

WorldView

San Antonio Council For International Visitors

NEWSLETTER

Dear SACIV Members,

On October 13, 1989, I prepared and filed the Articles of Incorporation for the San Antonio Council for International Visitors as a non-profit 501-c organization. In 1976, Patricia O'Connell was working with the City of San Antonio and was first to begin a procedure for hosting international visitors, selected by the US Department of State, in San Antonio. Quick to jump in on this venture were Irma Reyes, Mary Walsh, and Fernando Centeno. By the time Irma pulled me into this project, there were already a substantial number of delegations visiting San Antonio as part of this program, but there was no legal organization established by which to become official members of the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV). With the establishment of SACIV as a non-profit organization we were able to gain official membership status, entitled to all their benefits, including various funding possibilities.

In 1990, SACIV hosted 114 visitors from 52 countries. In 1992, we reached the phenomenal number of 268 visitors from 89 Countries. With spending cuts to the National Council for International Visitors (now called Global Ties US) and increasing numbers of cities becoming members of NCIV, our numbers dropped.

In August of 2012, as a result of the serious medical problems of our most dearly beloved

Chairman, Juancho Bierlein, I again became Chairman with the task of finding a new Executive Director and carrying on the mission that Juancho did so well.

I wish to thank all of our membership for supporting us over the years, the key members of our small Board of Directors who helped me as Chairman, and the contribution of all our past Chairmen as well as our present Executive Director, who is doing a tremendous job.



Bernard Buecker, Honorary German Consul, ret. and German President Joachim Gauck

This will be my last month as Chairman. However, I plan to remain on the Board to promote the organization and to assist primarily in increasing our regular and corporate membership. I urge everyone to remain as members, to persuade your family, friends, and possibly even your most favorite enemy to join this very important and most interesting organization.

Sincerely,

Bernard Buecker

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 *Chairman's Message*
- 2 *Announcements*
- 3 *2015 Programs*
- 4 *Members' Corner: Sarwat Husain*
- 5 *Three November Programs*
- 6 *Where Does Diplomacy Happen?*
- 7 *French Visitor Draws Connections*
- 8 *European Visitors Find Common Threads*
- 9 *SACIV Celebrates 26th Anniversary*
- 10 *Latin American Visitors Explore Democracy*
- 11 *Millennials and Foreign Policy*
- 12 *Members' Corner: Betsy Cameron*
- 13 *SACIV Hosts Summer Membership Mixer*
- 14 *Global Austin Brings Two Programs to San Antonio*
- 15 *Ambassador LeBaron Lecture, Visitors from Romania*
- 16 *Women Leaders from the Middle East and North Africa*
- 17 *SA Women Leaders Share Experiences Visitors*
- 18 *Visitors from Romania (Continued), Program Evaluation*
- 19 *Program Evaluation*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

◆ **Returned invoices are
DUE FEBRUARY 15th!**

****Please send completed "Membership
Renewal Information Forms" and
checks to:**

SACIV
PO Box 6088
San Antonio, TX
78209

◆ **We are seeking
HOME HOSPITALITY
hosts!**

We will be welcoming 6 law enforcement officials from **Armenia**, participating in a program on "Combating Human Trafficking and Developing Major Criminal Cases", and are looking for hosts for the evening of **February 7th!**

****Please contact Cecilia Cross for more information
or if you are interested at ccross.saciv@gmail.com.**



*We aim to build
international friendships,
to facilitate the exchange of ideas,
to foster cultural understanding,
and to promote San Antonio
as an international city.*

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

February 6th – 11th, 2016

**Combatting Human Trafficking
and Developing Major Criminal Cases**

A Project for Armenia

~

February 7th – 10th, 2016

**Regional Economic Connectivity:
The NAFTA Experience**

A Project for India

FIND US ONLINE



Find us on:
facebook®

facebook.com/SACIVTX
#SACIVTX

**Check out our new and
improved website!**



follow us on
twitter

twitter.com/SACIVTX
@SACIVTX

**Keep up to date on events
and browse our photo albums!**

In 2015, SACIV brought ...



120 VISITORS
from
70 COUNTRIES
... to **San Antonio!**

2015 Programs

April 26th – 30th ~ *Cultural Heritage Preservation and Museum Management*
Ecuador, Morocco, Poland, Vietnam

May 6th – 7th ~ *IVLP Gold Stars' Tour: Alumni Connecting the World Mr. Yongsong Chen*
China

June 16th – 20th ~ *Combating International and Domestic Human Trafficking*
Argentina, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

June 16th – 20th ~ *Human Rights, Civic Empowerment, and Minority Communities*
Australia, Micronesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, China, Singapore

July 17th ~ *America's Changing Energy Landscape*
Germany

July 18th – 23rd ~ *Accountability in Government*
Cameroon, Chile, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Nauru, Namibia, Dominican Republic

July 25th – 29th ~ *Sustainable Urban Development and Third Places: Mr. Sylvain Barfety*
France

September 14th ~ *Women Leaders: Promoting Peace and Security*
Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, United Kingdom

September 30th – October 4th ~ *Working for the Underserved*
Romania

October 6th - 10th ~ *America's Multiethnic Society and the Role of the Successor Generation*
Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

October 13th – 17th ~ *Grassroots Democracy and Civil Society*
Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

November 11th – 15th ~ *Going Global to Foster Local Economic Development*
Brazil

November 14th – 18th ~ *The US Experience in Supporting Military Veterans*
Ukraine

November 22nd – 28th ~ *Taking a Tech Start-Up to the Next Level*
Pakistan

December 12th – 16th ~ *Women Leaders: Promoting Peace and Security*
Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates



Members' Corner

By Sarwat Husain
SACIV Board Member

Five Young Entrepreneurs Visit San Antonio from Pakistan

The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is a professional exchange program, funded by the US department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The mission of IVLP is to offer current and emerging international leaders the opportunity to experience the richness and diversity of American political, economic, social and cultural life through carefully designed exchanges that reflect participants' professional interests and the public diplomacy objectives of the United States government.

The exchange brings up to 5,000 professional emerging leaders from around the world to the United States each year for programs of up to three weeks, and many of them visit our beautiful city San Antonio, as well.

Among all these visitors, in November 2015, there were five young innovators that came to San Antonio, around Thanksgiving time, after visiting a few other states. They were 4 men and one woman.

Since the purpose of the IVLP is to cultivate lasting relationships between current and emerging professionals around the world and their American counterparts and to provides opportunities for foreign opinion makers to gain firsthand knowledge about U.S. society, culture and politics, I felt it will be will fitting to have these five visitors do some volunteer work to experience the culture of volunteerism in US.

So I was able to arrange for them to serve at the annual Raul Jimenez Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday November 24th, 2015, which serves the dinner to 25,000 homeless and elderly of the city.



Being among thousands of other volunteers, they gained a realistic picture of the United States by spending time there. There were many political figures and city leaders standing in the line to serve these

needy segments of the city. Visitors were able to see firsthand how American society and politics "work," leading to understanding and admiration.

As America's leadership debates the balance between hard and soft power, this time-honored and proven experience demonstrated how the United States can show its best face to the world while achieving its goals peacefully.

I was able to arrange one media interview about their experience and a photo-op with our very own Mayor Ivy Taylor. One should have seen their excitement; it was so catchy.

Then the next day, Friday November 25th, I was able to take them to MCECC, one of the largest mosques in San Antonio, where the congregation is predominantly from Pakistan. They were able to talk about their experience of their US visit and some latest news of Pakistan, to 1500 attendees. The congregation loved meeting them, and the exchange lasted much longer after the Jum-mah prayers.



