**Minutes of the San Diego Refugee Forum Meeting**

Date: Tuesday, February 15. 2022

Location: Zoom meeting

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Attendees:

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| Abdi Abdillahi, SD County Refugee Coordinator |
| Angela Molina, Office of Cong. Sara Jacobs |
| Anne Fosselman, El Cajon Valley HS Community Ctr |
| Avonne Pace, A Better Life Together BRIDGE Project |
| Becky Moreno-Estrada, FBI Victim Specialist |
| Bob Walsh, SDRF Secretary |
| Carmen Kcomt, La Maestra Comm. Health Centers |
| Carol Crisp, PCG |
| Carol Lewis, El Cajon Collaborative |
| Carolyn Bonoff, Haitian Bridge Alliance |
| Casey Myers Doane, One Digital World |
| Chelsea Hill, Nile Sisters |
| Cipriano Vargas, Office of Sup. Lawson-Remer |
| Claire Enemark, SDRCC/UWEAST |
| Clint Carney, Survivors of Torture Intl |
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| Dalia Mohammad, License to Freedom |
| Dan Nyamangah, SAY San Diego |
| Dan Wilson |
| Dave Elmer, SDUSD ret. |
| David Schupack, Bridge Builders Network |
| Dilkhwaz Ahmed, License to Freedom |
| Farhat Popal, City SD Immigrant Affairs Mgr |
| Guadalupe Rodriguez, SAY San Diego |
| Hassan Abdirahman, Somali Family Service |
| Hector Peralta, community member |
| Ileana Salas |
| iPhone |
| Irene Elizabeth Garcia, County Child Lead Prevention |
| Ismael Avilez, Casa Cornelia Law Center |
| Jan Jarrell, SD College of Continuing Ed |
| Jane Hoey, Women's Empowerment Intl |
| Jane Register, World Relief SoCal |
| Jean Saito, First 5 First Steps |
| Jessica Hernandez, East Region Adult Ed |
| Jonathan Kahn |
| Juan Estrada, Molina Healthcare, Community Engagement |
| Judy Amaro, PCG |
| Julia Youkstetter |
| Kathryn LaPointe, Oasis |
| Lenda Hanna, SD County Off. Refugee Coord., Immigrant and Refugee Affairs |
| Lily Mojdehi, Breaking Down Barriers, Jewish Fam Serv |
| Liz Rosas, Somali Bantu Association |
| Lucy Jasso, San Diego Youth Services |
| Martha Salmeron |
| Mary Joy Cunningham, IRC MSW Intern |
| Maureen Hartin, Volunteers in Medicine |
| Nazira Adieva, County Office of Equitable Communities CAP |
| Officer Homayoun Nabizadeh, SDPD Comm. Relations |
| Osvaldo Alcazar Pulido, United Health Care |
| Rahmo Abdi, PANA |
| Renae Bryant |
| Rita Shamoon, CALWORKS job developer |
| Ross Fackrell, IRC, SDRF Vice Chair |
| Shlyn Guarian, SD County Child Welfare Services, Community Outreach |
| Therese |
| Therese Nicole Franklin |
| Veronica Perez, A Better LifeTogether |

**Meeting facilitator**: Hassan Abdirahman, Chair

**1. Greeting and introduction of attendees** Hassan Abdirahman, Chair

59 attending, including 14 new

**2. Treasurer’s report** Carol Lewis, Treasurer

We currently have 8 members for 2022. It’s time to be sending in membership dues to become a paid member of the Forum for this calendar year. Members are eligible to vote in Forum elections and to run for office. Dues provide funds for Task Forces and our World Refugee Day event.

This year we are making it easier to join by once again offering the option of mailing in a check (see membership form at website). You can also pay online through Paypal on the SDRF website <http://www.sdrefugeeforum.org/members.html>

You can send checks to me: Carol Lewis, Little House Family Resources, 131 Avocado Ave., El Cajon CA 92020. $35 annually for individuals/small agencies and $70 for organizations. Membership forms can be found online at http://www.sdrefugeeforum.org/

Carol can provide an invoice if you want one. Contact Carol at [carol.lewis@elcajoncollaborative.org](mailto:carol.lewis@elcajoncollaborative.org)

**3. Resettlement updates**  Abdi Abdillahi, County Refugee Coordinator

For the month of January 2022, San Diego County resettled a total of 685.

* Primary Refugees (not including the Afghans) = 36
* Cuban/Haitian = 93
* Iraqi with Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status = 4
* **Total Afghans for January 2022 = 552**
  + Afghans with refugee status = 84
  + Afghans with SIV status = 1
  + Afghans with Special Immigrant Parolee (SIP) status = 0
  + Afghans with Humanitarian Parolee (HP) status = 467
* 547 out of the total 685 (or 80%) for January 2022 are number of individuals eligible for CalWORKs including children.
* 138 out of the total 685 (or 20%) for January 2022 are number of single adults/couples with no children under 18 eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA).

For the FFY 21/22 (October 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022), San Diego County resettled a total of 2,571.

