

MAJDAL

Arab Community Center of San Diego



"They tried to bury us. They didn't know we were seeds."

2023 Annual Report

Mission

We are committed to uplifting the Arab community in San Diego and supporting community members in overcoming any social, economic, and political challenges they may face in pursuit of their goals.



Vision

We envision a just and dignified future and a continued right to individual and collective self-determination for all members of the Arab community in San Diego, including youth, women, workers, families, and elders.

Donate!

Make a contribution online or by mailed check: majdalcenter.org/donate

Mission Edge San Diego
c/o Majdal Center
PO Box 102894
Pasadena, CA 91189-2894



Dear Community,

Despite the growing challenges and injustices facing our communities, our center experienced significant growth this year.

From the expansion of our physical space to commemorating five years of dedicated service, each achievement stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to a more just and equitable world.

We proudly launched transformative arts and media projects, diligently gathered community feedback to guide our future efforts, and supported our local refugee and immigrant communities access critical resources. Our youth empowerment initiatives underscore our dedication to seeding the next generation of leaders.

As we set our sights on 2024, our goals include expanding our cultural arts programs and leading campaigns that advance housing, education, and data equity.

Your support is crucial in helping us achieve these goals. By making a donation today, you're investing in the resilience and empowerment of our communities: majdalcenter.org/donate.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ramah Awad". The ink is a dark brown or black color.

Ramah Awad

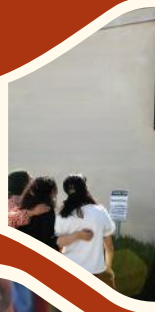
Executive Director

ramah@majdalcenter.org



2023 Highlights

We celebrated the expansion of our space & our 5 Year Anniversary!



We launched an arts & media project



We performed dabkeh with Little Amal as part of an international theatre tour



We initiated our strategic planning process & collected hundreds of community input surveys

We led two educational field trips to California state parks!

“

Majdal has encouraged me to develop a voice and use that voice to ensure that Arab and Muslim communities are represented and supported.”

- Lana Alany,
Youth Advocacy
Fellow

Support our 2024 Goals!



1

Host a cultural
arts exhibit at
the public
library

2

Start an
environmental
justice project

3

Launch a
MENA Census
Survey



4

Conduct
strategic
planning

5

Advocate for
housing &
education
equity



To grow our impact in 2024, we
need your support. Help us realize
our goals by making a donation at
majdalcenter.org/donate.

Thank you!



Follow along!

Follow us on [Instagram](#) &
[Facebook](#) for regular updates!
[@majdalcenter](#)



Contact us

majdalcenter.org
majdalcenter@gmail.com
(619) 800 - 1687



Come by!

Visit our space at
329 E. Main Street
in El Cajon!

Thank you to our dedicated team of staff, advisory board, youth leaders, & volunteers who make our efforts possible!



Our Team

To learn more about our incredible team, visit majdalcenter.org/our-team.



Our Staff



Ramah Awad

Executive Director



Mohammed Alkubaisi

Resource Coordinator



Farida Erikat

Youth Organizer



Subrein Damanhoury

Youth Programs Coordinator



Doaa Alazzawi

Community Health Worker



Selma Hassane

Development Associate



Toma Gabriel

Citizenship Course Instructor



Hana Masri

Development Associate



Advisory Board



Nadine Hassoun



Yasmeen Obeid



Jeanine Erikat



Moe Alhasan



Asmaa Kheirallah

382 youth attendees & participants

33 youth events & gatherings



Youth Education & Leadership

Visit majdalcenter.org/youth-programs to learn more.

Arab Youth Collective

The youth leadership council provides a space for high school and college-aged youth to develop leadership skills, organize events, and lead campaigns.

In 2023, they hosted 6 events including game nights, film screenings, and a graduation celebration.

This year, AYC expanded into subcommittees focused on advocacy, school engagement, and community-building.



Youth Advocacy Fellows

We partner with advocacy organizations to host 3-4 youth fellows per year. Fellows gain skills and experience in community organizing and campaign development!



Dalal Erekat, youth leader & USCPR Fellow, in action!

Youth Mentorship

Our youth mentorship programs offer students the resources and support they need to thrive in their personal, academic, and professional lives.

We offered one-to-one support to 17 students through our *Big Sib Little Sib* program and *Newcomer Girls Mentorship* program in partnership with License to Freedom

Shoutout to all our program volunteers: Hamza, Yasmin, May, Rinad, Mayada, Marwan, and our team of mentors!

Youth Recreation

Boys Soccer

Led by Nour Alkan, our soccer team of 16 boys (ages 12-18) practiced weekly and competed in two tournaments at the local futsal center.

Field Trips

We organized two field trips to California state parks: Cuyamaca State Park and the Tijuana River Estuary. These outings gave 32 youth the opportunity to learn about nature and wildlife.