These were the only two visits I was able to arrange, but they went to many other places in San Antonio. I know that they took such lasting experience back home from their visit to San Antonio. - - -

Thank you to...



CORPORATE MEMBER

Three November Programs Highlight American Foreign Policy Objectives in Regions of Significance

This past November was a busy month for SACIV as we hosted three consecutive programs for international visitors. All three programs reflected American foreign policy objectives significant to the regions and countries from which the delegates hailed.

The first group, comprised of nine visitors from Brazil, spent November 11th through November 15th in San Antonio for a program entitled “Going Global to Foster Local Economic Prosperity”. As Brazil is among the “BRIC” countries (a grouping acronym that refers to the countries of Brazil, Russia, India and China, which are all deemed to be at a similar stage of newly advanced economic development), a program on international economic development, especially in San Antonio, was particularly relevant for the visitors.



Through meetings with the City of San Antonio’s Economic Development Department, Geekdom, the Free Trade Alliance, the San Antonio Airport, the Bexar County SMWBE Program, Xenex, and attorney Ed Eistein, they learned about city & county level support for economic development as well as innovation hubs, services for startup companies, and efforts to promote entrepreneurship. The participants were able to make connections with their American counterparts, from a variety of sectors, who have become agents of economic change and prosperity and enjoyed home hospitality with SACIV members.



The next group brought five delegates from Ukraine to San Antonio to learn about “The US Experience in Supporting Military Veterans”. Due to recent events in their country including the ongoing conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which has collectively become known as the Ukrainian Revolution, there has been an enormous stress placed on Ukrainian civil society. Visitors traveled to our nicknamed “Military City, USA” to devise strategies to address challenges created by the current

situation they face, such as the phenomena of Internally Displaced Persons, a large and growing population of wounded or traumatized military veterans, and families profoundly affected by conflict. At the Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), they visited the Warrior Transition Battalion, the Warrior & Family Support Center, the Center for the Intrepid, and attended an award ceremony for three wounded Ukrainian soldiers. They also learned about the extensive Military Initiatives of the San Antonio Area Foundation, participated in a roundtable discussion arranged by the San Antonio Coalition for Veterans and Families, and met with representatives of the Wounded Warrior Project, the Bexar County Veterans Service Office, and TAMUSA’s “Patriots’ Casa”.



And finally, five young Pakistani visitors traveled to our city to explore the concept of “Taking a Tech Start-Up to the Next Level”. As Pakistan has been deemed one of the “Next Eleven” (a term identified by Goldman Sachs and economist Jim O’Neill as having a high potential of becoming, along with the “BRIC” group, among the world’s largest economies in the 21st century), this was also an important topic for this group of talented and successful entrepreneurs. At Geekdom they observed the role of co-working spaces in advancing tech start-ups and apps that address social challenges through meetings with resident companies and organizations such as the 80/20 Foundation and YupiCall. They explored issues facing the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs with visits to VentureLab and LiftFund. Their six day stay in San Antonio was filled with several cultural activities, including attending a circus show, watching the Holiday River Parade, and visiting a local mosque for Friday prayers. And to round out an amazing experience in San Antonio, they had a chance to meet Mayor

Ivy Taylor while volunteering at the 36th Annual Raul Jimenez Thanksgiving Dinner then joined SACIV members for a taste of a typical American Thanksgiving Dinner. - - -



WHERE DOES DIPLOMACY HAPPEN?

By Collin Burder

GLOBAL TIES > U.S.

Our world faces serious challenges today, some of which seem unresolvable. Establishing ties with people from around the world is undoubtedly one of the most powerful tools we have to address the problems that confront us all. When individuals in the U.S. develop ties with the citizens in other countries, they inspire thinking that transcends the boundaries of their daily lives. We see it every day at Global Ties U.S. Consider the Baltimore-based entrepreneurs at the Taharka Brothers, who worked with farmers in Haiti to import Haitian cocoa for their ice cream business; or Dr. Aaron Shirley, the Mississippi doctor who improved healthcare access for the needy in his state's Delta region by using a model developed in Iran.

a diverse range of experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.

In the coming months, Global Ties U.S. and our members, in partnership with the Department of State, will host a series of summits to take place throughout the United States. Participants will include business leaders, government officials, and representatives from NGOs. By working together, we will foster connections within the international exchange community and highlight the critical role that public and citizen diplomacy programs play in building a more peaceful and prosperous world.

There is no longer anything foreign about foreign policy.

Ensuring professional development opportunities for the international visitor community will be a key feature of our forthcoming summits. All who play a role in exchange programs will receive the training they need that will allow them to ramp-up their invaluable work. Participants will enjoy opportunities to improve their understanding of American public diplomacy and foreign policy, while examining how international exchange programs improve our relationship with the rest of the world.

The 2014/15 Diplomacy Begins Here regional summits will take place in eight U.S. cities. The foreign policy topics and themes to be emphasized will vary, depending on each summit site. Professionals and volunteers are being invited to participate, and discover how they can do more to make the international exchange experience better for everyone involved. For additional information on how you can get involved, go to <http://bitly.com/diplomacybeginshere>. - - -



When individuals in the U.S. develop ties with the citizens in other countries, they inspire thinking that transcends the boundaries of their daily lives.

The information-sharing and relationship-building that help people come together to tackle global challenges no longer happens solely through formal diplomatic relations conducted between governments. More and more, diplomacy takes place not only in Washington, DC, but in communities and regions throughout the United States. Ordinary citizens look around their community and understand: diplomacy begins here! U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said it best when he remarked, "there is no longer anything foreign about foreign policy."

In this new and shifting landscape, the task of bringing global engagement to local communities falls on us. We must ensure international exchange participants reflect

Thank you to...



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE

CORPORATE MEMBER

French Visitor Draws Connections Between San Antonio and Bordeaux

In July, French visitor Mr. Sylvain Barfety spent five days in San Antonio as part of diverse program on sustainable urban development and the American model of “third places”, a concept advanced by sociologist Ray Oldenburg that emphasizes the importance of informal public gathering places, away from the social environments of the home and the workplace, in a community. The program was designed specifically for our visitor to examine the balance between the environment, the economy, and cultural heritage preservation in urban development and revitalization in American cities, highlighting San Antonio as a leading example.

