

The Arab-American Family Support Center Newsletter

Arab American Family Support Center Newsletter ---July 2009

The Arab-American Family Support Center

150 Court Street, 3rd Floor

Brooklyn, NY 11201

(718) 643-8000

www.aafscny.org

Message from our Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe that its already been more than three years since we brought Lena Alhusseini on board as Executive Director. Today, we'd like to acknowledge the major accomplishments of our leadership team and staff over the past three years. Here are are just some of the them:

- • Our budget has grown by more than 50%
- • Our clients base has quadrupled to nearly 4,000 people, with expansion in every program
- • We consistently receive evaluations of "Excellent" or "Very Good" from the Department of Youth and Community Development and the Administration for Children's Services continues to give us high ratings
- • ACS, which has praised our quality of services, awarded us 15 additional preventive slots to serve the South Asian community
- • AAFSC was instrumental in opening the Khalil Gibran International Academy in the face of tremendous opposition and we are continuing our commitment to ensure KGIA is a school of excellence, with a focus on global education and the Arabic language
- • Our Board of Directors has grown from seven to ten members and is extremely diverse based on religion, gender and ethnicity
- • We have been invited to partner with organizations in the Middle East on issues of child protection and domestic violence, and our staff has been invited to participate in international conferences around the globe, including Germany and Malaysia
- • We have hosted delegations from around the world visiting the U.S. through the State Department

Thanks to our leadership team and staff, AAFSC is stronger than ever and we look forward to continue growing and providing even more valuable services to the Arab American and other immigrant communities of New York City.

Sincerely,

The AAFSC Board of Directors

Update on Recent Settlement

Closing a door to the past to help AAFSC move forward

We are happy to report that after a four-year-long legal case with our former Executive Director, we have been able to settle the suit with no finding of any wrongdoing by the Center or its Board. Our insurance company settled out of court and will absorb the cost of the settlement so that it will in no way impact AAFSC or any of our programs.

Putting this chapter behind us allows us to continue to focus on more important developments, some of which we are pleased to share in this month's newsletter. AAFSC and its Board have always been comprised of individuals who represent the cultural and religious diversity of our communities. Our goal to ensure that AAFSC is focused solely on maintaining a quality of service which not only provides a positive and productive working environment but which addresses the unique needs of the Arab immigrant population across the city through a variety of programs, services and activities. We look forward to continuing to work as your advocates and serving the very important needs of our community.

Our Funders

Helping AAFSC provide valuable services!

We always like to thank the organizations that provide financial assistance to AAFSC. It is because of their support that we have remained the leading provider of social services to the Arab American community of New York City for more than 15 years.

NYC Children's Services; NYC Department and Youth and Community Development; NYS Office of Children and Family Services (thanks to State Assemblywoman Joan Millman!); The Daphne Foundation; Independence Community Foundation; New York Community Trust; The Pinkerton Foundation; The NYSE Foundation; Jean and Louis Dreyfus Foundation; New York Foundation; Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services; The Lily Auchincloss Foundation; Healthy Families Brooklyn; and the Marilyn M. Simpson Charitable Trust.

We'd also like to thank our newest funder, Olayan America Corporation, for joining the AAFSC family.

Amazing Job By Our Kids!

SAT scores through the roof!

This past academic year was our second year of offering FREE SAT classes to our youth and the results were spectacular! From the first practice test to the actual exam, test scores went up by an average of

288 points and one student had her score increase by 770 points! We're proud of all the teens in the class who showed so much dedication and commitment.

We'd like to thank our partner in this program, New York Cares, for the incredible volunteers they provided.

If you know of a student entering his/her junior year who would be interested in the SAT class, please contact Paul Anderton at (718) 643-8000 ext. 39 or paul@aafscny.org.

The Arab-American Heritage Park Festival

Join us for a fun day in Prospect Park!

The fifth annual Arab-American Heritage Park Festival is less than three weeks away. Come join us on Sunday, July 19, from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm for a fun day of dancing, music, games, food, henna and so much more!

Come to the 15th street entrance to Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Last year, more than 10,000 people came out to the park and we hope to see even more people this year!

A Dedicated Team of Volunteers!

Helping AAFSC develop a long-term strategy

We're very proud of all the volunteers here at AAFSC and we'd like to recognize one particular group of volunteers. Several months ago, AAFSC was selected by the Harvard Business School Alumni Club as an organization they wanted to work with and develop a strategic plan for AAFSC.

Each year, only a handful of non-profits are chosen to receive the assistance of these dedicated professionals and we're honored that AAFSC was selected. Our deepest thanks to all of these individuals who have contributed their time and energy to helping AAFSC move forward.

A Wonderful Health Fair

Bringing important information to the community!

Our sincere thanks to all our partners who came to AAFSC on Friday June 19 for our annual Health Fair! Thanks to all of our partners, more than 200 people received valuable information on how to stay healthy and take care of themselves and their family.

For more information on AAFSC's health program, please contact Maha Attieh at (718) 643-8000 ext. 25 or maha@aafscny.org.

KGIA enrollment for 2009-2010

An opportunity for youths to get a great education and learn Arabic!

Khalil Gibran International Academy (KGIA) in downtown Brooklyn has grade 6, 7, and 8 seats for September 2009. The school offers personalized, supportive, and rigorous instruction; a program rich in hands-on, project-based work; Arabic language instruction for all students; cultural events connecting students with the Arab-American and international communities; as well as a rich and diverse after school program featuring sports, music, chess, dance, drama, and creative writing. Call the school today for more information, to visit the school, and for assistance with fall 2009 enrollment: 718-522-2119.

You Can Help!

All donations to AAFSC are greatly appreciated

In these difficult economic times, demand for our services is at an all time high! With your support, we can continue providing the high quality services our clients have come to expect. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to AAFSC by mailing a check to:

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150 Court Street, 3rd Floor

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ATTN: Director of Development

To donate by credit card, visit our website, www.aafscny.org.