

MAJDAL

ARAB COMMUNITY CENTER OF SAN DIEGO

2025 Annual Report





Who We Are

The Majdal Center is a resource and community hub dedicated to uplifting the Arab community while advancing racial, economic, and social justice for all refugee and immigrant communities across San Diego.

What's in a Name?

Majdal, meaning “tower” in Arabic, symbolizes our role in watching over, protecting, and uplifting our communities. *Majdal* also originates from the names of towns and cities across the Levant region, uniting our communities across borders.

Get Involved!



Volunteer:
majdalcenter.org/volunteer



Donate: majdalcenter.org/donate



Subscribe to our newsletter:
majdalcenter.org



Follow us on social media:
[@majdalcenter](https://www.instagram.com/majdalcenter)

Contact Us



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El Cajon CA 92020**



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We need your support to reach our 2026 goals!

1

Advocate for MENA data inclusion to increase visibility, resources, and political representation.

2

Strengthen our migrant defense efforts, including legal support and know-your-rights education.

3

Organize a summer youth leadership academy with educational, cultural, and social activities.

4

Conduct regular community forums to assess needs and cultivate peer-driven change.

5

Offer Arabic language classes for youth to deepen their connection with their cultural heritage.

Donate

Online or by mailed check!
majdalcenter.org/donate

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



Staff & Fellows

Learn more about our team at majdalcenter.org/our-team.



Ramah Awad
Executive Director



Farida Erikat
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Programs & Communications
Coordinator



Hana Masri
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Waleed Naser
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Coordinator



Jasmin Zeis-Khalil
NNAAC Advocacy
Fellow



Yvania Rubio
CPI Economic
Justice Fellow



Advisory Board



Yasmeen Obeid
Board Chair



Jeanine Erikat
Vice Chair



Nadine Hassoun
Treasurer



Afrah Abdulkader
Program Advisor

“

“A social advocacy agency doesn't just offer help or resources. It builds hope, trust, unity, and partnership. It walks beside you through challenges and celebrates every step toward a brighter, thriving tomorrow. That's the Majdal Center's mission and promise.”

- Afrah Abdulkader



Ghassan Hussein
Community Liaison





Family Services

Public Assistance Enrollment *with Sundus & Khaled*

We support families in accessing essential healthcare, financial aid, and food resources, particularly the elderly and those with disabilities.

Below is our appointment tally:

156

CalWORKs & CalFresh

31

Medi-Cal Health Coverage

87

Social Security Income & In-Home Support Services

137

Other services & referrals

Housing Navigation

with Sundus, Farida & the San Diego Wellness Collaborative

We assist refugee families in overcoming language, economic, and systemic barriers to access housing. Our housing navigation includes tenant rights education, enrollment in housing subsidy & utility discount programs, and financial assistance.

90

SDG&E & bills Appointments

59

Households Supported

65

Section 8 & Low-Income Housing Appointments

\$30,706

Financial Assistance

Behavioral Health

*with Sundus & the San Diego
Refugee Communities Coalition*

We offer a safe, culturally responsive space for community members to share challenge and receive socio-emotional support to strengthen overall wellbeing & resilience.

149

Individual Sessions

58

Unique Individuals Served

39

Group Sessions

89

Unique Individuals Served in Group Sessions

Total Reach across the Years

55



Average Weekly Walk-ins & Appointments

725



Households Served

3,625



Individuals Impacted



“Everything about the housing system felt overwhelming. Majdal Center removed a huge weight off my shoulders. This help didn’t just cover a security deposit, it gave us stability, dignity, and a real chance to start rebuilding our lives.”

- Waled Almahameid, family of 6





Youth Education & Leadership

Filmmaking

*with Fadi Taher
of Impact Media as part of
SDRCC's AMEA Campaign!*

In July, we hosted a month-long summer filmmaking camp exploring themes of mental health, substance use prevention, and identity & belonging. Ten participants learned storytelling and film production, culminating in a showcase of their short documentaries to a diverse audience of 40+ attendees.



Letters from the Future

*with Rima, Rawan &
The AjA Project*

We conducted 6 art workshops with 17 youth and community members, where they wrote letters to their younger selves, reflecting on their migration journeys. Their letters and collages will be displayed around El Cajon as part of a public arts project.



125

Youth
Participants

9

Workshops &
Events

45+

Soccer
Practices

5

Youth
Fellowships

Folkloric Dance, *Dabkeh* with Shibly

Our *dabkeh* troupe showcased their talents during Arab-American Heritage Month in April at both the El Cajon Public Library and Grossmont College. Traditional dance inspires youth to celebrate and reconnect with their heritage while also educating the wider community about our rich culture.

Boys Soccer Team

*with Waleed, Street Soccer,
New Vision Urban Impact &
Barrio Logan College Institute*

Our boys' soccer program, initially for ages 14 and older, expanded this year with a second team for ages 8 to 14. With 61 registrants, we hold weekly practices and regular scrimmages to promote physical & emotional wellness and to foster a sense of belonging.