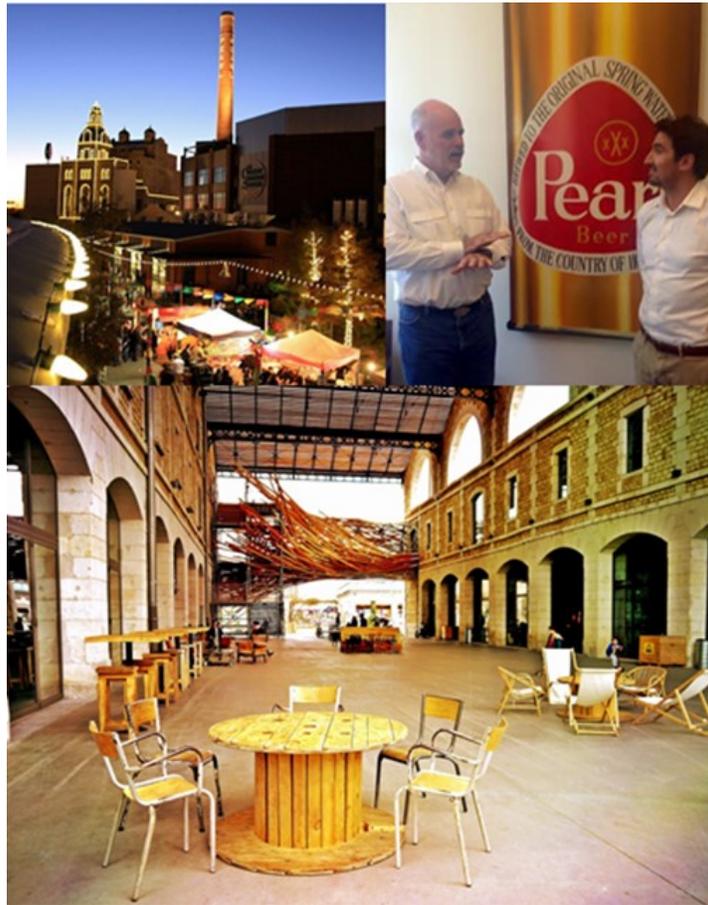
Mr. Sylvain Barfety visited San Antonio in his capacity as the Economic Development Manager and one of several founders of Groupe Evolution in Bordeaux, France. This firm creates incubator projects that support sustainable development, such as their most recent initiative called “The Darwin Ecosystem”, a sustainable urban development project designed to revitalize the right bank of the Garonne River and built on the four fundamental pillars of cooperation & pooling, collective governance, ecological transition, and innovation. Located among the renovated warehouses of a former military barracks, the alternative urban space is shared by 250 occupants (including companies, organizations, an organic supermarket, and a restaurant), all involved in green business, the creative economy, or responsible trade and united to promote a sustainable urban culture.

With Mr. Barfety’s background in the creation of “The Darwin Ecosystem”, it seemed only natural that he visit one of San Antonio’s newest, mixed-use urban spaces: The Pearl. In a meeting with Mr. Bill Shown of Silver Ventures, the company behind the redevelopment of The Pearl, Mr. Barfety was able to draw connections between his project in Bordeaux and the similar development here. Both projects used adaptive reuse and repurposed space to create a sus-

tainable urban environment not just for tourists, but for residents of the community to live, work, and play. Both were formed from collaborative investment, with public sector money catalyzing private sector financing. And both projects were formed with a keen attention to historic preservation, Mr. Barfety noted in reference to the artistic and sustainable use of objects and architectural features from The Pearl’s days as a major local brewery.

Through appointments with other local organizations (including Centro San Antonio, SA2020, the San Antonio River Authority, Green Spaces Alliance, Mission Verde Alliance, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, and the Paseo del Rio Association) Mr. Barfety developed important professional contacts and learned about successful initiatives that promote revitalization of cities while incorporating cultural heritage preservation and the innovative use of resources. He had the chance to engage in mutually beneficial conversations on topics such as the role of sustainable planning and environmental protection awareness in urban development and the way that community organizations and businesses work together to promote sustainable urban based social and economic development. And he was able to ask provocative and poignant questions on the issues such as the impact of gentrification on social equality.

Through these experiences, his time visiting tourist attractions, and home hospitality in San Antonio, Mr. Barfety was quick to remark on the similarities between his hometown of Bordeaux, France and our city. He drew a parallel between the two cities of comparable size which both are home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites. And while the Garonne River is slightly larger than the San Antonio River, both are economic drivers and social apexes of each region. And finally, both Bordeaux and San Antonio have dynamic, developing urban cultures, propelling them forward as world class cities. - - -



European Visitors Find Common Threads within our Multiethnic Societies

From October 6th through October 10th, 14 visitors from Europe visited San Antonio for a program examining “America’s Multiethnic Society and the Role of the Successor Generation”. The visitors hailed from Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom and represented a vast array of professions and ethnic backgrounds, demonstrating their own multicultural societies in Europe. They all shared the desire to increase their understanding of the contributions made and challenges faced by minority groups in the US. Specifically, they traveled to San Antonio to examine themes such as celebrating & showcasing



diversity through the arts, multicultural & anti-bias education, and maintain heritage through ethnic community associations.

They began their program with a visit to the International School of the Americas, a public magnet school on the campus of

Lee High School which seeks to engage students through a multicultural curriculum and emphasizes learning from a global perspective as opposed to a US-centric world view. Visitors were extremely impressed by the student’s presentation on the school’s annual, entirely student run Model United Nations conference and were particularly engaged in small group discussions with the pupils and faculty about their yearly portfolios and how instructors teach towards global competence. But the highlight of the visit was the last session in which visitors joined a class called the “Borderland Collective”. This innovative course encourages students to analyze the US-Mexico border through multiple historical, theoretical, and pragmatic contexts. The visitors interacted in small groups with students to explore some of the immigration themes they were studying, which was a common expertise of all of the visitors. They discussed provocative prompts such as “What is your dream for international borders in fifty years?” and “What educational activities are most helpful in improving global perspectives and reducing bias?”. The visitors ended the morning feeling invigorated by the youthful energy and inquisitiveness and continued their day with a Tex-Mex lunch downtown and a presentation, discussion, and tour of the Institute of Texan Cultures.



The following day, visitors traveled to Austin for a morning of cultural activities and an afternoon of appointments with area professionals. On their final full day in San Antonio, visitors had the opportunity to learn about the ethnic, religious, linguistic, and racial diversity in American culture through art during visits to the Guadalupe Cul-

tural Arts Center, where they were able to attend the “Viva Mi Cultura” dance performance, and the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center, where they visited the Mujer Artes women’s arts collective.



They also were particularly thrilled to take part in a roundtable discussion with members from the Jewish Federation of San Antonio, the Turkish American Association of San Antonio, the Council on American Islamic Relations, and the San Antonio Baha’i Community on the role that ethnic and religiously based organizations play in allowing individuals to embrace and maintain their cultural heritage and personal identity. They raised poignant questions about interfaith attitudes, improving awareness in the community, and recognizing that we have more in common than we are different.



Most importantly, they were able to explore the common threads within their respective European societies and those of America.

Their last day ended with a reception and dinner at the El Tropicano Hotel in celebration of SACIV’s 26th anniversary and to honor Dr. Bernard “Ben” Buecker’s tenure as Honorary Consul to the Federal Republic of Germany and as Chairman of the Board of Directors of SACIV. Speaking about the event, Ms. Patricia O’Connell, a long time SACIV member and member of SACIV’s “Special Events Committee”, commented that it was an “inspiring dinner in which we heard about so many nationalities all working towards the same goal and meeting in peace to exchange ideas and form friendships”. ---



Thank you to...

Dr. Bernard “Ben” Buecker
CORPORATE MEMBER

SACIV Celebrates 26th Anniversary

By Paige Brown, SACIV Intern

On October 9th, 2015, SACIV celebrated its 26th Anniversary at the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel in downtown San Antonio. The celebration invited local guests and SACIV members as well as international visitors who were part of a delegation from Europe and Eurasia participating in a program entitled “America’s Multiethnic Society and the Role of the Successor Generation”. Guests were pleased to entertain and interact with the visitors who represented 14 countries, celebrating not only our annual anniversary but their last night in the community.



The event included a series of festivities beginning with a reception. Guests flooded the hotel lobby while a quartet from San Antonio’s very own North East School of the Arts performed. Guests enjoyed beverages and appetizers and mingled amongst each other, meeting new visitors and greeting existing members. For many it was an evening full of familiar faces as well as an opportunity to establish new and foreign acquaintances. Following a reception, guests shuffled into the main dining hall for the dinner program and seated themselves around several colorfully decorated round tables in preparation for dinner and the program.



