



El Cajon Collaborative Council Meeting Notes

December 2nd, 2008

I. **Welcome & Introductions**

In order to make as much time as possible for our presentation, Cheryl Cosart opening the meeting with quick introductions as well as a few announcements regarding the new sign-in sheet and parking. See additional attachment for the Collaborative Council Contact List.

II. **Presentation and Discussion:**

We were fortunate to hear from representatives from some of our Chaldean service partners including Father Bazzi from St. Peter Chaldean Catholic Church, Nawal Alkatib from the Gateway Internet program and Chaldean Media Center, and Besma Coda from the Chaldean-Middle Eastern Social Services. Each individual presented on a short list of topics and introduced the Chaldean population and particular needs of the community. Father Bazzi noted that Caldeans are a very family and church centered community of people and that the Cathedral in El Cajon is the center of the Chaldean Catholic church in the Western US (19 states belong to the Diocese). In her presentation, Nawal Alkatib noted that they have had overwhelming success with their program of Arabic internet classes held at libraries in East County. The Chaldean community responded very well to being surveyed and participating in the planning of these programs. Finally, Besma Coda from the Chaldean-Middle Eastern Social Services Center discussed their broad range of services and a cultural sensitivity training that they can offer to groups. She also noted that jobs are a great concern to many of the Chaldean refugees.

During discussion Michael McKay of Catholic Charities was able to provide some context to the refugee influx this year and the expected numbers for next year of about 3,600 primary refugee arrivals. He also emphasized employment and training as being important issues for collaboration and partnership with refugee resettlement organizations.

III. **ECC Committee/Workgroup Reports**

The Program Committee meets regularly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:30pm to discuss collaborative programs and Collaborative Family Night. Debbie Comstock of East County Family Justice Center is the chair.

The Neighborhood Safety Committee is reconvening with Susan Caldwell of Institute for Public Strategies as the Chair. Susan is looking for workgroup participants and passed around a sign-up sheet for interested individuals.

IV. **Information Roundtable – Community Announcements & Other News**

A shortened information roundtable was necessary because of the longer presentation. Any information available will be distributed electronically.

V. **Next Council Meeting**

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 6th from 12:15-2pm at the Cajon Valley Union School District Board Room (750 East Main, El Cajon, CA 92020).

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