



## General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 18, 2017 10:30 am to 12:00 pm  
International Rescue Committee (IRC) – 5348 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105

Present: Alvin Cook, Andrea Silva, Awichu Akwanya, Becky Levine, Bridget de la Garza, Carmen Hernandez, Danielle Eguiza, David Murphy, Deona Dorsey, Donnaly Crull, Guerline Jozef, Jackline Mola, Justin Kramer, Kathi Anderson, Kim Thomas, Kirsten Moore, Kelly Wright, Lizeth Lopez, Lori Gutierrez, Lucia Acevedo, Madelyne Wagner, Munquith Alhajaj, Oliver Cabana, Oren Robinson, Rahwa Weldeselase, Rebecca Miranda, Rebecca Paida, Rita Shannon, Rudy Vargas, Ryan Williams, Shyln Guarian, Vernita Gutierrez, Viviana S. Sherman, Zachary Rivera

### 1. Opening.

- a) Call to order at 10:34 am.
- b) Rebecca Paida (Chair) opened the Forum meeting and welcomed attendees.
- c) Refugee Forum Officers: Rebecca Paida (Chair), Kirsten Moore (Vice Chair), Bridget de la Garza (Secretary), and Oren Robinson (Treasurer) were present.
- d) Forum participants introduced themselves.

### 2. Membership and Financials.

- a) Oren Robinson (Treasurer) gave the following report:
  - Current membership is 43.
  - Benefits of membership include being able to nominate individuals for the forums' annual Refugee Resilience Award, vote during elections, have a resource table at the forum's World Refugee Day Event at no cost, and have name posted on forum website.
  - Membership fees can be paid online at [www.sdrfugeeforum.org](http://www.sdrfugeeforum.org) or by check.

### 3. San Diego Refugee Forum Task Force Updates.

- a) Advocacy Task Force: Rebecca Miranda reported that the Advocacy Task force met last week and decided to focus on events to increase awareness of refugee issues.. Will develop action toolkit and will be looking for educational materials related to advocacy to distribute at events. Rebecca Miranda was elected co-chair of the task force. The next meeting of the Advocacy task force will be **August 8, 2017 at 12 p.m.** at the Alliance for African Assistance.
- b) Asylee/Asylum Seeker Task Force: No updates.
- c) Domestic Violence Task Force: No updates
- d) Employment Task Force: No updates.

- e) Health Task Force. Madelyne Wagner reported that the Health Task Force met on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. Agenda included a presentation by the Legal Aid Society of San Diego: Consumer Center for Health Education and Advocacy. The next meeting of the Health Task Force will be Tuesday, August 8, 2017 at 1 p.m. at Niles Sisters Development Initiative.
- f) World Refugee Day Task Force: Maggie Fenn suggested that anyone who has pictures of the event, please post them to the World Refugee Day Facebook page.

#### 4. Reception and Placement (Resettlement Agencies Arrival Data and Updates)

- Alliance for African Assistance: No report.
- Catholic Charities: No report.
- International Rescue Committee: Thirteen (13) arrivals in June 2017 from Afghanistan and Somalia. David Murphy shared update on the current status of court rulings on refugee arrivals which is changing on a weekly basis. Current maximum number of arrivals in U.S. for 2017 federal fiscal year is 50,000, and this number has been met. Because the original cap was 110,000, there are many refugees in the pipeline. No additional refugees admitted unless they have been accepted by a resettlement agency and have a "bona fide" U.S. tie.
- Jewish Family Services: Fifty-two (52) arrivals in June (mostly SIVs from Afghanistan and Iraq). Twenty-six (26) arrivals expected in July.

#### 5. County of San Diego. Maggie Fenn reported arrival data for San Diego County.

- Total number of arrivals for the month of June 2017 was 136, similar to the previous month's total number of 138.
- Monthly refugee arrivals report now includes data at the bottom of page listing the number of CalWORKS cases, number of *individuals within the* CalWORKS cases including children, and number of singles or couples with no children.
- Monthly refugee arrival data is posted on the forum website under "Resources" tab.

#### 6. State Advisory Council

Maggie Fenn reported that the by-laws are being revised to modify the member voting process. The newly elected SAC members will be invited to the August SAC meeting. The next State Advisory Council meeting will be an in-person meeting that is open to the public, no need to RSVP. This meeting will be Wednesday, August 30, 2017, 8:00-9:00 a.m. at the Wyndham San Diego Bayside, 1355 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego 92101.