While guests indulged in a flavorful three-course meal, a series of distinguished speakers addressed

the diners. Master of Ceremonies, the Honorable Phil Hardberger, set the tone for the evening, introducing guest speakers including keynote speaker, Mr. Aaron Rippenkroeger, the CEO of Refugee Services of Texas. Mr. Rippenkroeger shared his struggles, accomplishments, and aspirations for his organization as well as several refugee stories, revealing the hardships and importance of welcoming refugees of various backgrounds into our country. Following the keynote speaker, Dr. Bernard “Ben” Buecker was honored for his tenure as Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany and as Chairman of the Board of Directors of SACIV. He was presented with a City Proclamation by Councilman Ron Nirenberg and a Bexar County Ceremonial by former County Commissioner Tommy Adkisson, and then introduced Ms. Nina Petrow as the new Honorary Consul of the Republic of Germany. After this presentation, two of the international visitors reflected on their positive experience spending time in the United States and offered comparisons between America and their home countries. The program drew to a close as guests sipped coffee and finished tres de leche cheesecake, reminiscing on previous international experiences, discussing current affairs, and building bridges one handshake at a time. - - -



Latin American Visitors Explore Grassroots Democracy and Civil Society in the United States

On October 13th, 14 international visitors traveled to San Antonio for a five day program on “Grassroots Democracy and Civil Society” in the US. The participants represented nine Latin American nations, including Chile, Columbia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Their program was designed to explore civic activism in San Antonio’s Hispanic community, immigration policies & the grassroots debate, and government transparency & accountability.

They spent their first day in San Antonio exploring downtown, the Riverwalk, and the Missions and dove right in to meetings with area organizations the following morning. They began their day observing citizen grassroots groups that interact with elected officials to address divergent interests at all levels of government through a meeting with representatives of the Communities Organized for Public Service and the Metro Alliance. Known as COPS/Metro, this coalition of religious groups, educational institutions, and unions work to address social problems by supporting multiethnic, diverse leaders and promoting broad-based community organizing for the public good. Visitors concluded their day with a meeting with community activist Ms. Nettie Hinton, who discussed her experience as a community advocate in neighborhood revitalization and her cooperation with local government & NGOs to achieve her goals. Visitors were moved by how her background inspired & informed her activism and intrigued by her thoughts on the

the public and addressed ethical issues that affect governance. Specifically, they heard about how the Office of Municipal Integrity promotes and ensures accountable behaviors in government projects and encourages a government which is accountable to its constituency. That afternoon, they also meet with representatives of the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, the largest and oldest non-partisan Latino voter participation organization in the US. They found it particularly useful to learn about the SVREP’s activities to encourage Latinos and other minorities to participate in the American democratic process, to empower grassroots Latinos voices, and to advocate on issues of importance to Latinos.



But perhaps the most exciting component of their program was the opportunity to attend a grassroots rally with presidential candidate Hillary Clinton! They were able to experience firsthand an essential part in campaign politics and interact with local voters and active members of the community. This provided participants with a better understanding of democracy and the electoral process in the United States and of citizens’ participation in their own governance. - - -

power of concerned citizens to promote change. They discussed their own experiences in their home countries and determined that meaningful change is often achieved from the ground up. Ms. Hinton illustrated the diversity of viewpoints held by Americans and how this diversity contributes to a dynamic, resilient, and pluralistic political system.

They spent the next morning at City Hall, meeting with city representatives to discuss their work to make information about government activities easily accessible to

Thank you to...

CORPORATE MEMBER

MILLENNIALS AND FOREIGN POLICY: HOW OUR NEW PERSPECTIVE CAN SHAPE THE FUTURE

By Yoonji Kim and Sebra Yen

GLOBALTIES > U.S.

IN HONOR OF INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY, TWO GLOBAL TIES MILLENNIALS SHARE THEIR PERSPECTIVE ON THE FUTURE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS.



At a time when 65% of U.S. adults say the world is more dangerous than it was several years ago, and 51% say the United States does too much to help solve world problems, it is easy to be pessimistic about the future of foreign relations. As members of the millennial generation—born between 1980 and 1997—our world view is shaped, in large part, by the events of 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The tragedy of the lives lost and damage done may have given us a case of "war fatigue."

But there is reason to believe that pessimism is not destined to win out—it is in our power to find another way forward and take action. Because those formative events have also opened our eyes to the world and inspired many in our generation to make a difference.

We have experienced rapid globalization and technological advancements that put us in constant contact with people from all over the world, leading this generation to a more progressive approach to differences in race, gender, and even sexual orientation and gender identity. The ease with which we can send a Tweet or a Valencia-filtered image on Instagram has contributed to a stronger global community, where horizontal exchanges of ideas and information are commonplace. This has led millennials to be more receptive to the need for diplomacy than many previous generations, who lived in a less connected world that was heavily influenced by the Cold War.

Millennials are more supportive of international organizations like the United Nations and less supportive of defense spending.

According to A. Trevor Thrall and Erik Goepner's research entitled "Millennials and U.S. Foreign Policy," millennials are hyper-connected. They are the best-educated, most ethnically and racially diverse cohort in history. Because of this, millennials are comfortable with people from all walks of life—and it shows in how they feel about foreign relations. Millennials are more supportive of international organizations like the United Nations and less supportive of defense spending. And as the oldest millennials take positions of authority in U.S. foreign policy making, we hope new practices and more inclusive approaches can be implemented in American diplomacy.

It is already happening. Increased openness to global engagement can be seen in the United States' pivot to Asia. Thrall and Goepner say that millennials tend to view China more as a

partner than as an adversary. As graduate students at The George Washington University, we can vouch for the positive outcomes of these daily people-to-people exchanges with Chinese international students. For example, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies offers activities like the weekly Chinese Tea Time. These moments of being in the same room with our global peers and having conversations about where we come from and how we view the world allows us to break down barriers. Any kind of exchange remains an important tool to dispel misperceptions and foster that partnership.

Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, the Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) continues to be a force for increased cooperation and bridge-building as it brings future leaders from around the world to the United States, enabling them to meet with their counterparts and engage in constructive dialogue. These conversations with citizens across the U.S. are around major foreign policy issues such as entrepreneurship and STEM; Countering or Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE/PVE); climate change; trafficking in persons or drugs; strengthening civil society; and more. This channel to candidly speak about global issues and share perspectives creates life-changing experiences, which will contribute to better cooperation in the international community.

...we view our openness to more creative public diplomacy measures as a re-channeling of our "war fatigue" toward positive change and harmonious international relations

The findings from Thrall and Goepner's report should be encouraging for those of us in the international exchange community. But we shouldn't forget the ongoing challenges we face, including international millennials and future generations' attitudes towards the United States. In particular, Arab millennials have been raised in an era where their countries have strained relations with the United States. We should be mindful of the weight historical context and major events have on shaping world views.

Older generations may view millennials' reluctance to adopt hard power strategies with concern. However, we view our openness to more creative public diplomacy measures as a re-channeling of our "war fatigue" toward positive change and harmonious international relations. But it's not something that will happen automatically. It's a choice each one of us has to make, and we need to encourage our peers as well. As part of this dynamic generation that can expand the role of global partnerships in world affairs, it is up to all of us to advocate for exchanges and ensure that the millennial generation actively participates in the shaping of our world. The international affairs budget is only 1 percent of the entire federal budget. Only .018 percent of that goes to U.S. Department of State sponsored international exchanges. Pledging your support for our #ExpandYourWorld campaign is one way you can get involved, and bring us one step closer to a more peaceful and prosperous world. Whether it be informing Congress about the importance of public diplomacy programs or hosting an exchange participant, there's always a role for you to play. ---



Members' Corner

By Betsy Cameron
SACIV Board Member

SACIV Delegation Examines Accountability in Government

This past July we had the visit of an eight member delegation focused on "Accountability in Government". A Multi Regional Project, the group represented countries in South America, Caribbean, Africa and the smallest country in the world – Nauru, in the South Pacific. San Antonio was one of the stops which also included stops in San Francisco/ Sacramento and New Orleans.