* Primary Refugee (not including the Afghans) = 85
* Secondary Immigration (refugees that resettled in another county and moved to San Diego) = 5
* Asylee = 4
* Iraqi with SIV status = 4
* Cuban/Haitians = 328
* **Total Afghans for FFY 2021/2022 (October 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022) = 2,145**
  + Afghans with refugee status = 273
  + Afghans with SIV status = 31
  + Afghans with Special Immigrant Parolee (SIP) status = 131
  + Afghans with Humanitarian Parolee (HP) status = 1,710
* 1,710 or 80% out of the total Afghans 2,145 that resettled in San Diego County for FFY 21/22 (October 2021 through January 2022) are Afghans with Humanitarian Parolee (HP) status.
* 2,107 out of the total arrivals 2,571 (or 82%) for FFY 2021/2022 are number of individuals eligible for CalWORKs including children.
* 464 out of the total arrivals 2,571 (or 18%) are number of single adults/couples with no children under 18 years eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA).

For more details, see the County Arrivals Report for February 2022 uploaded on the SDRF website.

Today’s presentation provides a description of the current state of affairs with the newly arriving Afghan entrants.

**4. Task force updates** Task Force Chairs/representatives

Employment

Carol Crisp reported:

The task force met last week. They discussed plans to organize a refugee job in April, possibly at Grossmont College. Perhaps a hybrid event. Once it is finalized, the group will inform the Forum, but you can email Carol regarding your interest in participating. ccrisp@pcgus.com

Asylum

* Clint Carney: ORR has recognized that there are more than 35,000 torture survivors in the San Diego area. SDRF participants are encouraged to join the Asylum Task Force.
* Casey Myers of One Digital World: The group has set up computer classes in refugee centers in the border area to better prepare asylum seekers and migrants.
* Mary Joy Cunningham from IRC introduced herself as an Asylum TF member.
* Kathryn La Pointe has been active with people seeking asylum.

Mental Health

Claire Enemark reported:

The group is still working on a survey to create a map of mental health service providers who are culturally qualified, including for newly arrived asylees. It is hard to find clinicians; specialists are needed. Please help the task force identify qualified people.

Culturally Qualified Mental Health Providers Survey: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=UvK1-s5zPU-vwLTWlV5JSZ2\_onwb\_1tKg0dDvHKvMpFURFdTV09FRlpPNjlXSjZFTVExRjlMN1FZUy4u

World Refugee Day Committee

We will be calling for volunteers to get started with planning this event, which takes place annually in June.

**5. Presentation: Relocation and Resettlement of Afghans to San Diego** Ross Fackrell, Resettlement Program Manager, IRC

Ross presented a PowerPoint presentation titled “Afghan Arrivals in San Diego: R&P vs. APA”. The Afghan Placement Assistance program was created by the US State after the fall of Kabul in August 2021 to deal with the thousands of evacuees flown out of Afghanistan. First taken to US military bases abroad, evacuees were processed and moved to military bases in the US through February of 2022, though several thousand remain at overseas bases.

The new Afghan entrants coming through the APA are not designated as refugees or SIV cases, as we are used to handling, but are humanitarian parolees (HP), a different category. The main point of the presentation was that there are many important differences between refugees and APA HP cases in terms of how they entered the pipeline to the US, how they were screened and vetted, their pathway to the US, their preparation for coming here, their official immigration status, their resettlement benefits and public benefits, and their experience as newcomers. It is vital for agencies that deal with the new Afghan arrivals to understand these differences.

See the attached PowerPoint for a detailed description of these significant differences.

**6. Community announcements**

Lupita Rodriguez, First 5 Steps

Is providing a flyer for you to get in contact with their program services. Guadalupe.Rodriguez@saysandiego.org

Shlyn Guarian, Outreach for Child Welfare Services

The Faith in Motion initiative is looking at coordinating with faith-based organizations to collaborate with on efforts to prevent child abuse and on preparing communities for children. Contact Shlyn Guarian, COSD Child Welfare Services, Community Outreach Liaison, 619.917.5481.

Hector Peralta

I grew up in El Cajon and am currently an El Cajon resident. I am working on my PhD dissertation in American Studies at Yale University, and my research is about the incorporation of migrant and refugee communities into the economy and labor force of the East County San Diego casinos (Viejas, Barona, Sycuan, Jamul, Campo/Golden Acorn). If anybody has any insight or stories that could be relevant, please do reach out via private message or at [hector.peralta@yale.edu](mailto:hector.peralta@yale.edu)

Jessica Hernandez, East Region Adult Education

Would I be able to be emailed (jehernandez@guhsd.net) the contact information for the contact person at IRC, Catholic Charities, and Alliance for African Assistance? East Region Adult Education would like to connect with these agencies and schedule a meeting.

**7. Approval of the minutes of the November 2021 and January 2022 meetings** Bob Walsh, Secretary

The minutes were approved.

**Adjournment**: Hassan Abdirahman, Chair, 12:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting**: March 15, 2022

Minutes recorded by Bob Walsh, Secretary