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## **Iraqi Dignitaries Visit San Diego Nonprofit to Learn About Implementing Community Service Programs**

*- Delegation Plans to Model Neighborhood House Association programs in Iraq-*

**SAN DIEGO-** An 11-member delegation of Iraqi leaders in government, politics, education, business and other fields paid a visit to the Neighborhood House Association (NHA), San Diego's largest multi-purpose social services agency to study the nonprofit's effectiveness at implementing various social services throughout the community.

The visit to NHA was part of the delegates' 21-day, five city tour of the United States that included trips to successful businesses, organizations and state and local governments in hopes of returning to Iraq with useful information to apply toward their country's rebuilding effort. The visit was sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the delegates were traveling under the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs International Visitor Leadership Program.

"After 95 years of providing community services, Neighborhood House Association has gained a wealth of experience and knowledge in helping others improve their quality of life," said NHA President and CEO Rudolph A. Johnson, III. "We welcomed the opportunity to participate with the U.S. State Department and share our knowledge to help make a positive impact on the rebuilding of Iraq."

The visit between the delegates and NHA was coordinated by the Citizen Diplomacy Council of San Diego.

"The Iraqi delegates are looking at now different nonprofits and non-government organizations are addressing community issues that are pertinent to the Iraqi people, such as healthcare programs, education, programs for youth, human rights and diversity," said Enrique Meza, Director of Programs for CDCSD. "The Neighborhood House Association was a good fit to provide them with information on how to supply effective services to the community."

While at NHA, the delegates had the opportunity to learn more about NHA and the implementation of its nine different programs and services. The delegates participated in a formal presentation by senior staff and received a walking tour of one of NHA's Head Start sites in an effort to learn more about developing much-needed community programs. The interaction with NHA consisted of an overview of programs that included healthcare, child development, family and senior services.

"We hope this successful visit is just the start of more relationships between NHA and other international communities looking for guidance in implementing community programs and services," said Johnson. "This is a great opportunity for NHA to make an impact in changing lives, not just in our community but across all borders."

The delegates, who started their tour in Washington, D.C., will travel from San Diego to Louisville, Kentucky, then Philadelphia and New York City before heading back to Iraq.

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The Neighborhood House Association (NHA) is San Diego County's largest multi-purpose human services agency. NHA helps thousands of individuals and families improve their quality of life by providing vital social services including employment, healthcare, child, family and senior services. For more information, visit [www.neighborhoodhouse.org](http://www.neighborhoodhouse.org).

Citizen Diplomacy Council of San Diego (CDCSD) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization. Our mission is to increase respect, mutual understanding and cooperation between San Diego and the rest of the world. CDCSD works to accomplish this mission through person-to-person, professional, cultural, and educational exchange between the San Diego County community and emerging international leaders. To learn more about CDCSD, visit [www.SanDiegoDiplomacy.org](http://www.SanDiegoDiplomacy.org).