The group was very excited about visiting the state of Texas as they had their ideas of seeing cowboys and horses. In fact, we were able to arrange a half day visit to a ranch in Bandera for several of them to go horseback riding. It was probably one of the highlights of their trip to the U.S. – an experience they will remember forever.

San Antonio offered a wide variety of meetings which met their interest in the topics of accountability in local government, transparency in elections, education in ethical leadership and governance in a small town. The City of Boerne provided an informative presentation led by Mayor Schultz and the group was very engaging. A couple of observations raised by the visitors was the lack of public transportation and the strong local government preference for local determination rather than state or federal government control. In meetings with representatives of the City of San Antonio Ethics Review Board, City Clerk's office and Bexar County Elections office, the group discussed comparable and distinguishable procedures in their countries, and had a keen interest in learning about lobbyist activity and the extent of financial disclosure for



employees. At St. Mary's University School of Law, the group met with Dean Sheppard, Law Professor Johnson, and law students. They received several legal articles about ethics codes and conduct of lobbyists and discussed what they considered to be appropriate sanctions for ethics code violations.

Not only did the visiting group acquire information at the meetings, but through the exchange of information, discussions and ideas, the local individuals who met with the visitors were enriched professionally. SACIV members can also be enriched professionally and personally through home hospitality.

It provides the opportunity to experience the international visitors on a personal level by interacting with them and expanding the knowledge of their professions, culture, language and family. - - -



Thank you to...

El Tropicano
Riverwalk Hotel

CORPORATE MEMBER

SACIV Hosts Summer Membership Mixer

On July 19th, 2015, the San Antonio Council for International Visitors hosted a “Summer Membership Mixer” at La Paloma Riverwalk Restaurant in downtown San Antonio. Over 50 SACIV Members and their guests gathered in a private room, overlooking the scenic San Antonio Riverwalk, to welcome our international visitors who traveled to San Antonio as part of a program on “Accountability in Government”. The eight visitors hailed from all over the globe, including Cameroon, Zimbabwe, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, Namibia, Nauru, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Chile. Guests enjoyed Mexican street tacos and tres leches cake while mingling amongst each other and forming new friendships! - - -



Global Austin Brings Two Programs for Day Trips to San Antonio

Over 90 organizations similar to SACIV across the country administer the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), including our closest regional counterpart, Global Austin. Due to our near geographic proximity, SACIV often sends groups of visitors to Austin for professional appointments and cultural activities. Similarly, Global Austin sends international visitors to San Antonio for day trips arranged by SACIV. We hosted two such groups recently.



On July 17th, 2015, SACIV welcomed two German visitors for a day of programming in San Antonio on "America's Changing Energy Landscape". Ms. Nicole Kaim-Albers, Head of

Office of the World Energy Council Germany, and Ms. Cathleen Kloetzing, Head of E-Mobility Coordination Office for Saxony's Energy Agency, spent the morning visiting the Alamo 3 Solar Farm with CPS Energy's Mr. Sam Taylor and ConEdison's Mr. Dennis Brennan. They toured the solar farm, built on 70 acres and from almost entirely locally built components, and learned about the solar panels, which are capable of producing as much as 5.5 megawatts of power at any point in time, enough to power 1,300 homes. They were also able to hear about the economic impact of solar power in San Antonio and CPS Energy's initiatives such as the "New Energy Economy" program and the "Save for Tomorrow Energy Plan (STEP)". Both women asked poignant questions and enjoyed the discussions during the meeting, despite the mid-summer South Texas heat.



Following the meeting at the solar farm, the visitors were joined for lunch by SACIV Chairman and Honorary Consul of Germany Dr. Bernard "Ben" Buecker at the festive Mi Tierra in downtown San Antonio. They enjoyed authentic Tex-



Mex cuisine and were able to discuss the aspects of the German energy sector with Dr. Buecker. After their meal, the visitors explored downtown San Antonio and the Alamo via a Riverwalk Boat Tour and then headed back to Austin.

A few months later, SACIV also welcomed a group of African women for a day of programming in our city as part of a project entitled "Women Leaders: Promoting Peace and Security". Representing a variety of sectors, all with impressive professional backgrounds, the twelve women hailed from the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, and the United Kingdom.

Their day of programming began with a visit to the Martinez Street Women's Center on San Antonio's Eastside, where they discussed the Center's programs which work to em-



power women & girls and advocate for their achievements and equality in the community. Staff of the Center and international visitors realized the shared struggles that women face in their countries and in the San Antonio community. Next, visitors headed to the University of the Incarnate Word for a catered lunch meeting with the staff of Women's Global Connection, a non-profit ministry of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word which aims to promote the learning and leadership capacity of women locally and globally. After a presentation on the organizations activities abroad and within the com-

munity, the visitors participated in a conversation in which they shared stories of best practices and exchanged contact information for potential future collaboration. The day ended with a visit to the Esperanza Peace and Justice



Center in which visitors learned about the work of the community arts organization focused on promoting civil and economic rights and honoring cultural heritage through many different mediums. They were particularly inspired by the Westside "Mujer Artes" project and exhibit and enjoyed discussions with the women of the local arts collective. - - -

Thank you to...



CORPORATE MEMBER

SACIV Hosts Lecture with Ambassador Richard LeBaron

On September 18th, 2015, SACIV welcomed Ambassador Richard LeBaron for a lecture at the University of the Incarnate Word's Grossman International Conference Center. As a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington and a member of the Advisory Board of Global Ties US, the umbrella organization that supports the work of local councils for international visitors such as SACIV, Ambassador LeBaron led a discussion on how exchange programs contribute to foreign policy objectives and the critical role of citizen diplomats in reaching these goals. He specifically cited the efficacy of the US Department of State's premier exchange program, the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), administered by SACIV and over 90 similar organizations around the country.



Having attended high school locally at St. Anthony's as well as studied for two years at St. Mary's University, LeBaron was pleased to speak to SACIV members as well as members of the public on his career as a diplomat in the Middle East & North Africa as well as address current foreign policy trends and issues affecting the region.

Ambassador LeBaron retired from the U.S. diplomatic service in April 2012 after a thirty-three year career. In his final position at the Department of State, Richard LeBaron was the founding Coordinator of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, an interagency organization designs and implements campaigns to counter the appeal of terrorist groups to potential recruits. LeBaron's final foreign posting was Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy in London from August 2007 to August 2010 and he also served as Chargé d'Affaires in London from February to August 2009 during the transition to the Obama Administration. Previous to his assignment to London, Mr. LeBaron served as the U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait (2004-2007). From September 2001 to July 2004, he was Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel. And from 1998 to 2001, he was Minister-Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs at the Embassy of the United States in Cairo, Egypt. While posted in Washington from 1991 to 1998, LeBaron served in three positions related to the Middle East: Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council, Director of the Peace Process and Regional Affairs Office in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the Department of State, and Public Affairs Adviser for the Near Eastern Bureau. From 1991 to 1993, Mr. LeBaron was Political Officer in the State Department's Office of European Community Affairs.

