

Dear Friends,

As the San Antonio Council for International Visitors (SACIV) continues to grow, our committees and staff have been very busy. For instance, our Member Engagement Committee is working to engage more members in our programs and have been meeting with our constituents to increase member participation. Members were encouraged to engage, to volunteer for Special Events, and to become more involved in our Visitor Escort program. We are working to ensure our members are aware of all of the opportunities available to them to support this organization.



Speaking of programs, we have increased the number of professional exchanges for international visitors that we host and under the leadership of our Executive Director, Cecilia Cross, and with the assistance of our new Program Coordinator, Tania Kayumova, we are able to promote this program more aggressively. We have increased membership, added new Corporate Members, and our budget is healthy.

We recently hosted a very well attended "Summer Member Mixer". As you know, one of the most significant and important reasons we exist is to bring our international visitors to San Antonio and provide opportunities for our members to interact with these guests from around the globe, sharing ideas and experiences. We had two groups in San Antonio during this event that were introduced to our members and who spent time interacting with our community. This event was also an opportunity to thank our many resource groups and individuals who make our international program such a success.

An upcoming highlight - we are looking forward to celebrating SACIV's 30th anniversary with a dinner and program on October 16th, 2019 at the UIW's Rosenberg Skyroom. We have a wonderful evening planned and are looking forward to sharing it with our members and friends. We welcome sponsors for the event and encourage our members to attend this milestone celebration. Tables and individual tickets are available, along with sponsorship opportunities. Please contact our Executive Director for more information. I am looking forward to seeing you there!



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Best wishes,

Jo Ann Andera
Chair, SACIV Board of Directors

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

August 17th—22nd US Trade Policy

Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Colombia, Djibouti, Israel, Moldova, Sri Lanka, Palestinian Territories

August 28th—September 1st Energy Security Japan

September 8th—14th Police Professionalization Exchange Program III Mexico

September 11th—14th Combatting Smuggling & Trafficking in Persons El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico

September 18th—24th 21st Century Change Makers Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Tajikistan

September 19th—24th Criminal Justice & Counter Terrorism Uzbekistan

Stay posted on our upcoming programs, as well as events!

Visit us online at:
www.sacivtx.org/program-and-events



ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Have you **RENEWED** your SACIV membership? It's not too late!*

*Support a worthy cause...
RENEW TODAY!*

Renew online at:

<https://saciv.wildapricot.org>

OR

Send checks to:

PO Box 6088

San Antonio, TX 78209



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Joan K.
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Pamela V.

Welcome to Tania Kayumova, our new Program Coordinator!



Tania Kaiumova, Program Coordinator, has more than 10 years of experience in coordinating international events and programs both abroad and in the U.S. Her passion is creating and maintaining meaningful, long-term relationships both in business and personally. She graduated from the Ukrainian National University with a Master's Degree in International Business where she was running several public events promoting regional business awareness in the European and Russian markets. She did this in her work for the Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Ukraine. In this capacity, she organized business trips abroad for local businesses and worked to increase the attraction of investors to that industrial area in Ukraine. She considers herself a "mediator" between different cultures, helping people to establish mutual understanding and find safe environments to discuss and exchange experiences. Ms. Kaiumova is gaining a broad understanding about San Antonio and its communities and works to assist international visitors to see the best sides of its rich history, to have genuine learning experiences and to find opportunities for international friendships. Tania was hired as a Program Coordinator to help orchestrate IVLP programming and assist with non-profit development.

Past 2019 Programs

January 16th – 19th: *Support & Advocacy for Disabled Youth*
Uzbekistan

March 12th – 16th: *Women & Entrepreneurship*
Bosnia & Herzegovina, Iraq, Japan, Mauritius, The Netherlands, South Africa, Taiwan

March 12th – 18th: *Interfaith Dialogue & Religious Freedom*
Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Morocco

March 26th – 30th: *Economic Revitalization through Public-Private Partnerships*
Croatia, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Poland, Italy

March 28th – April 2nd: *US State & Local Government*
Albania, Argentina, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Israel, Jordan, Macau, Moldova, Nepal, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Tanzania, Australia, Papua New Guinea

March 30th – April 2nd: *Entrepreneurship as the Engine of Prosperity & Stability*
Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Serbia, Ireland, Poland, Italy

April 3rd – 9th: *Edward R. Murrow Program for Journalists*
Algeria, Brazil, Ghana, Ethiopia, India, Malaysia, Sierra Leon

April 6th – 10th: *Small Business & Entrepreneurship Development*
Mexico

April 7th – 13th: *Police Professionalization Exchange Program I*
Mexico

April 8th – 13th: *Regional Responses to Inter-American Migration Issues*
Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, Mexico

April 9th – 13th: *21st Century Change Makers*
Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan

April 20th – 24th: *Towards a More Safe & Secure World*
Argentina, Aruba, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Sao Tome Principe, Guatemala, Panama, Peru

April 20th – 24th: *Open World Rumsfeld Fellows: Economic Development*
Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

May 15th – 21st: *Regional Responses to Refugee & Migration Issues*
Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Turkey

May 24th: *Inclusive Education in the US*
Russia

May 30th – June 4th: *The Contemporary US Economy*
Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

June 16th – 19th: *Promoting National Dialogue through Civic Engagement*
Ukraine

June 18th – 22nd: *Where Government Meets the People*
Burma

June 18th – 22nd: *Combatting Trafficking in Persons*
Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Belize, Bolivia, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, Uruguay

June 19th – 23rd: *Sustaining Cybersecurity*
Philippines

June 22nd – 26th: *US Foreign Policy: Global Challenges*
Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom

June 23rd – 29th: *Police Professionalization Exchange Program II*
Mexico

July 17th – 23rd: *Combatting Trafficking in Persons*
Bulgaria, Ghana, Grenada, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Uganda, Zambia

July 21st – 24th: *Promoting Cyber Security*
Algeria

July 25th – 30th: *Responsible Municipal Management*
Pakistan

July 26th: *Women's Leadership in STEM*
Japan

July 27th – 31st: *Community Leadership for Women*
Palestine

August 6th – 10th: *Addressing the Needs of Underserved & At-Risk Youth*
Mexico

Group from Uzbekistan Explores Support for Youth with Disabilities

In January, we were glad to host a delegation of State Department IVLP visitors from Uzbekistan who made the journey to San Antonio to learn more about what local organizations are doing to support and advocate for young people with disabilities. The variety of organizations and support options available in San Antonio truly impressed our visitors and made for an excellent program.

Their time in San Antonio began with a stop at the one-of-a-kind Morgan's Wonderland. As an amusement park and non-profit organization designed to be accessible to all, the visitors were thoroughly impressed by the array of attractions at the park. Adaptive swings allowed those using a wheelchair to enjoy the playground; sight and sound warning systems in the waterpark ensured that children of any sensory ability could have fun there; most of all, however, visitors discovered an ethos and a careful attention to detail that permeated every minutia of the park's design from sidewalks to resource centers to cuisine to activities.

Following that meeting, the visitors were led to the neighboring organization of STRAPS, South Texas Regional Adaptive and Para Sports, which works to provide specialized sports programming for children and adults. Since Morgan's Wonderland has become a hub for disability services, STRAPS has positioned themselves nearby to provide athletic events at Morgan's Wonderland while also serving the wider region. Visitors were impressed by their range of programs across countless sports that they adapt to serve those in their community.

After a stop for lunch, visitors were treated to the refurbished, post-industrial Pearl area of town where they stopped at the San Antonio Area Foundation's new office space in the middle of a former brewery. At the Area Foundation's office space, visitors met with the Children's Association for Maximum Potential (CAMP). CAMP is an amazing organization which works to create low-cost camp experiences for children with special needs. They never turn away a CAMPer based on ability, and through a conscientious group of volunteers, medical professionals, and paid staff, they ensure that CAMP participants get everything they need while participating in activities they might not have thought possible, like horseback riding, archery, fishing, or boating. Visitors were really moved by their touching videos of CAMPer's experiences.