“

“At Majdal, I gain support, confidence, and a safe space where I can learn new skills. I get real-life guidance, encouragement, and a community that always motivates me to do better.”

- *Raghad El-Nihme*



Economic Empowerment

English Class

with Aalaa, Subrein & volunteers

Learning English is one of the highest needs among new refugees and immigrants. Our English program supplements formal language learning by offering participants the tools to practice English using real-world scenarios. This helps improve their confidence and comfort in overcoming social barriers and navigating life with more ease and self-sufficiency.

Thank you to our volunteers: Pablo, Anthony, Ekhlash, Aaliyah, Hassanatu, Ziad, Kellie, Yazan, Mohammad, Naba, Bara'a & Katherine!

Digital Literacy

with Aalaa, Khaled & San Diego Futures Foundation

With the renovation of our computer hub, we introduced digital literacy workshops and drop-in office hours for community use. We developed and taught a curriculum in Arabic covering computer basics, digital security, and guides for accessing critical online resources. These digital literacy programs are vital for bridging the technological gaps that impact our newcomer community.



Building capacity towards self-sufficiency!

For new refugees and immigrants, improved English language proficiency and digital literacy help facilitate:

- Easier social integration
- Improved job opportunities
- Access to critical information & services
- Stress reduction & improved mental health
- Increased access to educational opportunities

98

English Class Participants

28

Employment Access Sessions

10

Digital Literacy Workshop Participants

25

Academic Navigation & FAFSA Sessions

“

“I greatly benefited from the English conversation class. My vocabulary improved and I was very happy. The spirit of the class with the students and volunteers was wonderful. I thank everyone who encouraged me and worked hard to support us.”

- Hala Khalil



Community advocacy leads to big wins!

California will now recognize the MENA Category! *with Ryan and the California MENA Civil Rights Coalition*

This year marked significant strides for our communities' visibility with the passage of the MENA Inclusion Act (AB-91) in California! In years to come, this will lead to the recognition of over one million MENA Californians who have been overlooked in the data because they were categorized only as "White" or other demographic categories.

Timeline of MENA Category Approval

MARCH 2024



U.S. Federal Government

APRIL 2024



San Diego County Board of Supervisors

DEC 2024



San Diego Unified School District Board

Total Reach through Coalition:

15

Endorsing Cities

68

Endorsing Organizations

74

Advocacy Sessions

27,927

Letters, Calls, Petition Signatures



Pushing for MENA at Community Colleges!

with Ryan, Dede, and Yvania

Our advocacy directly led to Cuyamaca College's Associated Student Government adopting a resolution in support of a MENA category, followed by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

OCT 2025

Associated Student Government
of Cuyamaca College



NOV 2025

Academic Senate for CA
Community Colleges

What does this mean for our communities?

Our official MENA count will increase by:

- 1 million in California
- 120,000 in San Diego County
- 26,000 in El Cajon City

This will advance & strengthen:

- Educational resources
- Healthcare access
- Economic opportunity
- Civil rights defense
- Political representation

OCT 2025



California State
AB-91 MENA Inclusion Act

TAKE ACTION!

- Outreach

Connect with student orgs

Talk to Friends & Family

Join the MENA Club!

Speaking at Public Con

Public Con



Did you know?

MENA communities comprise about one-third of El Cajon's population. For updates and ways to get involved, visit: majdalcenter.org/all-campaigns.



Advocacy, Policy & Civic Engagement!

612

Individuals Reached

17

Workshops & Presentations

65+

Workshop Participants

70+

Community College Students Mobilized



Education & Student Advocacy

with Ryan, Farida, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, and Council on American Islamic Relations

We co-led 10 cultural competency & professional development trainings for over 467 educators, counselors & students. Topics included historical context of Arab-American cultures, challenges facing Arab-American and Muslim students, the impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian bias, and the importance of supporting students and staff.



Improving Public Transportation

with Subrein, Aalaa, and San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)

We gathered feedback from 50 community members via a survey and a community forum during which 30 participants shared challenges and suggestions for lower fares, new routes, and better safety measures.

Our deepest gratitude to our donors, partners & funders!

75

In 2025, our support network, comprising 53 monthly donors and 22 one-time contributors, played a crucial role in sustaining our efforts.

68

We drive collective action in collaboration with 68+ organizations and foundations. For more about our partners, please visit majdalcenter.org/our-partners.

7

We are proud to be an active member of key coalitions collaborating across El Cajon City, San Diego County, California, and nationwide:

- BUILD Health through Housing
- California MENA Civil Rights Coalition
- National Network for Arab American Communities
- Neighborhood Solidarity Committees
- San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition
- Taaleem: Education Advocacy Network
- Welcome Newcomers Network



Arab Community Center of San Diego
مركز الجماعة العربية في سان دييغو

مجدل

MAJDAL

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