The Ambassador reflected on many issues of international importance, specifically how public diplomacy and participating in exchanges can lead to positive change in the Middle East. He elaborated on a piece for the Atlantic Council entitled "Beyond Countering Extremism: What About Everybody Else in the Middle East?" in which he wrote: "The United States will have many reasons to be involved in the Middle East for many years to come. Employing people-to-people contacts as a strategic instrument of our long-term approach is essential if we have any hope of shifting attitudes and creating an environment of trust and shared interest to replace the atmosphere of fear and loathing that through which we are living." He cited the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program as an effective way the State Department is influencing long-term positive change in the Middle East and the wider Muslim world.

The Ambassador opened the rest of the session up to questions from the audience and engaged in a dialogue on his experiences and opinions on a variety of subjects. Passionate about the power of international exchanges and an advocate for strategically expanding these programs, Ambassador LeBaron espoused much wisdom on the audience, who later enjoyed a reception following the talk. - - -

SACIV Welcomes Visitors from Romania

By Paige Brown, SACIV Intern

On September 30th- October 4th, 2015, the San Antonio Council for International Visitors welcomed three visitors from Romania for a program entitled "Working for the Under-served". The program was designed to explore different programs that address poverty in multi-ethnic communities, thus observing the integration and empowerment of migrant populations from impoverished regions and conflict zones and the community's effort to combat discrimination against these minority and immigrant populations. As project managers and coordinators for organizations in Romania including "Intercultural Institute", "Resource Center for Public Participation", and "Policy Center for Roma and Minorities", the guests were very knowledgeable on the subject and were provided the opportunity to explore the ways in which San Antonio addresses these issues.

Following the day of their arrival, the visitors dove into a series of meetings beginning on Thursday, October 1st, starting at Catholic Charities. There the visitors learned about the origin of many of the arriving refugees in San Antonio from Director Paula Walker. In the afternoon the visitors then met with the CEO of the Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC), Fernando Godinez. The meeting highlighted the ways in which MAUC provides guidance for the San Antonio's large Hispanic population pertaining to education, housing, and economic development. The guests found the efficiency of the organization very impressive, specifically the fact that it is non-profit however based on business practices, including several business leaders on the board. The visitors agreed that the way in which MAUC encourages private sector participation in order to generate income to fund the nonprofit projects is a system many other organizations and various countries should adopt.



Continued on Page 18

SACIV Welcomes Women Leaders from the Middle East and North Africa

By Paige Brown, SACIV Intern

On December 12th through December 16th, San Antonio Council for International Visitors welcomed 17 visitors from the Middle East and North Africa participating in the IVLP program "Women Leaders: Promoting Peace & Security". The 17 visitors, all women, travelled to San Antonio to explore both the current and historical roles of women. More specifically, the visitors examined roles of women in political transitions, post conflict reconstruction, humanitarian emergencies including the accommodation of refugees, and peacemaking efforts. Before attending meetings regarding these topics, the guests spent their first two days familiarizing themselves with San Antonio. The visitors had the opportunity to meet the staff, Board, members, and guests of SACIV at the annual Holiday Party. On the afternoon of December 13th, the Denman Estate opened it's doors to members and friends of SACIV in celebration of the holidays. For sev-

eral hours visitors roamed the estate enjoying a festive buffet, open bar, and music from a live quartet. We were honored to welcome our 17 guests and exchange greetings, stories, and experiences. To further immerse themselves into the San Antonio community, the guests concluded their weekend at SeaWorld preceding the holiday party.

The following day the guests attended a series of meetings regarding the purpose of their program, beginning with two meetings at UIW. Here, Diana Kellerman representing the Center for Refugee Services, and Alison Black representing Women's Global Connection shared their organization's mission and accomplishments. Diana Kellerman emphasized to the guests that the Center for the Refugee Services is not just a settlement agency but a social support center. While the Center for Refugee Services focuses on welcoming and accommodating refugees, Women's Global Connection specializes in providing various services to girls and women in order to help better integrate women into society and maximize their potential through access to education, technology, and business opportunities. This specifically interested some of our guests as Women's Global Connection also has locations in Zambia and Tanzania.

That afternoon, guests then visited the Martinez Street Women Center, a neighborhood organization unique to San Antonio. Executive Director Joleen Garcia along with her coworkers engaged the visitors, encouraging them to share their definition of an empowered woman based on their experience and knowledge. To conclude the first day of meetings, our visitors attended an appointment with Council Woman Rebecca Viagran. Other than sharing her rise to status as one of the few female figures involved in governing San Antonio, Rebecca Viagran shared her number one piece of advice, that being, "You have to be very strong & comfortable with who you are and what your convictions are".

The second and last day of meetings began with a conference hosted and organized by The Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking. Director Saul Castellanos along with other representatives shared alarming statistics about human trafficking in Bexar County while the guests exchanged statistics from the countries that they represent. Despite the differences, both the visitors and facilitators discussed both lack of female education and prominent poverty as root causes of human trafficking. But perhaps one of the most eye opening experiences for the visitors was their visit to Bexar County Elections Department. Here, Jacquelyn Callenan, the director of Bexar Country Elections Department introduced the new electronic voting booths that citizens use to cast their votes rather than using paper and pencil. The visitors were amused with the modern equipment (which they got to test) as Jacquelyn emphasized the efficiency and reliability of this alternative method. The staff of Bexar County Elections Department were equally surprised by the fact that in many countries in the Middle East, anyone in the military are not allowed to vote.

Finally, the guests concluded their visit with one final meeting back at UIW. Once there, the guests were greeted by Former Texas Senator and Mayoral Candidate, Ms. Leticia Van de Putte. Rather than discussing statistics and facts, Ms. Van de Putte sympathized with the guests, relating to them as women, mothers, wives, and political figures. She reminded us all that despite our political motivations and aspirations, "as women we are to be responsible for our families and truthful to our faith". Despite the religious, ethnic, and political differences among women across the globe, Ms. Van de Putte reminded us that we all endure the same duties. The guests appreciated ending their visit to San Antonio, on an emotional yet encouraging note thanks to Ms. Van de Putte. - - -



into society and maximize their potential through access to education, technology, and business opportunities. This specifically interested some of our guests as Women's Global Connection also has locations in Zambia and Tanzania.

That afternoon, guests then visited the Martinez Street Women Center, a neighborhood organization unique to San Antonio. Executive Director Joleen Garcia along with her coworkers engaged the visitors, encouraging them to share their definition of an empowered woman based on their experience and knowledge. To conclude the first day of meetings, our visitors attended an appointment with Council Woman Rebecca Viagran. Other than sharing her rise to status as one of the few female figures involved in governing San Antonio, Rebecca Viagran shared her number one piece of advice, that being, "You

Thank you to...



Mr. James Lifshutz
CORPORATE MEMBER

SA Women Leaders Share Experiences with International Visitors

Visitor program builds cross-cultural understanding

By Ryan Loyd, *KSAT 12 News*

SAN ANTONIO - Women from places like Sudan, Jordan and Bahrain are spending substantial time in the Alamo City learning from leaders in the community.

But not just any leaders -- the international visitors are connecting with the women who help guide San Antonio.

“We have this bond all over the world and we’re looking to make progress for our communities, for our countries, and it’s wonderful to be there and share what’s happening here in San Antonio,” said San Antonio District 3 Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran.

The women are part of the International Visitor Leadership Program, or IVLP, through the State Department. Locally, the San Antonio Council for International Visitors coordinated the visit and arranged a variety of activities.

The theme of this year’s travel is women’s role in peace and security.

Viagran met on Monday with nearly two dozen women who hail from developed and developing countries across the Near East and North Africa. She told the program participants that San Antonio is a strong example where women hold leadership roles. She said they include Mayor Ivy Taylor, city manager Sheryl Sculley, city clerk Leticia Vacek, and city attorney Martha Sepeda.