The next day, IVLP participants were back at it again with a visit to the University of Texas at San Antonio and their Student Disability Services Department. There, they met with the Executive Director, Dr. Dianne Hengst, and talked about all of the ways UTSA serves their students with disabilities, including counseling and referral services, proctoring help, accessibility compliance, and even volunteer note-taking.

From there, the group took a break for lunch before reconvening at the University of the Incarnate Word to talk with representatives of Disability Rights Texas.

Their team of attorneys acts as the major disability advocacy group in the state of Texas and fights to protect the civil rights of those with disabilities. Julia Longoria and Brittany Whittle who met with the visitors talked about their work with schools and local interest groups to inform youth and parents about their rights and how to advocate for them. The group was really inspired by their passion for social justice and their impressive workload.

Overall, between all of these appointments and the beautiful backdrop of San Antonio, these International Visitor Leadership Program participants from Uzbekistan were able to really enjoy their educational, professional exchange and their free time exploring the city. It helped them put into focus some of the best ways for enforcing the rights of youth with disabilities, creating a non-profit infrastructure with long-term viability, advocating for effective policy, and ensuring multi-faceted assistance models. SACIV looks forward to hosting more of these groups in the future!



Global Delegation Working Towards a More Safe & Secure World

On April 20 - 24th, 2019, we welcomed ten international visitors from Latin America for an IVLP regional program called "Towards a More Safe & Secure World." With each visitor coming from a different country, they all brought a unique perspective to the program and contributed in fruitful conversations with each other and the resources with whom they engaged.

To learn more about international issues from a face-to-face conversations in smaller groups, our visitors first began with a hand-on experience of being welcomed through home hospitality with a number of SACIV members who opened up a warm discussion around their tables.

On Monday, our visitors made a trip to Laredo to see one of the busiest border crossings in the United States to observe how DHS counters human trafficking and illegal immigration at a land border. US Department of Homeland Security, Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HIS) shared with the group about the current situation and issues related to border security. The next meeting was with the representatives at US Department of Homeland Security, ICE, Rio Grande Detention Center, officials provided a tour of the detention center where illegal immigrants are held and discussed how immigrants are detained and processed.

Later Monday afternoon, they continued their discussion at the meeting with Dr. Claudia San Miguel, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the Criminal Justice Program at Texas A&M International University. She shared her research project in collaboration with students in 2014 looking at how law enforcement can better identify and rescue victims of human traffic at early stages. The discussion continued in outlining the importance of multi-agency cooperation to help identify and rescue victims and the types of additional resources needed to combat the crime.

On Tuesday, the group met with the Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking (AACAT) a multi-agency, multidisciplinary coalition whose goal is to eradicate human trafficking from Bexar County and the surrounding area by prosecuting offenders, preventing future exploitation, and serving current victims. Specifically, the representatives of the Freedom Youth Project Foundation shared their research on effective treatment for child victims of sex trafficking and their programs aimed at combating human trafficking through prevention designed specifically for high targeted victims. There was an open discussion about mutual efforts to raise awareness and support youth population.

After lunch, they headed to BCFS System Headquarters, a global system of non-profit health and human services organizations based in San Antonio and operating programs worldwide to address the unmet needs of at-risk



populations. The President shared practical examples of dealing with challenges faced by struggling children, families, and communities in times of emergency and disaster. Specifically, he shared with the group about the shelters they set up recently for unaccompanied migrants minors entering Texas from Mexico and Central America.

And finally, the visitors met with an ever-ready partner and resource of SACIV, the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), who once again opened their doors and provided examples and practices about how to sustain relationship between fighting crime and protecting the rights of the public and of alleged criminals, they discussed transparency and accountability and the strategies to ensure equal treatment for all. The representatives of SAPD also provided the overview of the Department's role in combating border-related crimes, including illegal immigration. The delegation openly asked questions and exchanged ideas for positive results.

The program was intensive and was able to cover a wide array of diverse appointments across San Antonio and South Texas. DHS, ICE, and the SAPD discussed the role of different levels of government in maintaining secure and orderly borders. Texas A&M International University delved into facts of their researches to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking at early stages.

Overall, they were able to experience a wide swath of programs available in San Antonio from myriad organizations.



Representing a Globally-Minded San Antonio in DC

SACIV had the pleasure to represent San Antonio's growing presence in international exchange at the 2019 Global Ties National Meeting in Washington, D.C. The meeting was a great occasion for members of the SACIV staff and Board to discuss with other partners in the Global Ties network the opportunities and challenges for international exchange.

At the meeting, community-based members (CBMs) like SACIV representing every corner of the United States joined national programming agencies (NPAs) who organize delegations on behalf of the State Department. Together, there were great opportunities to interface on the current state of the network.

Events began Wednesday with a meeting on Capitol Hill to learn about the importance of advocacy for international exchanges. Speakers re-emphasized the bipartisan support for exchange programs like the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and spoke at length about the economic and diplomatic benefits that come from facilitating exchanges around the United States.

Then began a series of sessions to help attendees learn more about non-profit development, programming for IVLP exchanges, and the work of other members of the network. Being able to talk directly to peers at other CBMs about the work we all do programming exchanges at the local level was definitely beneficial and provided plenty of ideas for best displaying our communities.

That Thursday, sessions on social media utilization and public-private partnerships were among the fare to be had. The Citizen Diplomacy Luncheon that followed was a real treat. It starred a featured resource from the network, Serve2Unite, who work to combat hatred and violent extremism by building bridges in their community. Started by a Sikh man and a former white supremacist, their work truly impressed everyone in the crowd.

The rest of the day allowed time for networking, touring the booths of D.C.-based partners, and learning more about best practices in exchange. That night, each member of the SACIV delegation was treated to an embassy reception. At the Finnish Embassy, Immediate Past Chair Betsy Cameron and Program Coordinator John Wingert were personally greeted by the Ambassador and enjoyed talking to the embassy staff and network partners about the bidirectional successes of international exchange.

The next day's luncheon awarded members of the network for their hard work, and highlighted the excellence of former IVLP participants who had leveraged their exchange experience for sustained impact whether in the name of women's rights or improved water access for poor and rural areas.

On Saturday, Executive Director Cecilia Cross participated in a panel discussion on "Programming Sensitive Topics" with representatives of GlobalMinnesota and the Human Rights Council. Cecilia spoke about SACIV's successes in dealing with contentious and emotional issues like human trafficking and immigration. It all comes down to

an understanding of the issues, your community, and the best ways to hold a productive, but sensible discussion. By the time that session finished, however, it was time for members of the SACIV team to return to San Antonio.

We left Washington with more information to use in our own work but also with important contacts who will be valued partners to reach out to about future projects or programming ideas. Everyone is ready to start using that information and to return to DC next year!

2019 Membership Luncheon

Every year the members and the guests of San Antonio Council for International Visitors gather for the Membership Luncheon, which provides recent updates and opportunities for current and potential members. This year, Keynote Speaker, Dr. Katherine Brown, President & CEO of Global Ties US, reflected on the value and impact of international professional exchange in San Antonio community.



There was also a unique opportunity to welcome an international delegation of 12 visitors, participating in an IVLP program on "Regional Responses to Refugee & Migration Issues", from Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, and Turkey at our membership luncheon this year.

Attendees were pleased to hear from Dr. Brown, who addressed them with an impressive presentation on what it means to be a part of global family. Dr. Brown outlined the great impact those relations have for each local community and for the country. She shared how the federal budget we spend on exchange programs was considerably small, but the impact is huge, now, and for future generations.

SACIV was happy to welcome new members interested in making a difference in San Antonio through their personal involvement in welcoming foreign delegations, coming to grow their knowledge the world we live in.

