to share information on their organization with social workers, please contact Shalyn Guarian. (619) 521-7359.

6. Community Announcements

- Native Interpreting is hosting an introductory four-hour training on interpreting on April 1, 2017. Enrollment fee is \$30. Madelyne Wagner provided a flyer on this event.
- Office of Emergency Services, County of San Diego is offering a workshop on April 28, 2017. The public is invited to attend.
- STARPAL offers a youth center Tues-Friday at 2:30 p.m. The offer tutoring and field trips. Youth who participate in STARPAL have been improving their grades. Tutoring from college students.
- Intrepid Theatre presented "Exiled Voices" on March 12, 2017 at the Horton Grand Theatre and has tentatively scheduled another performance at Crawford High School tentatively scheduled for April 10, 2017. This performance is the culmination of eight-week long project in which professional artists are matched with refugee students at Crawford High School. Performance is free and open to the public.
- Karen Organization of San Diego shared their latest newsletter.
- UPAC offers a Noble Works Program that helps individuals with severe mental illness find meaningful employment.
- Planned Parenthood is now providing treatment services of FGC as well as child-spacing, cancer screening, and other.
- The San Diego Police Department has a Family Justice Center, clothing, advocacy, emergency housing, housing for pets, immigration assistance, and legal assistance.
- SAY San Diego, through the Crawford Community Collaborative, is hosting an event for parents of students in the Crawford Cluster to have input into the district's LCAP (funding) plan. This event is March 25, 2017, 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. at Ibarra Elementary School.
- *The Commission on the Status of Women*, United Nations held this month was attended by Dilkhaz Ahmed and others from San Diego.
- The Women's Museum of California is holding a panel discussion of women who participated in the U.N.'s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61), report back about the results of their presentation. This event is March 27, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the museum in Liberty Station.

7. **Approval of Minutes.** Diana Rhodes made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting (February 2017), and Awichu Akwanya, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

8. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 18, 2017 from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) - 5348 University Avenue, Suite 205, San Diego, CA 92105.