#### 7. Refugee Health. No update.

8. Focus Presentation. Overview of Resources Provided by Mental Health of America, San Diego Focusing on Minority Mental Health

*Presenter: Jackline Mola, African Immigrant Outreach Coordinator, Mental Health America of San Diego County, 4069 430<sup>th</sup> St., San Diego CA 92104, Ph: 619-543-0412, [jmola@mhasd.org](mailto:jmola@mhasd.org); [www/mhasd.org/](http://www/mhasd.org/)*

- a) Focus is to promote mental health wellness education. Promote prevention, treatment, and maintenance of mental health problems. Hope to break down the stigma of getting help for mental health, especially for those that are under-served.
- b) Offers Mental Health First-Aid trainings. Minimum of 10 participants required.
- c) All programs are free and funded by the County.
- d) Programs Offered:
  - Breaking down Barriers.
  - Father 2 Child.
  - Father 2 Child Second Chance Mentoring
- e) Services & Activities
  - Educational Presentations
  - Advocacy
  - Information and Referral Services
- f) Advisory groups. Jackline welcomes participation of anyone from the community who supports the target populations.
- e) The Powerpoint of this presentation will be posted on the San Diego Refugee Forum website under "Resources."

9. Spotlight Presentation. Haitian Bridge Alliance, Inc., (HBA)

*Presenter: Guerline Jozef, President/Public Relations, Haitian Bridge Alliance, Inc. 4265 Fairmount Ave, SD CA 92015. Email: [info@haitianbridge.org](mailto:info@haitianbridge.org) Ph: 917-496-2248; [www.haitianbridge.org](http://www.haitianbridge.org)*

- a) Began in April 2016 when there was an arrival of individuals from Haitian arriving in U.S. via Mexico who walked from Brazil after earthquake and economic hardships in Haiti.
- b) HBA helped Haitians get to their final destinations such as New York
- c) Services provided:
  - a) Translation services.
  - b) Legal clinics
  - c) Employment readiness program (in Creole)
  - d) Drivers Ed program
  - e) Toy drive
  - f) Assistance getting passport
  - g) Visits and translation for Haitians who are detained.
  - h) Support Needed: financial, translation, and other.

10. Community Announcements

- a) Rebecca Paida acknowledged representatives from local government offices who are in attendance at today's meeting.

- b) Bread and Rose Center for Feminist Research and Activism, San Diego State University, is conducting research (survey) aimed at building a directory of organizations that serve refugee populations and the services they offer. The link to the survey is [goo.gl/ZES5y3](http://goo.gl/ZES5y3). If questions, contact Dhaha Nur, [dnur@sdsu.edu](mailto:dnur@sdsu.edu).
- c) A resource fair for social workers will be held in November. (Shalyn Guarian, County of San Diego, Child Welfare Services.)
- d) The East African Community Center is hosting an event for for male youth and parents on August 11, 2017 from 2-5 p.m. Focus on it mental health. Everyone is welcome. Contact: Awichu Akwanya, [aawichu@unitedwomenofeastafrika.org](mailto:aawichu@unitedwomenofeastafrika.org)
- e) The CARE Community Center is having its first resource fair, Saturday, July 29th 2017 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 p.m. located at 12 N. Euclid Ave, National City, CA 91950. Resources will include food bank, mobile health clinic, housing assistance, Medi-Cal and Cal-Fresh enrollment, workshops and more; Contact: Oliver Cabana, DA's office, [oliver.cabana@sdccda.org](mailto:oliver.cabana@sdccda.org).
- f) [Nile Sisters Development Initiative](#) has three upcoming events. Information on these event is available on their website.
  - a. Refugee and Ethnic Populations Health Convening hosted in partnership with the Office of Minority Health Resource Center. Dates: July 20-21, 2017. Location: San Diego State University. Free of charge.
  - b. Panel of South Sudanese leaders and stakeholders, "Refugee Crisis: Spotlight on South Sudan" August 17, 2017. Reserve spot on NSDI website.
  - c. [Community Picnic](#), supported by City of San Diego, International Affairs Board, Date: August 5, 2017.
  - d. The City of San Diego International Affairs Board and Human Relations Commission is hosting a joint meeting on the subject of refugees in San Diego. Date: July 19, 2017, 5:30 p.m. Location: Silver Room, City Administration Building Concourse, 202 C. St. San Diego, 92101. Contact: Joel Day.
  - e. Mohammed Tuama shared that a resolution was recently adopted to establish an indoor soccer field in El Cajon. Pilot project to provide civic engagement for refugees will start in August 2017. First job and resource fair for skilled and foreign credentialed newcomers will be held October 26, 2017.
  - f. Kirsten Moore, co-chair of San Diego Refugee Forum said thank you and farewell as she will be moving from the U.S. at the end of the month.
  - g. Bridget de la Garza reminded everyone that up for the San Diego Refugee Forum listserv to share and receive community announcement. The link to join is located on the main page of the [www.sdrefugeeforum.org](http://www.sdrefugeeforum.org).

11. Approval of Minutes from June 2017. Kirsten Moore made a motioned to approve the minutes from June 20, 2017 general meeting. Maggie Fenn seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

12. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 15, 2017 from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) - 5348 University Avenue, Suite 205, San Diego, CA 92105.