One of the most touching moments was celebrating the great input of Mrs. Irma Reyes, Founder of SACIV, who received a certificate from the Office of International Visitors of the U.S. Department of State for her 30+ year work with the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Mrs. Reyes served twice as the Executive Director of SACIV, once having been brought out of retirement to run the organization, and now as Chair Emeritus of the Board of Directors.

"For decades, Mrs. Reyes was the beating heart of the organization and kept it alive over the years with her vision and commitment to the mission. As a leader in her own right within our community, she has a profound passion for meeting and hosting international visitors, and has always strived to go above and beyond to welcome and introduce them to San Antonio and the South Texas region, providing citizens with invaluable global perspectives", said Cecilia Cross, Executive Director of SACIV.



Rumsfeld Fellows Visit San Antonio to Examine Economic Development

In April, five international visitors from Central Asia, namely from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, explored showcases how a non-governmental, private sector, universities as well as the governmental offices promote trade both in San Antonio area and in the global marketplace. These visitors were able to learn about the opportunities, best examples and struggles for building international ties on the level of small and medium businesses. Moreover, they were able to deepen their understanding of culture and tendencies of the local business to make San Antonio economically competitive internationally.

The group began by meeting with the Velocity TX, a private sector which focuses on accelerating the process of commercializing ideas, products, services, or processes, and to guide companies entering the market in the United States. The visitors asked a number of questions and got first-hand information about the pipeline available for foreign startups (mainly from a neighboring countries) to get the necessary resources they need to accelerate and grow with the help of investments and consulting. Next, the delegation proceeded to the City of San Antonio's Economic Development Department. As they have welcomed so many visitors before, EDD opened their doors to this group to explain their work in fostering growth and development in San Antonio. Their conversation delved into the examples of the current incentives and city's support of businesses and entrepreneurs and their work to attract and promote international investor opportunities.



Later Monday afternoon, they were given the chance to hear the voice of the educational sector from wonderful representatives of UTSA's Institute for Economic Development. This meeting provided the participants with a better understanding of how the university engages in the local business community and the role it plays in laying the foundation for international friendships and deep relationships that might last for generations.

And the final stop of a busy learning day was at the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF). The representative of a private, nonprofit organization that assists businesses and industries in locating and expanding in the San Antonio area, was able to showcase a number of examples how to promote and attract businesses who are interested in entering the US markets.

On Tuesday, the group began with a morning meeting at the



US Commercial Service of the US Department of Commerce, a federal government agency dedicated to helping small-to-medium sized companies develop international markets. This meeting provided the visitors with a better understanding of how federal agencies provide

trade counseling, market intelligence, business matchmaking and commercial diplomacy services offered to San Antonio companies and individuals looking to export and benefit from free trade agreements. It was



encouraging for some participants to see the representative offices in their own countries giving hope and ideas how those relationships can be expanded.

Before lunch, the visitors were also able to see the historical places and learn more about the culture and background of our diverse city. They visited Mission San Jose and then were also able to witness and enjoy a typical fiesta celebration, "Fiesta de los Reyes", at the historic market square.

The visitors then met with staff of LiftFund, which provides credit and services to small businesses and entrepreneurs who do

not have access to loans from commercial sources and offers leadership and innovation to the microlending industry

On Wednesday, the group began with a morning meeting at the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce where they learnt about the work to improve the business climate and build opportunities for growth in San Antonio and the region through programs focused on advocacy, economic development, events, and direct services to its members. In addition to learning these practices, the group met with the representatives of committees who specifically deal with international industries, military installations, infrastructures, economic development, workforce and cyber security.



Visitor Quotes

Women & Entrepreneurship

The appointments were very interesting and gave me in-depth understanding of crossings between business and science. Also, Geekdom was on the top meetings with their demo and practical example. The home hospitality was awesome as we discussed all current matters regarding economy, politics, culture, lifestyle in both of our countries.

-Ms. Dajana Dzindo (Bosnia & Herzegovina)

All meetings were so interesting, each one has a special benefit for me and adds something new and I know more professional people now. I gained wider knowledge about women entrepreneurs in developed societies that are concerned with the issues of women and their projects in terms of its importance in developing and strengthening the economy of the country. I haven't had any idea about the city except that it was near Mexican border. Now I am too happy that I have had a chance and visited the most amazing city!

-Ms. Muneera Lazim Sachit Naseer (Iraq)

Interfaith Dialogue & Religious Freedom

Our appointments were so useful, they opened great prospects for me and I personally saw the actual steps of merciful actions.

-Mr. Tarig Mohamed Ibrahim Alimam (Sudan)

Economic Revitalization Through Public-Private Partnerships

Most of the meetings were relevant and I learned a lot about US culture in general.

-Mr. Antonio Barisic (Croatia)

It was very interesting to learn all about the different approaches; the pleasant surprise was to learn about a lot of services that Europeans would consider to be in the government's domain to provide are actually provided by the private sector here. This visit gave me the opportunity to recognize a rich identity of the city. I also became a basketball fan!

-Mr. Joost Michail Van Keulen (Netherlands)

I am very grateful for the opportunity to learn on different levels: professional, cultural and personal. This program was a great success

-Mr. Alessandro Marchetti (Italy)

US State & Local Government

Every meeting had something interesting to consider and learn, how community would work together (Alamo example). I loved the city (I was several times in Houston) but this city has a lot to offer, its rich culture, people are so kind, history, Latin American community.

-Ms. Guadalupe Fernandez (Argentina)

We had a very good experience in San Antonio interacting with American people and with culture. We made a lot of activities as visiting the missions, going to a NBA game, and also home hospitality was an amazing experience.

-Ms. Hoi Man Yuen (Hong Kong)

The appointments met my professional objectives, they gave a thorough understanding of how state and local governments cooperate and interact with the federal government, and moreover it shed light on the innovative approaches how to grow economy.

-Ms. Ayman Naimat (Jordan)

Edward R. Murrow Program for Journalists

My home hospitality was a very pleasant and culturally rich experience. I was very welcomed!

-Mr. Maximiliano Camargo De Oliveira (Brazil)

We had very frank conversations at all our meetings, it was a firsthand knowledge in how TPR covers sensitive issues and how KENS structure their news. Thank you for the amazing experience in San Antonio, loving the colors and vibe in the city!

-Mr. Jeffvinder Singh Sandhu Rusbal Singh (Malaysia)

I could connect to this city more than the others. It feels so close to home. The best part of the San Antonio city is extremely warm and generous people!

-Mr. Hariharan Sekaripuram Anandaraman (India)

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Development

Our meetings were more than I expected because now I have a better perspective, tools and support contacts to be able to grow and train small businesses in my home country.

-Ms. Daniela Guadalupe Leon Losoya (Mexico)

The appointments were excellent and every meeting was very interesting for my professional activity and so helpful for future design of my programs and I'll apply these knowledges and the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Oaxaca.

-Mr. Porfirio de Jesus Santiago Santaella (Mexico)

21st Century Change Makers

The meetings were very inspiring, though they were not directly connected with my work I could still learn about the importance to give back to your community and how to offer diverse opportunities for the youth and others in the society. Thank you for a great program and hospitality. I am looking forward to come to SA, TX again!

-Ms. Tjasa Bozic (Slovenia)

I got inspired on how to tackle similar issues that I am working on for instance mobilizing youth voters.

-Mr. Cosmin Pojoranu (Romania)

I am very happy that I had the chance to be a part of this program and enhance personally and professionally. I am looking forward to sharing with you all the ideas that I am going to put into practice in my country very soon!

- Ms. Fitore Misini (Kosovo)

Regional Responses to Inter-American Migration Issues

Our favorite meeting was with Colonies North Elementary School where we heard happy stories and also difficult and tragic situations where the results aren't as hoped. Excellent best practices for integrating children into schools.