Art & Media Project

We launched a new art & media project titled “Homeland and Homemaking: Arab Youth Tell Their Stories Through the Arts” to culminate in a local arts exhibit!



Storytelling & Filmmaking

We offered over 6 workshops in filmmaking, photography, storytelling & theater engaging over 60 youth.

Theatre & Dabkeh

We hosted weekly dabkeh lessons for 12 youth, leading to a performance at Chicano Park as part of the Little Amal international theater tour!

Printmaking

Over the course of 3 days, 18 youth participants designed and engraved their own print stencils to produce individual posters.

Special thank you to Fadi Taher (Impact Media), Catherine Hanna Schrock (Imagine Brave Spaces), and Lorain Rihan for leading these workshops!

550+ households served
42 weekly average appointments



*Community
Health &
Wellbeing*

Direct Services



Our services address Social Determinants of Health

- Healthcare access & quality
- Education access & quality
- Social & community context
- Economic stability
- Neighborhood & built environment

On a daily basis, we support community members access health, housing, and educational resources through case management and public assistance enrollment. Our services reach an estimated 550 households or 3,300 individuals.



Health Access

- Scheduling medical appointments
- Coordinating translation & transportation
- Raising health awareness
- Navigating health insurance

Housing Access

- Emergency rental assistance
- Subsidized housing through Section 8 and low-income housing programs
- Support with rental applications
- Education on tenants rights

Public Assistance

- CalFresh Food Program
- CalWORKs Program
- Medi-Cal Health Care Program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
- Unemployment (EDD)
- Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)



Community-identified issue areas include:

- Language barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Cultural & social integration
- Housing access
- Insufficient public services

Mental Health

- Providing emotional support & peer-counseling that is culturally and linguistically relevant
- Raising awareness to prevent substance use among youth

301 enrolled participants
& attendees

7 workshops



Economic Empowerment

Employment Access

New refugees & immigrants often face challenges entering the workforce, primarily due to language barriers. Our efforts focus on assisting with resume- writing and connecting with local job opportunities.



Education & Awareness

We offer regular workshops focused on health literacy, general awareness, and skills development.



Workshop Topics

- COVID-19 prevention
- How to file taxes
- How to start a business
- Protection against natural disasters
- College & career education

English Language

English language is one of the highest needs among new refugees & immigrants. To respond to this need, we piloted a mobile learning app, *Learning Upgrade*, that garnered 63 registrants.



U.S. Citizenship safeguards the following:

- Protection from deportation
- Citizenship for ages under 18
- Family Reunification
- Freedom to Travel
- Right to Vote
- Employment Opportunities

Citizenship Readiness

Our Citizenship Readiness Course supports participants with preparing for their naturalization exams and interviews.

Since the launch of the program in 2022, we have supported 47 community members to gain U.S. citizenship.

247 community survey respondents

10 focus groups & forums



*Advocacy &
Policy*

MENA Census

To address the lack of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) representation in data, we conducted a pilot MENA census with nearly 100 participants. We partnered with the Metabolism of Cities Living Lab at San Diego State University.



Strategic Community Input

Through our strategic planning, we conducted an assessment with 118 survey respondents and 9 focus groups with a total of 60 participants across staff, youth, leadership, community, and partner organizations.



Special thank you to Rania Mustafa (Tamkeen Coaching & Consulting), Paul Watson (Global Arc), and Nasser Mohieddin (SDSU)!

Environmental Justice

We provided community input to shape San Diego County's Decarbonization Framework, emphasizing the impact of housing, employment, and transportation on community well-being.

310+ grassroots donors
since 2018

37 partners &
funders



Photo Credit: San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition and the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communication

Thank you!
شكراً جزيلاً

Partners



Center on Policy Initiatives
 Family Health Centers of San Diego
 Horn of Africa
 Imagine Brave Spaces
 Impact Media
 Islamic Center of San Diego
 Karen Organization of San Diego
 License to Freedom
 Metabolism of Cities Living Lab, San Diego State University
 National Network for Arab American Communities
 Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans
 San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition
 San Diego Wellness Collaborative
 San Ysidro Health Center
 Southern Sudanese Community Center
 The Global Action Research Center
 United Women of East African Support Team
 U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights
 Youth Organize California
 Youth Will

A special thanks to
 Valerie Nash (Nash &
 Associates) and
 to our fiscal sponsor,
 Mission Edge San Diego!



Funders

California Humanities
 California Mental Health Services Authority
 California Natural Resources Agency
 California Department of Social Services
 Center for Arab American Philanthropy
 Emergent Fund
 Elevate Youth California
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 Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest
 San Diego Gas & Electric
 Sierra Health Foundation
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 The Conrad Prebys Foundation
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 Women's Foundation California

To read more about our partners, visit majdalcenter.org/our-partners.



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