Cecilia Cross, executive director of the San Antonio Council for International Visitors, said the women who make the journey to the United States are hand-picked by embassies in their respective countries. They do not apply for the program.

According to the IVLP, 30 current and 314 former chiefs of state or heads of government are IVLP alumni.

“They’re here (in the U.S.) for a total of three weeks,” said Cross. “They were in D.C., then New York, then Minneapolis, then San Antonio, and then they’ll be back in D.C. to meet with 60 other women leaders from around the world. They’re divided up regionally, so we’re lucky enough to have visitors from the Middle East and North Africa. These people move on to do important work in the global community.”

Suzan Mohamed is one of the visitors touring San Antonio. Mohamed is from Sudan, but works in Saudi Arabia where her organization -- which focuses on women’s empowerment, child welfare and social security for the elderly and people with special needs -- is headquartered.

She said the diversity of women leaders in San Antonio is what stood out.

“The diversity, the acceptance of different backgrounds, the clear description and explanation of laws, and providing equal opportunities to people to participate and provide services as much as they can,” Mohamed said. “The greatest out of it is for me to meet people from all over, women from all over the region, who are tak-

ing leading roles in developing women, and edification of women policy, and eradicating violence against women and promoting peace, which is what we need today.”

Viagran said the one piece of encouragement she loves giving the most is telling women to know who they are.

“Stick by your convictions and be confident and secure in your own identity. Because you’re going to face challenges of many kinds but as long as you know who you are and you’re secure in your identity, you can handle anything coming your way,” she said.

The women arrived on Saturday and have taken part in activities like walking the Museum Reach of the Riverwalk, going to the Alamo, and seeing the San Antonio Missions and Institute of Texan Cultures. They have met with local organizations including the Center for Refugee Services, Women’s Global Connection, Martinez Street Women’s Center, the Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking, as well as talking with women leaders like Viagran and former Texas Sen. Leticia Van de Putte.

Cross said the women get to learn about the vast number of resources available in a global city like San Antonio.

“We have the opportunity for these visitors to meet with the community and so it’s a two-way exchange. They’re learning about other countries and other cultures and our visitors are learning from us,” Cross said.

The objectives of the State Department’s IVLP include affirming the impact of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, which promotes the role of women in peace and security; familiarizing the women with constitutional, judicial, and legislative processes that promote gender equality and protect women’s human rights; and examining the current and historical roles of women in political transitions, humanitarian efforts, and reconstruction following conflicts.

The historical event that allowed women to vote for the first time in Saudi Arabia over the weekend, which also saw the election of several women for the first time ever in that country, is something Mohamed followed from the States.

While there is still a long way to go, she believes it was a first step toward equality and a new era for women.

“It’s great and I can see the vibes over social media from all the women who participated in the elections or have run to take a position, and it’s such an edgy move for the Saudi woman that. Saudi women will be very proud of,” she said.

Occupations of the visitors to San Antonio include attorneys, program directors, nonprofit chairs, counselors and researchers.

WATCH THE VIDEO! <http://www.ksat.com/news/sa-women-leaders-share-experiences-with-international-visitors>

SACIV Welcomes Visitors from Romania

Continued from Page 15

The visitors were equally impressed with the origin and presences of Haven for Hope, which they visited Friday afternoon following a brief meeting with staff at Brackenridge High School where the visitors learned of one of the oldest schools in San Antonio. The guests were captivated by the extensive services they learned that Haven for Hope has to offer to the homeless, including education, job training, medical care, dental care, therapy, etc. More importantly, the visitors admired the organization's cooperative approach with other non-profit organizations, emphasizing the need for community cooperation. The amount of community participation and volunteers were truly inspiring.

The final appointment with Yohannes Birhane, detained Torture Survivor and Program Coordinator for Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES) concluded the meetings for the visitors. At RAICES the visitors compared the asylum models of the U.S to those that exist in Europe. Additionally they learned of the legal services provided in order for asylum seekers to obtain visas.

Apart from the various appointments, the international visitors had the opportunity to explore San Antonio, experiencing the lively culture firsthand. A free day on the afternoon of their arrival, Wednesday, allowed for time to relax and explore the Riverwalk while the trip concluded with Homestays on Friday hosted by SACIV members, Kay Grosinske, Stuart and Betsy Cameron, and Donald and Lydia Garrido, spending their final evening either trying local restaurants or in the comfort of the host's homes. - - -

Program Evaluation: Combatting Domestic and International Human Trafficking

June 16th—June 20th, 2015

Report Prepared By:

Antonio Rosado (Liaison/Interpreter)

Perceptual Changes

This group of visitors included attorneys, law enforcement agents, public servants, and rights advocates from the Caribbean, Central and South America. Because their backgrounds were different, the visitors' focus and interests were diverse. Some were more interested in the law enforcement aspect of the program, others in the NGO's participation, and the rest in the government's involvement in all human trafficking issues. Many were all thrilled to be part of this program. All visitors came to the United States to participate, learn, and exchange ideas with the other participants from Latin America and the United States. From the beginning the visitors made an effort to get to know each other. Because of their own background, some visitors struggled with the federalist concept, with the lack of involvement of the government in the activities that the civil society performs in this field, and with the perception by the American people on the role of international organizations.

Another perceptual change was the evolution of their idea that the United States was this big rich country where everybody had the same lifestyle, to a picture of a country of so many different cultures, peoples, political opinions and lifestyles, where public and private sector work together to find the best solution to a particular problem. They were very surprised and many were pleased to see how smaller communities help in the fight against this problem.

After listening to the presentations and talking to American officials, leaders, scholars, and regular citizens, the guests realized how important are the rule of law, justice system, and education about this issues to the American people, and most of them absolutely loved it.

From the beginning, the visitors seemed to be divided in two groups: Those who favor a political and legal system like the one in the United States, and those who prefer a full participation and direction by the government with very little input and involvement by the civil society.

Finally, as part of their travel experience, the visitors were shocked by the size of the United States, the diversity of the American citizen, and particularly the American lifestyle and quality of living, and the role that civil society plays in our society and our system. They were also surprised by the cleanliness of the streets of Washington, D.C.

Diversity Goals

The visitors represented a wide variety of ideologies and regions of the Caribbean, Central America and South America. Some of them were from the public sector, others came from the civil society. Some were law enforcement while others were rights advocates. The presenters included people from all aspects of the human trafficking issue in the United States and from all levels of government. The visitors liked that they were able to establish a connection with colleagues everywhere. Some of them struggled to understand how the American system works, specifically the idea of decentralization and civil society participation as service providers. They were also impressed with the size of the United States, the diversity of its people depending on the region, and the way the market influences life in America. - - -

Thank you to...



UNAM
SAN ANTONIO

CORPORATE MEMBER

Program Evaluation: *Combatting Domestic and International Human Trafficking*

June 16th—June 20th, 2015

Report Prepared By: *Inge Kirkland (Liaison/Interpreter)*

After an uneventful flight we arrived in San Antonio where we had 3 days of very interesting and varied meetings along with home hospitality.

On Wednesday we visited the San Antonio Police Department, where we met the whole team that works on human trafficking in this city. We were greeted by Anthony Trevino, Police Chief, who spoke of the urgent need to “unify our forces across local, state and federal departments, civil society and across nations to fight the national and global epidemic of human trafficking”. District Attorney Mr. David Wright gave our visitors an overview of his job. First he explained the state law that is used to prosecute violators and protect victims and then he told of some cases, how they developed, how he and the police communicated and cooperated to bring about a successful conviction. Visitors were given information on web sites to access educational material. This was a very informative and also spellbinding meeting.