-Ms. Diana Gomez Munoz (Peru)

Open World Rumsfeld Fellows: Economic Development

I gained knowledge in policy the companies implement in their work that I can organize or develop at home. I am grateful for such a program, I met such great people, we really appreciated staying with you. Wish you good luck in your future programs.

-Ms. Maral Ilyasova (Turkmenistan)

The home hospitality was the best part of my experience. I am really thankful!

-Ms. Jenny Jenish (Kyrgyzstan)

The meetings were very helpful, speakers were very open and explained models of their work with very clear and interesting approach.

-Mr. Nurtas Janibekov (Kazakhstan)

Regional Responses to Refugee and Migration Issues

I enjoyed home hospitality very much as it is eye-opening way to peek into the life and thoughts of normal citizen. The generosity and hospitality amaze me every time.

-Mr. Sami Isoniemi (Finland)

It is very interesting to meet people who are not staff members to get a sense of what is going on in the US.

-Mr. Hakan Demir (Germany)

I enjoyed home hospitality a lot, our hosts were very friendly and nice, we had a great discussion.

-Ms. Valentina Fabbri (Italy)

The Contemporary US Economy

All the meetings were just right for this program. The most interesting meeting was with the representatives of UTSA Downtown Campus, their programs were inspiring and great. Home hospitality was unique as I could learn more about real life of Texas family.

-Mr. Zvonimir Novak (Croatia)

Our meetings were productive with a lot of useful information. We saw how the economic community is doing business and how the cooperation is established between the federal and local level. I would highly rate this program in San Antonio.

-Ms. Nina Vukotic (Montenegro)

This program was amazing as I could meet with the representatives of the local Bank - Frost. The participation in home hospitality was one of the most fascinating parts of this program. It is the best way to get more profound knowledge about the local culture. It also provided deeper understanding about Texas.

-Mr. Ion Josan (Moldova)

Texas is great! I will recommend to all my friends!!!!

-Mr. Mateusz Walczak (Poland)

Where Government Meets the People

All our appointments and activities in San Antonio met my professional objectives. I am excited to share them in my country.

-Mr. Kyaw Zaya (Burma)

Combatting Trafficking in Persons I

The appointments were useful especially with the Human Trafficking Persecutor and Task Force where I learned about their work, experience and the way they conduct their investigations.

-Ms. Rosa Ohama (Peru)

I learned about the experience from different organizations in San Antonio while combating human trafficking including laws, best practices and challenges that we all share.

-Ms. Michelle Segura (Belize)

Sustaining Cybersecurity

Thank you to San Antonio Council for International Visitors for their work and program. Much success to your organization!

-Ms. Angelo Buenviaje (Philippines)

The most interesting meetings for me were with representatives of Rackspace and Texas A&M University San Antonio. It is amazing how San Antonio prepares particularly the students to become experts in the field of cybersecurity. It is no wonder it produces the best and the brightest generation of cyber security professionals.

-Mr. Harry Lorenzo (Philippines)

US Foreign Policy: Global Challenges

I didn't know what to expect! And it was really super!!!

-Ms. Larisa Brown (United Kingdom)

Visit to San Antonio helped me to have much better understanding of the situation of Latin American population in the US and about border security. I met with two Latino American women; it was wonderful!

-Mr. Michael Kovacic (Slovakia)

Combating Trafficking in Persons II

I really, really enjoyed home hospitality; I will never forget my new family far away from home. It was sooo good finally to have a homemade meal and warm conversations after a week of being away from home.

-Ms. Malyia Rudolph (Marshall Islands)

The most interesting situation in San Antonio as well as in the USA is that every decision comes from bottom. That is from community and government offices and politicians are here to do whatever community wants to do. It is great hope for us.

-Mr. Sugath Amarsinha (Sri Lanka)

Responsible Municipal Management

San Antonio meetings helped in understanding various successful and practical solutions that we also face in our home country. Though, I would love to see more projects that connect urban agencies.

-Ms. Nishaa Ishtiak (Pakistan)

This trip showed me different perspectives on history of Texas. People are very friendly and smiling all the time.

-Mr. Jamil Ahmed (Pakistan)

Russian Visitors Explore Inclusive Education in the US

In May, eight visitors from Russia came to San Antonio to learn more about “Inclusive Education in the United States”. The meetings were specifically organized on the topic of national and local government and non-government programs, policies and initiatives in support of special needs students and how they are funded.

Our guests started their day exploring a unique place - Morgan's Wonderland. The one-of-a-kind theme park allowed the visitors to see some totally original ideas for providing fun for special needs children. The park has grown tremendously in recent years and boasts 25 acres of rides designed to serve special needs children. They also have on-site therapeutic and educational facilities to complement their recreational work. The Russian IVLP visitors were very inspired by the one-of-a-kind place.

After lunch, our guests enjoyed their time with the representatives of Eva's Heroes discussing their important work enriching the lives of those youth with intellectual disabilities. Many participants shared about this valuable time for them as they saw a great example of different possible programs and events that could be done to raise awareness of the public.

They also met with the Arc of San Antonio to discuss their broad continuum of services for children, adolescents, and adults with intellectual developmental disabilities. They were joined by representatives from Autism Lifeline Links to discuss how they work together to provide services for individuals and families. Participants shared about issues of education that disabled children and teens face in their home country, the ways that this special group could be included in the society, and the psychological struggles that parents have going through with these hardships. The Russian delegation was amazed to see how much information and supportive material was provided for disabled people and their family at every stage of their lives. Everyone agreed on the fact that it takes a proactive parent and supportive society to navigate these overwhelming issues. The discussion was quite open and honest allowing participants to examine many commonalities and share different approaches to address them. Both Russian and American participants saw the value of such discussions, as it doesn't matter where in the world you are, together, people can reach a great result.



Ukrainian Delegation Promoting Dialogue through Civic Engagement

On June 16th - June 19th, 2019, we welcomed four international visitors from Ukraine for an IVLP single country program entitled “Promoting National Dialogue Through Civic Engagement.” This program was planned to provide participants with insights, strategies, and tools to help community representatives from various regions in Ukraine to overcome mistrust and misunderstanding through dialogue and civic engagement.

On Monday, our visitors met with representatives of the 10 peaceCenter, where they learnt about the organization's work

providing resources and nurturing ever-growing circles of peacemakers. Ukrainian guests were encouraged to hear about the Charter of Compassion and its mission. This conversation continued in a meeting with the representative of the City of San Antonio's Faith-Based Initiative. The Community Faith-Based Liaison presented the hard work which has been carried out for the past forty years to foster compassion with the support of other public, private, community and faith-based organizations. During the discussion, our guests learned about a variety of programs, meetings and round tables that happened in San Antonio in order to build up relations and learn from each other promoting public-private collaboration around the Charter.

Later on Monday afternoon, they met with a proactive Creative Director of MightGroup who talked about the media's role in the community to share stories which build trust and promote dialogue within and across diverse communities in San Antonio. He also spoke about DreamWeek, an annual summit of speakers, artists and educators who gathered to promote tolerance, equity and diversity and advanced the teaching of



Dr. Martin Luther, Jr. On Tuesday morning, the visitors had a great time having a tour in the Institute of Texan Culture where they gained a better understanding of ethnic and linguistic minority group integration into American society, namely in San Antonio. They learned about German, Polish, Hungarian, Chinese, Japanese and Mexican migration history, the ways how immigrants were supported at local level.

After lunch, they headed to meet with Texas State Representative Allison who led the discussion about the equality promotion for the minority communities. He also shared his experience in representing and advocating on behalf of these communities.

The visit to San Antonio couldn't be diverse without a meeting with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. It was an essential part of their experience here in San Antonio to meet with a Legislative Attorney. The Ukrainian group learned about the “law firm of the Latino community” and their programs that were structured to bring Latinos into the mainstream of American political and socio-economic life. The participants were impressed by numbers and great work this fund did in the community providing better educational opportunities, encouraging participation in all aspects of society and offering a positive vision for the future.

The Ukrainian team was very grateful for representatives' time to meet with them and share their experiences and stories. This affirmed that civic engagement is incredibly important, as public participation increases the well being of everyone as a whole in the community, addressing all issues, rather than those of a select few. Ukrainians saw in practice what a vibrant civil society does to encourage communication, cooperation, and compromise throughout every possible sector.



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SACIV Hosts Two Delegations Examining Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking

Human trafficking has been a pressing issue for many years, which has captured the attention of international organizations in many countries aiming to “modern slavery”. On June 18th - June 22nd, 2019, the San Antonio Council for International Visitors welcomed eleven international visitors for an IVLP regional program entitled “Combating Trafficking in Persons.” The visitors represented Latin American countries including Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

On Wednesday morning, our visitors met with a representative of the American Association of University of Woman (AAUW) - Younger Women’s Task Force (YWTF), where they learnt about the movement dedicated to organizing younger women and their allies to act on issues that matter most. Both international visitors and the representative of AAUW agreed that the work should start as early as possible to prevent cases of trafficking. Participants shared about their work in their home countries. It was clear in the discussion that there were more questions than answers in the process of combating not only human trafficking but sex trafficking, labour trafficking, and child trafficking as well.

Their next meeting was with a reporter from the San Antonio Express-News for a Labor Trafficking Case Study. Mr. Luke Whyte shared more about the process of how human trafficking cases are investigated and reported and how media’s efforts help raise awareness of this issue. As a Data Editor for the paper, he presented his experience of data collecting and investigating labor trafficking for the last year in South Texas.

After lunch, the group met with the Immigration Liaison from the Office of the City Manager of the City of San Antonio. At the meeting, they discussed the work that was established with the community, stakeholder groups, nonprofit organizations, and interfaith organizations



as a strong network to coordinate and connect San Antonio’s immigrant community to services. Representatives talked about the new Migrant Resource Center, which began in March, assisting thousands of migrants from Central America and Africa, traveling through San Antonio to their sponsor families across the country

Later on Wednesday afternoon, they continued their discussion at a meeting with Criminal District Attorney of the Bexar County District Attorney’s Office. The attorney shared her experience in working with the DA-lead Bexar County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force. Our guests learned of the attorney’s perspectives on migrants’ vulnerability in being trafficked, and the kinds of outreach, awareness-raising, and support services that they provide to victims who are reluctant to ask for help because of their immigration status. Our guests heard real-life stories and examples of how to get the best from engaging different organizations and federal agencies.

On Thursday morning, the visitors met with the Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking. This meeting helped our guest see the work of multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Coalition which aims to

eradicate human trafficking from Bexar County and the surrounding area by prosecuting offenders, preventing future exploration and serving current victims of human trafficking. At this meeting, IVLP guests learnt, as well as shared, their anti-human trafficking experiences. Meeting representatives of AACAT was an opportunity to inspire and network with each other in the fight against human trafficking.

Thursday afternoon our guests spent at the historical sights of San Antonio and walked along the riverwalk learning more about the cultural side of our city. This time was good to recuperate for the trip to Laredo and meetings on Friday.

On Friday morning, the IVLP guests left for Laredo meetings. In the morning, they visited the US Department of Homeland Security’s ICE Rio Grande Detention Center, where they toured the detention center where illegal immigrants are held. The discussion continued in the office of ICE where our visitors were amazed at the level of importance the U.S government attached to ending human trafficking. They saw a government that has demonstrated a strong political will to combating human trafficking, and stimulating virtually all the federal agencies and community organizations to take strategic actions against human trafficking through collaboration.

Next, at a meeting with Casa de Misericordia they noticed that the willingness and hard work of every entity to combat human trafficking at the border were demonstrated in many obvious ways and programs. Our visitors explored their facilities and learnt how they were rehabilitating survivors. The representative of the shelter for victims of domestic violence and survivors also shared a toolkit the organization received from a team of researchers to better prepare for helping victims of trafficking. This meeting helped our guests see the reality that exists at the border, which urged participants to forge valuable networks for the mutual task of ending human trafficking.

The last meeting on Friday was with the representatives of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. This non-profit organization welcomed our guests and shared their work in aiding immigrants and victims of human trafficking, specifically those who come through the valley.

San Antonio Council for International Visitors was honored to host international visitors from Latin America to bring awareness and create a platform to discuss this spreading plague of trafficking in persons in our community and around the world. We hope these meetings helped neighboring countries examine U.S. local, national, and international efforts to combat human trafficking. Moreover, it was inspiring to see so many participants and local active representatives dedication to anti-trafficking efforts: these exchanges will help them

connect and work together towards new solutions and ways to help end modern slavery at home and worldwide.



On July 17, 2019 - July 22, 2019, SACIV hosted a group of twenty-three visitors from as many counties in San Antonio to learn about efforts to combat human trafficking. The visitors were from Bulgaria, Ghana, Grenada, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. San Antonio was the third city they visited on their tour of the United States, as they had previously been to Washington D.C. and other Northern US cities. Here in San Antonio however, they were introduced to how human trafficking and smuggling were different due to our proximity to the Mexican/American Border. During their weeklong visit to Texas, they met with the Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking, the San Antonio Police Department, Customs & Border Protection - Air and Marine Operations, Homeland Security Investigations, and even attended SACIV's "Summer Membership Mixer".

On Tuesday, the group first met with Mr. Saul Castellano, the CEO of the Freedom Youth Project Foundation. The Freedom Youth Project Foundation works to educate parents and teens about human trafficking and how to prevent youth victimization. Freedom Youth Project was founded in 2010 and is unique in their tactics to prevent human trafficking by using an educational approach that is based on the idea that love is a major factor in trafficking. Mr. Castellano discussed how an education is a key way of combating human trafficking before it can take place. This approach helped the visitors view



human trafficking from a new perspective.

After lunch, the visitors went to the San Antonio Police Department to meet with Sergeant Christopher Lutton and Mr. Robert Looney. There, the visitors learned about the Police Department and the San Antonio community and how they work side by side to combat crimes. They heard about how the city is a prime spot for trafficking to occur due to its size and proximity to the Mexican border. Sergeant Lutton and Mr. Looney also discussed how the relationship between the Department and the community is key to combating crimes in the city. The friendly relationship between Police Departments and community is rare to find today in the United States and that is what the officers attribute to the small crime rate for the city of this size. This sparked interest in the visitors as it was a new way of combating crime and is such an oddity in not only the United States but the world. After the meeting, a few visitors also

went on ride-alongs to see what crime is like in the Alamo City and they were able to witness the community in a new light.

On their last day, the visitors met with Mr. Steven Jones from the San Antonio International Airport, Customs and Border Protection



(CPB) Air & Marine Operations, and Mr. Charles "Chuck" Paul from Roy Maas Youth Alternatives (RMYA). Mr. Jones first gave the visitors a refresher on human trafficking and the difference between trafficking and smuggling and then discussed some of his previous cases with the visitors. The visitors took great interest in the cases since they had been looking forward to hearing about some of the experiences law enforcement had with the topic. The cases were very interesting to the visitors as they were all unique and showed some of the many ways the United States combats human trafficking. Then Mr. Paul discussed human trafficking from the victim's perspective. Since most of the presentations the visitors had seen previously were from law enforcement's perspective, the new way of viewing the issue was insightful and taught the visitors a more personal way of understanding trafficking.