We all, police officers and visitors, went out to lunch together to a nearby restaurant and everyone had the chance to talk to the officers that sat among our group. The food was great and conversation animated and enjoyable.

After lunch, a “Ride Along” was offered to our visitors. Most of them jumped at the offer. Each visitor accompanied an officer on a 2 hour patrol and everyone came back having had an unforgettable experience and made a lifelong friend.

Thursday we had a very long and interesting day trip to Laredo to tour the border activities. We were greeted at the International Bridge Lincoln Juarez by Port Director Joseph Misenthaler, who welcomed the group and mentioned a few facts about the border: of the 330 border crossings in the USA, 6 are here in Laredo. This is the # 1 port for truck crossings (2 million per year), # 2 for human trafficking, #3 in overall volume, # 4 in US buses. Chief Misenthaler explained that the hardest to process are people: they just show up and agents have to make on the spot decisions how to “classify” them. Cargo is easier because they get manifestos they can study and compare to other papers and previous imports by the same company! He stressed the fact that fluid movement of people and goods between the US and Mexico is a vital part of our daily life and the job his agents do is of major importance. Thus, the selection of officers who work here is rigorous and their training is extensive. It lasts 1 year.

After this introduction, various officers took us to a tour of:

- Car entry facilities, where 111,000 vehicles pass through every day. There are 15 lanes and we observed officers and dog handlers with their dogs checking out the cars. Several lanes are used by drivers who routinely pass back and forth between the US and Mexico. They are able to participate in a special process where they get checked out and vetted to use special quick pass lanes. Any infraction or brush with the law causes the pass to be revoked.
- Passenger facilities, where people who come in buses are processed in a primary “portal” (if they have the required paperwork in order) and a secondary portal (they need further investigation).
- Rail Bridge, where we witnessed the passing of the train and how a huge X ray portal scans all cars for suspicious cargo. Officers explained how they spot the cars that need further examination.

The truck bridge only sees commercial traffic and 6,000 come into the country and 6,000 go out of the country on a daily basis. These vehicles drive through a tunnel that also has a giant x ray installation that scans every truck. Officers at all places told us that they do not see much human trafficking in these operations.

After another great lunch we headed to the Laredo Detention Center. This is a private facility operated by CCA. They are a contractor of the Federal government and our visitors were surprised at this arrangement! Mr. Juan Diaz, Chief Operator of the facility explained that, as a private operation, they are able to operate more efficiently and cheaper than similar operations run by government agencies. Their average cost is \$59 per day per inmate! “We are inspected by officials from the federal, state, and municipal administrations, as well as by the fire and the health department”, Mr. Diaz explained. He also explained that, as soon as they spot an abused

woman, they call the pertinent authorities who take charge of that case. We toured the facility that now houses only women who are here temporarily in transit back to their home countries or to a more permanent facility. They have medical services, a library, a kitchen where all meals are prepared on site and a laundry. Inmates’ clothes and bedding is washed 3x a week. They separate inmates into 4 groups that live in separate dormitories. The separation is done according to the dangerousness of each inmate.

At our last meeting of the day we met with several officers at the HSI (Homeland Security Investigations) Laredo Office. Here, we saw how all the activities we had observed during the day, were “stitched” together by the various activities the officers here investigate. Based on the Legislation contained in the Violence Protection Act they address prevention, prosecution and protection. HSI officers explained to our visitors what they do and how they perform the mission they are here to fulfill. They detect, investigate, document, and collect evidence necessary to prosecute criminals and coordinate help for victims. Rape is the crime they find most often, trafficking not that much. Depending on their findings, they offer a “victim centered response” that includes information on services available to them and documentation of how they were victimized in order to start their visa application to obtain a T visa that allows them to stay in the country, work, get help and eventually apply for citizenship. HSI also participates in outreach campaigns and efforts to make the public aware of the issues, notably the “Blue Campaign”, public awareness in radio and TV ads. which is currently being carried on 17 of the largest cities in the USA.

Our last meeting in San Antonio was with a large group of people, all dedicated to domestic violence and trafficking issues. The Freedom Youth Project Foundation put this event together in a large meeting room of a local Catholic Church and Director Saul Castellanos gave a very comprehensive lecture on this topic. This was a continuing education training event for area professionals from the city, the state and also the Army, Navy and Air Force personnel who deal with these issues. We all learned a lot! The power point presentation dealt with three subjects: Public Awareness, Prevention and Restoration. These crimes are a very lucrative business: worldwide, it is estimated that they bring in 32 billion Dollars. In the US there are an estimated 300,000 victims per year. Only 18,000 come from abroad. This means 275 victims per day! 1/2 of 1 % are rescued. Globally, only 4 in 1000 are identified. Arrests on the basis of prostitution: 90% are the girls, 9.5% are Johns 0.5% traffickers. Through the slide show Mr. Castellanos showed who and why some girls (80%) and boys are vulnerable and how criminals exploit those vulnerabilities. The demand and price of a 12 to 14 year old girl is very high. Life span in “the life” averages 7.5 years. Mr. Castellano had a poster with mug shots of girls that had been taken over several years in various police stations all over the US. The deterioration was heart-breaking to see. Unfortunately, “Pimping” is not considered by society to be a very despicable profession any more. There is even a “Pimping for Dummies” manual! People have become desensitized to the issues. That is why public awareness campaigns are so necessary and valuable. Rescuing and healing girls is very, very expensive when and if they are found. Offering materials to the public, to children and to the police departments to educate them and help prevent these crimes to happen is infinitely more affordable in terms of treasure and suffering. We were given several web sites that are valuable to get information and prepare materials. The sites educate youth and devise strategies and gathers information. After this very valuable meeting, we went to lunch with many of the other participants. Our visitors made friends with some of them and will stay in touch!

In all 5 cities the group visited participants had the opportunity to interact with women and men from various ethnic backgrounds. *They particularly enjoyed their stay in San Antonio, where they could interact easily with most people! - - -*

“WORLD VIEW”

Editor & Contributor

Cecilia Cross

ccross.saciv@gmail.com



San Antonio Council
FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

P.O. Box 6088 San Antonio, TX 78209

Board of Directors & Staff

Dr. Bernard “Ben” Buecker,
Chairman
mastholte@aol.com
210.454.7742

Justin Rice, Secretary
justrice@yahoo.com
210.738.8772

Terry Camacho
Terrycamacho18@gmail.com
210.789.3513

Jose Luis Garcia
Jlgarcia78205@sbcglobal.net
210.827.7863

Irma Reyes,
Founder, Chair Emeritus
sacivtx@sbcglobal.net
210.380.0377

Franco Cristadoro, Treasurer
cardigno@sbcglobal.com
210.735.7232

Marcos Fragoso
fragoso@uiwtx.edu
210.805.3014

Dr. Angelika Jansen-Brown
angelikajansen@yahoo.com
210.224.6011

Betsy Cameron, Vice Chair
Bcameron.saciv@gmail.com
210.663.8055

Sarwat Husain
shusain@cair.com
210.378.9528

Mary Walsh
maryapples@gmail.com
210.497.3894

Cecilia Cross,
Executive Director
ccross.saciv@gmail.com
210.287.6328

San Antonio Council for International Visitors (SACIV) was founded in 1989 as a non-profit, volunteer-based organization aimed at encouraging understanding and friendship between the community and visitors from abroad. SACIV provides information, hospitality, and assistance in making business and professional contacts for these visitors. SACIV is a member of Global Ties US in Washington, DC. This publication is funded by the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State under the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961.