The last meeting of the day was with Special Agent James M. Rodriguez from the Homeland Security Investigation - San Antonio Field Office. This was the



first time on their trip to San Antonio that the visitors had seen how the United States federal government deals with human trafficking and smuggling in persons. The visitors enjoyed learning about HSI and how it differs from local law enforcement. They also had the opportunity to discuss how the United States law enforcement system works with regards to immigration. Agent Rodriguez also learned about the visitors' countries and how they deal with immigration and smuggling in more depth. This was a great mutually beneficial learning experience for everyone involved.

The last event of the day was SACIV's Summer Membership Mixer, which the visitors were invited as the guests of honor to attend. This was not only a great experience for the visitors, as they got to meet people from our organization, but it was a great experience for our members since they were able to meet our visitors. Our visitors enjoyed meeting members of the San Antonio community and learning more about our culture and vice versa.

The San Antonio Council for International Visitors was honored to host this amazing group of international visitors to bring a bigger discussion about the human trafficking issue in our community and in the world. We hope that this experience not only helped these countries learn new ways to alleviate the problem, but also helped the San Antonio community gain new perspectives on the crisis. This was truly a great experience for everyone involved

because through collective learning, new solutions and new perspectives were not only discovered for our visitors, but for the community as well. Hopefully this visit will help combat the global and local human trafficking crisis.

European Group Examines the Contemporary US Economy

On May 30th - June 4th, 2019, we welcomed eleven international visitors from Europe for an IVLP regional program called "The Contemporary US Economy." The visitors represented Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom. They all brought a unique perspective to the program and contributed in fruitful conversations with each other and the resources with whom they engaged.

On Friday, our visitors met with the representatives of the local Frost Bank, where they learnt about current banking issues, investment, and insurance tendencies. Though representatives of Frost Bank admitted that their international presence was quite limited compared to some bigger banks in Texas, its local influence was strong and growing in San Antonio. European guests kindly praised American banks for their stability and wanted to know the secret for a high level of trust in the community. The secret was simple: build up relations. The next meeting was with the representatives at University of Texas Health San Antonio - Long School of Medicine, where Dr. Hromas, the Dean at the Long School of Medicine and the Vice President for Medical Affairs at the University of Texas Health Center in San Antonio welcomed our guests at the lunch table. The presentations of modern researches and current issues in the medicine didn't leave any participant indifferent. Our guests were impressed by the diverse parts of the contemporary economy in San Antonio and its motto "we want to cooperate and find solutions together rather than compete and be rivals".

Later on, Friday afternoon, they continued their discussion at a meeting with representatives of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The Vice President of Government Affairs shared her experience and observation of the tendencies in the international business relations between Hispanic and American business, especially taking into account the recent talks about tariffs increasing at the border. The discussion continued by outlining the importance of education and guidance of small business owners on exporting and importing their product and services.

On Saturday, the visitors had a great time visiting San Antonio Missions and, in the evening, each ILVP participant enjoyed face-to-face conversations with the local members of SACIV, experiencing the example of local family traditions and Texan home hospitality. On Sunday they visited the historic town of Gruene, TX, where they learnt more about the diverse culture of the Texas Hill Country and had lunch at the famous local restaurant, The Gristmill, as well as walked around the quaint town and visited the various shops.



On Monday morning, the IVLP guests met with the director of the Bexar County Small, Medium, and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (SMWBE) Program.

Our visitors heard about the variety of programs they offer, which seek to support and maximize women's role in the local economy. Their next meeting was with the business representatives of Asociacion de Empresarios Mexicanos (AEM), who shared more about the practical side of doing business in San Antonio being from Mexico and vice versa. Specifically, the representatives of the AEM shared cultural differences and details of educating and guiding new Mexican businesses here in San Antonio. There was an open discussion about concerns and worries on both sides of business in Mexico and the US.

After lunch, they headed to the UTSA's Institute for Economic Development, which encompasses a variety of centers and programs that facilitate economic, community, and business development at the local, regional, and national. The European group learnt about resources, which included technical training, research, market analysis, and strategic planning for entrepreneurs, business owners, and community leaders.

And finally, the visitors met with an ever-ready partner and resource of SACIV, LiftFund. The delegation openly asked questions about the services to small businesses and entrepreneurs who didn't have access to loans from commercial sources. They also learned about the programs LiftFund supports, namely Women's Business Center and LaunchSA. The participants were impressed by numbers and great work this center does in the community.

Through these varied and impactful meetings, the delegation from Europe was able to explore San Antonio's successful efforts to promote financial stability, to discuss US investments in emerging markets, and programs that assist developing local markets. Each one of them found the appointments useful in exchanging views on the US/Europe economic relationship.



European Delegation Explores Regional Responses to Refugee & Migration Issues

On May 16th - 20th, 2019, we welcomed 12 international visitors from Europe for an IVLP regional program called "Regional Responses to Refugee and Migration Issues." This program helped our visitors learn more about federal, state, and local government policies & initiatives, as well as inter-governmental action to resettle and integrate refugees who arrive either through US Refugee Resettlement Program or through unofficial channels.

To learn more about refugee and migration issues from face-to-face conversations, our visitors first began with a meeting with officials of the US Department of Homeland Security, Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigation (HSI), where they learned about the agency's role in maintaining border security and explored how they cooperate with other local law enforcement and personnel from other US federal agencies.

On Thursday afternoon, our guests were warmly welcomed as the guests of honor in the SACIV's annual "Membership Luncheon" event where they met with SACIV members and leaders in the international community. Later that day, they continued their discussion with representatives of the Bexar County District Attorney's Office, where they were presented with an overview of human trafficking in the border area.

San Antonio Police Department once again opened its doors for our international visitors as they discussed the department's community relationships and explained the reasons behind a long-standing SAPD policy that bars its officers from asking residents about their immigration status or detaining anyone solely on suspicion of being in the United States illegally. The most exciting opportunity for our delegation were the "ride-alongs", in which the delegation spent time shadowing police officers on duty for the evening as they patrolled the community.



its mission includes providing safe, welcoming educational environment for refugee and immigrant children. Specifically, the administrators and teachers explained the school's partnership with the local Catholic Charities refugee resettlement program and discussed effective approaches for integrating new and non-English speaking students.

After lunch, they headed to Mexicans and Americans Thinking Together (MATT), a bi-national, citizen-led civil society organization with offices in San Antonio and Mexico City. The Executive Director shared with our delegation their practical work of strengthening cultural and economic links between the United States and Mexico. They were able to explore ideas on how immigration law might be reformed to better align with the realities of how people live and work across the border.

The weekends were quite busy as well. On Saturday IVLP guests experienced the cultural side of San Antonio taking a special guided tour of the five Missions which was lead by a representative of the American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions (AIT-SCM). This organization did amazing job presenting their work for the preservation and protection of the culture and traditions of the Native American tribes and other indigenous people of the recently named "UNESCO World Heritage Sites".

Saturday evening was special for our delegation as they met with SACIV's members in smaller groups for home hospitality. Each delegate had a face-to-face conversation sharing their experience and thoughts about vital topics of everyday life. Please, see several quotes from our guests below:

"I enjoyed home hospitality very much as it is eye-opening way to peek into the life and thoughts of normal citizen. The generosity and hospitality amaze me every time." said Mr. Sami Iso-niemi of Finland.

"It is very interesting to meet people who are not staff members to get a sense of what is going on in the US."



Mr. Hakan Demir, of Germany, reported. Said Ms. Valentina Fabbri of Italy:

"I enjoyed home hospitality a lot, our hosts were very friendly and nice, we had a great discussion."

On Sunday evening our visitors headed to Laredo, TX to visit civil society organizations and government agencies there.

Monday began with a morning meeting at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) where the group learned about the mission of the largest federal law enforcement agency of the United States, the Department of Homeland Security, as well as about the work the agency does regulating and facilitating international trade, collecting import duties, and enforcing U.S. regulations, including trade, customs, and immigration. The visitors carried on their discussion at Texas A&M International University (TAMU) where they met Maria Eugenia Claderon, Assistant Vice President for Global Initiative. The other great part of this visit was the open conversation with Consul Adscrito Nabor Sergio Luna, Consulate General of Mexico in Laredo, TX. His presentation was vital and clear when he shared his thoughts on the root which causes migration.

Later that day, the group met with Catholic Charities' representatives in Laredo who shared about their work providing various direct services to individuals and families who live in economically distressed areas. From there, the group went to Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA) where they heard about free legal services provided to low-income residents in 68 counties of Southwest Texas. The evening ended with a meeting with representatives from the Laredo Area Foundation.

Our delegates represented nine countries from Western and Eastern Europe and all work on migration issues, therefore every one of their visits were focused on the reality and US experience of facing those challenges every day. The San Antonio Council for International Visitors is very grateful for assistance of every organization involved in conducting these amazing meetings and discussions with our international guests. Thank you for your willingness to make a difference by hosting and sharing your expertise.



Palestinian Women Discuss Community Leadership

On July 29, 2019 - July 30, 2019 SACIV hosted five women from Palestine to learn about Community Leadership for Women. They met with Mr. DJ Jackson from Haven for Hope, Former Mayor Ivy Taylor, Members of the Bear County Family Justice Center, and Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran. Through these meetings the visitors were able to learn more about women leadership in San Antonio and what it's like to be a woman in the city of San Antonio.

On Monday, the women visited Haven for Hope where they were able to tour and learn about the campus. They also participated in a community service activity. During this trip the women were able to learn about how shelters like these help homeless women. Through meeting with Mr. DJ Jackson, the Volunteer Service Manager, they were able to learn about the programs Haven for Hope uses to help homeless women get into the workforce once again. They were also taught about the root causes of homelessness in the community and how Haven for Hope tries to help combat the issue.

Next, the visitors met with Former Mayor Ivy Taylor to talk about her accomplishments as a woman in power and her role of one of several women holding positions in San Antonio's municipal government. It was a great experience for the visitors to talk to a woman who has been in a power position in San Antonio's government and to learn about her experiences.

On Tuesday, the women visited the Bexar County Family Justice Center (BCFJC). At the center they met with Crystal Chandler, Deirdre Hernandez-Perez, Rachel Martinez, Officer Nancy Olguin, Rhonda Barnett, Richard Loza, and Dolores Villanueva. In this meeting, the women learned about how the Justice Center helps bring everything a victim needs to one place to make it more accessible for them. They brought in representatives from each agency that resides at the center, such as a representative from the District Attorney's Office, the San Antonio Police Department, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, and a FJC Programming Counselor. These representatives talked about their role in the center and the part they play in helping victims of domestic violence.



Finally, the visitors met with Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran of District Three. During this meeting, the Councilwoman talked about what she and her team are doing to help women join the workforce and be more active in the community. Councilwoman Viagran also talked about the report she and her team conducted. The report addressed four main issues, such as female economic output, women's health, female political presence, and abuse of women. She talked about how this report was a major step in showing the issues that women face in the San Antonio community. She said a key to helping improve not just the life of women in San Antonio, but the whole community, is getting political groups to work together to fix these issues.

The San Antonio Council for International Visitors was honored to host the visitors from Palestine. The women learned more about the lack of women leadership here and what San Antonio is doing to combat the issue. This experience shed new light on the issue which helped form new solutions and insight. This was truly a rich learning experience for not only the group but for everyone involved and we here at SACIV were not only honored but privileged to have hosted these wonderful women. Hopefully this experience will help the growth of women leadership not only in Palestine but here in San Antonio as well.



SACIV Welcomes Two Delegations Focused on Cyber Security

On June 19th - June 23rd, 2019, we welcomed six international visitors from the Philippines for an IVLP single country program entitled "Sustaining Cybersecurity." This program was planned to provide participants with insights, strategies, and tools to improve interagency coordination on cybersecurity, to strengthen cyber policies and legislation and encourage adoption of multi-stakeholder approach to regulation.

On Thursday morning, our visitors had a great tour of the Rack-space premises, a leading company in San Antonio. The guests learnt about the company's work to ensure the safety of data across hundreds of thousands of clients. The representatives discussed their experience in public-private collaboration, as well as strengthening cyber policies and legislation.

This conversation continued in a meeting with the District Representative and Deputy District Director from the Office of Congressman Will Hurd. The dialogue was mostly around the work of the House Information Technology Subcommittee when the passage of Federal CIO Authorization Act of 2018 reformed executive branch information security. The guests also learned about the DHS Data Framework Act which helps provide resources to the Department of Homeland Security to fight cyber threats.

After lunch, they met with a wonderful group of academic representatives at the Texas A&M University San Antonio (TAMUSA), Center for Information Technology and Cyber Security. The group professors welcomed the guests and shared about the development of a comprehensive IT and cybersecurity education and research program that prepares TAMUSA students for cyber careers.

On Friday morning, the visitors had a great discussion time with representatives of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce's Cybersecurity Industry Council. Acting Vice President for Cybersecurity and Director of Cybersecurity San Antonio presented a detailed overview of the collaboration that is done in private, private-public and public sectors, federal government, academic and entrepreneurial levels where dedicated people comply to connect and grow San Antonio's cybersecurity industry. The presentation also covered the industry-driven programs that accelerate the growth and national reputation of San Antonio's cybersecurity sector by fostering a collaborative environment for innovation, job-producing investments and public-private partnerships.

The next meeting was with Digital Defense, Inc. which was founded in 1999 and aims at managing security risk assessments that help organizations across the globe defend data and keep brands and reputation secure. The ILVP guests learned about the organization's experience in driving out risk with a unique combination of high automation, inclusive of leading-edge patented technology, complemented by high touch from a dedicated team of security analysts, researchers and client advocates. The conversation was a great exchange of expertise and experience.

After lunch, our delegation headed for the meeting with representatives of the University of Texas at San Antonio's Department of Information Systems and Cyber Security. This meeting was helpful due to the academic perspective of the matter. The participants learned about programs, including a Cyber Center for Security and Analytics, which specializes in high-impact research as well as the Critical Technology Studies Program and is designed to prepare students for work in the national security apparatus.

The visit to San Antonio was especially bright for our visitors as they had a chance to experience the hospitality of SACIV's members on Saturday evening, when each IVLP participant enjoyed face-to-face conversations with the local members, experiencing the example of local family traditions and Texan home hospitality.

Through these varied and impactful meetings, the delegation from the Philippines was able to explore San Antonio's successful collaboration in public-private sector to strengthen cyber policies and legislation, to learn from US academic resources about their programs that help produce modern generation of cyber security professionals. Each one of the participants admitted what a great value every meeting was, as they were able to ex-

change experience and expertise that had been collected, tested and gained over decades.

On July 21st - July 24th 2019, SACIV welcomed four international visitors from Algeria for an IVLP single country program entitled "Promoting Cyber Security." This program was planned to provide participants with the opportunity to examine U.S. cyber security and risk management strategies, to explore the collaborative approach between sector specific agencies, federal agencies, and private sector partners to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, investigate and recover from cyber incidents.

On Monday, our visitors met with the representative of Lackland Air Force Base (AFB), where they learnt about the Air Force Cyber Command (24th Air Force), a unit designed for the sole purpose of cybersecurity operations. They also learned more about Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency (25th Air Force).

This important conversation continued in the meeting with two professors from the University of Texas at San Antonio, Department of Information Systems and Cybersecurity and Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security. These professors presented the programs and ways how they prepare students to be future cybersecurity leaders. During the discussion, our guests heard about a variety of ideas and methods of raising a dynamic team dedicated to infrastructure assurance, research, and education. Some of the visitors were so inspired by the presentations that they wanted to go back to school and refresh their knowledge of such a fast developing cyberspace community.

In the evening, this IVLP group was invited as guests of honor at the SACIV's Summer Membership Mixer. Our visitors enjoyed meeting members of the San Antonio community and learning more about our culture and values and vice versa.

On Tuesday morning, the visitors had a valuable meeting with representatives of Frost Bank, Investments and Insurance Department. They learned about the ways and initiative the bank provides its customers to educate them on fraud and identity theft prevention. They met with the bank's Chief Technology Officer who shared with them her 47 years experience in running the IT department of the bank. During the discussion, Algerian guests shared their challenges in their first steps to encourage the financial sector of Algeria to go digital. And there is still a long way to go in order to build people's trust.

Later that day, they met with representatives from the Office of Congressman Will Hurd to hear about the policy landscape surrounding cyber security in the US and the bills Congressman Hurd has been involved with in the area of fighting cyber threats and making sure there are available resources to fight those threats.

After lunch, they headed to meet with the private sector representatives of Build Sec Foundation who shared about the long-term incubator which helps founders launch security product startups in Central Texas. Our visitors could learn about their unique cases when they helped several companies to be recognized, tested, and deployed into the market. They also shared their experience in surrounding every startup with necessary resources and networking to excel.

The visit to San Antonio was filled with significant meetings and necessary discussions as Cybersecurity doesn't have borders or limits, yet every country faces the same questions of when and how to build necessary systems, as well as where you need to draw a fine line between National Security and personal freedom. Every discussion ended up with the same comment "in order to be ahead of cybersecurity attacks and make sure there is security, every entity has to be willing to collaborate and share best practices, experience, and knowledge. That will help to be deliberate and focused in all areas of cyberspace."



Mexican Visitors Address the Needs of Underserved & At-Risk Youth

On August 7, 2019 - August 9, 2019 the San Antonio Council for International Visitors welcomed a delegation of visitors from various regions in Mexico to learn more about addressing the needs of underserved and at-risk youth. The visitors had previously visited Washington D.C, Chicago, and Los Angeles, before making their way to the Alamo City before returning home. Here, they were able to visit organizations such as Haven for Hope, The Boys and Girls Club, Roy Maas Youth Alternatives, AVANCE, and many other programs that help disadvantaged youth.

On August 7, the group first met at Haven for Hope to speak to volunteers, tour the campus, and learn more about how it aids in combating homelessness in Bexar County. After the tour of the one of a kind facility, they had the opportunity to ask questions about how Haven for Hope helps the homeless re-enter society and become more self-sustaining. This brought new perspectives on how homelessness can be combated. They also met with representatives of THRIVE San Antonio, who provided insight on how the organization partners with Haven for Hope to help homeless LGBTQ youth.

After lunch, the visitors visited the Boys and Girls Club. There, they were able to tour the building and learn about the work of the organization. Specifically, the visitors were fascinated with their multi-generational program model.

On Thursday, the visitors first stop was with Roy Maas Youth Alternatives (RMYA), where the visitors were able to tour the facility, learn about their mission, and were even able to meet some of the residents at the center. The visit was very emotional for the delegation as they were able to hear the stories of the youth and how they were able to have a better life because of the center. The visitors took these success stories to heart as it showcased the importance of the program.

After lunch the visitors visited with members of peaceCENTER. They spoke with volunteers and heard about the organizations various activities. They also learned that the program isn't just to help troubled youth, but to serve all youth by preventing them from entering into negative situations.



On the last day of the trip, the visitors first went to the University of the Incarnate Word to meet with two representatives from City Year San Antonio. They¹⁸

were able to learn about how this program's approach to helping youth is different and that the organization is unlike what they had seen previously, as their work is primarily based in schools. They were also fascinated with the volunteerism aspect of the organization, which encourages community outreach and service.

Next, the delegation visited Big Brothers Big Sisters. At this organization, the visitors were able to learn about how adults and kids can learn from each other and aid each other as mentors. They were able to meet with alumni of the program and witness the result of going through the program. They toured the facility and met everyone who worked at the organization to learn about each of their vital roles.

After lunch, the visitors went to UTSA to visit the Dreamers Center. They were able to learn about how the University is helping DACA and undocumented students get a higher education.

Lastly, the visitors went to the Cortez Family Center to meet with representatives of AVANCE. They had the opportunity to learn about how they help parents get degrees in higher education, as well as other services they provide, such as parenting classes. During the meeting, the visitors were able to speak to representatives from the national office and learn about the efficacy of the program within our community.



The San Antonio Council for International Visitors was honored to host this amazing group of international visitors from Mexico to shed light on services provided combat the disenfranchisement of at-risk youth. We hope that this experience not only exposed what the San Antonio community can do to help this youth, but also helped these visitors learn about how they can assist the youth in their communities. This was truly a great experience for everyone involved because through collective learning and sharing new solutions and new perspectives, much discovery was gained by our visitors and the local community they met with.



Japanese Visitors Discuss Women in STEM

On July 26, 2019 the San Antonio Council for International Visitors welcomed eight visitors from Japan to discuss women's leadership in STEM fields. During their day trip to San Antonio they met with Ms. Barbra Hewitt from San Antonio Women in Technology, Ms. Ann Stevens from BioMed San Antonio and Ms. Teresa Evans from Trauma Insight San Antonio, and lastly they visited the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce's Cybersecurity Industry Council.

First on their tour of San Antonio, meet with Barbra Hewitt from San Antonio Women in Technology. They were

able to speak with her about her experience in STEM fields and what it was like for her to take that path. She also discussed some reasons why

there haven't been as many females in STEM fields and what things others can do to encourage more female participation. The visitors were very inquisitive during the discussion and it gave some insight on how not only Japan could encourage more participation to girls to get more involved in STEM but how we in San Antonio can encourage more STEM involvement from girls.

Next the visitors met with Ann Stevens from BioMed San Antonio and Teresa Evens from Trauma Insight San Antonio. During this meeting, the visitors first heard from Ms. Stevens about her experience in the health science field. She talked about her founding of BioMed SA alongside Former Mayor Henry Cisneros. She also discussed the importance of working together in the field of Healthcare and BioScience. Then the visitors heard from Teresa Evens of Trauma Insight. Ms. Events discussed her background and her experience as a woman working to succeed in the BioScience field. She also gave insight on why many women opt out of STEM fields but also offered a solution to the problem of the lack of female presence in the STEM workforce which is advocating. Ms. Evens said that advocating is key to getting more participation from girls to join more STEM focused fields. She also discussed the hard work that goes into wearing the many hats that she does. This sparked the visitors interest as they were able learn about how they could show everyday women in Japan that they too can have a happy life and work in STEM.

After lunch, the visitors visited the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce's Cybersecurity Industry Council. There, they met with Amanda Keammerer, Lisa Marie Gomez, Laurie Stinson, and Amy Contreras. The ladies first discussed San Antonio's cyber background. During this meeting it was a free flow discussion with women giving advice and talking about their experience getting to where they

are today. They gave some insight on not only what men should do to encourage more female participation in the field but what women can do. They said that men need to make women feel more welcome when they enter the field and that women need to help each other. They discussed the importance of women helping women and not putting each other down. This also sparked a discussion on how encouragement is key, teaching women that it's okay to put themselves out in the world and to ask for what they want. This was a new perspective that the visitors hadn't examined so it really helped to give them another solution to the problem of the lack of female STEM workers.

The San Antonio Council for International Visitors was honored to host the visitors from Japan. The visitors learned more about the lack of women leadership here and what San Antonio is doing to combat the issue. This experience shed new light on the issue which helped form new solutions and insight. This was truly a rich learning experience for not only the visitors but for everyone involved and SACIV was not only honored, but privileged to host these visitors. Hopefully this experience will help the growth of women leaders not only in Japan, but also here at home.



“WORLD VIEW”

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