



Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois (KCCI) 2023 Activities and Events

We, the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois, are very grateful that we have many supportive members and dedicated volunteers helping our community grow. We would like to express our appreciation and thank everyone for their sincere efforts. Below please see what we accomplished during the past year:

January 8: Grand Opening for the KCCI's new home (at 4217 North Milwaukee Ave Chicago IL 60641) with our members, friends, local organizations and politicians, and the Jefferson Park Police Department.

January 28: Dr. Ahmed Dursun's (University of Chicago) presentation: "How to improve and sustain your English language skills as a newcomer" at the Center.

February 6: Fundraising campaign for earthquake relief. KCCI was able to collect over \$20k to assist victims through Kurdish organizations on the ground.

March 11: Panel: "Kurdistani University Student Experiences in the U.S.A"

Panelists:

Bareen Hamza (University of Illinois Chicago)

Dalal Hassane (Harvard University)

Mod: Ahmet Dursun (University of Chicago)

March 11: International Women's Day celebration and lunch with our women members and supporters. Participants shared empowering stories and experiences and discussed how to support each other and stay connected.

March 16: KCCI members and community gathered for the Halabja Commemoration and listened to Halabja survivors' stories followed by a photo exhibition.

March 25: Members and friends of the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois organized 10 iftar dinners sponsored by members of KCCI.

April 9: Kurdish Night filled with snack and beverages, Kurdish Dance, and Folk Music.

April 16: Sponsoring Aynur Dogan concert at Old Town School of Folk Music.

April 21: KCCI members and friends celebrated “Cejna/Eid” at the center. It was an open house gathering at the center.

April 22: KCCI celebrated the main Kurdish holiday, Newroz, with its members, friends and community at large at the Crystal Palace Banquet. We welcomed the coming of the spring along with our singers’ performance (Diyar Dersimi, Ava, Arash). It was a memorable night to reconnect through joy and revive community bonds.

May 9: KCCI held a movie screening of a popular Kurdish film 'Turtles Can Fly' (with English subtitles).

May 30: KCCI held a movie screening of another popular Kurdish film “BEKAS” (with English subtitles).

June 11: KCC held a community potluck in Bunker Hill Picnic Grove. Our community members generously brought food to share, joyfully engaged in games with children and Kurdish dance. Several community members were recognized for their recent accomplishments and contribution to our community.

June 13: Presentation: “Final Expense & Mortgage Protection Information Session” with Licensed State Underwriter, Mehnush Hameie. Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois brings the industry expert and renowned financial advisor to offer a comprehensive understanding of life insurance and mortgage protection services.

June 17: Kurdish Music night with Arash at the Kurdish Center

June 25: Presentation: "A Conversation on the History of Syriac Christianity in the Context of Kurdish Relations" by Dr. Ramazan Turgut (Midyadi).

Dr. Turgut is an Assistant Professor specializing in the history of religions, focusing on the Syriac (Assyrian/Aramean/Chaldean) diaspora. He is affiliated with the Department of Syriac Language and Literature at Mardin Artuklu University. He is actively engaged in postdoctoral research investigating the Assyrian community in Chicago. Additionally, Dr. Turgut is the Managing Editor of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) in Turkey.

June 28: Eid Celebration - we had an open-house Eid gathering at the Center. Celebrate Eid with our fellow community members and friends.

June 29: KCCI visited the Washington Kurdish Institute in DC to strengthen its relationship with other Kurdish organizations..

July 1: KCCI held a Town-hall- Community meeting to listen to the community's needs and recommendations on how to better serve them.

July 2: Eid & Summer Picnic at Catherine Chevalier Woods.

July 16: Presentation: "Taxation of Individuals and Companies in America-Li Amerîkayê Backirina Şexs û Şîrketan" by J. Cengiz Ozcan (OZ Tax Accounting Services).

July 19: Panel: "How to build your credit?" Our successful realtor member and friend, Biakhal Alkhalifa, organized an amazing event with her distinguished guests, Kelly Stone and Russ Siegel, at the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois.

July 23: Appeal to the International community on behalf of Kurdish people - The Treaty of Lausanne, signed a century ago between Turkey, the British Empire, and France, is considered a pivotal international precedent for forced population transfers in the 20th century. It cleared Turkey from ethnic cleansing but enabled genocidal acts against Kurds and other minorities. Kurds have never accepted the treaty, as it denied their national recognition and divided Kurdistan among oppressive countries. The international community has not corrected this mistake or prevented atrocities against Kurds and other minorities. On its 100th anniversary, Kurds worldwide appeal to reverse this institutionalized treaty and establish a safe Kurdistan for all oppressed minorities in the region.

July 26: Kurdish Language Course for Kids and Adults – Kurdish Classes for Kids and Conversation Club for Adults. Every Sunday.

August 9: Presentation: American Income Life (AO) and job opportunities - Our member Mehnush Hameie (Licensed State Underwriter), AZAD Agency LLC, held an info session on American Income Life (AO) and job opportunities at AO at the Kurdish Cultural Center.

August 20: Summer Picnic at Catherine Chevalier Woods.

August 19-20: The Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois participated in the 2023 Middle East Festival (MIRA) on Saturday, August 19, from 12:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Warren Park. People were able to taste Kurdish food and drinks from the Gundis Kurdish Kitchen, Kurdish Yogurt, and homemade food from our volunteers.

October 23: The Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois was featured in the spotlight section of Borderless Magazine by Diane Bou Khalil.

November 11: Kurdish Kurmanji Classes and Games for Kids (November 11th-December 30th).

November 15: Free English classes for adults are offered by Gonul and Tom at the center.

December 3: KCC held an annual board meeting and selected its new board members.

January-December: Board members of the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois have been visiting new Kurdish families in Chicago area, local Kurdish businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and politicians to strengthen our relationship with these individuals and organizations and to present Kurdish culture in diaspora.

Board Members of 2023

Co-Presidents: Ridwan Zozani Betul Serbest	Vice President: Bahadin H Kerborani	Vice President: Velat Turk	Secretary: Serhat Yesilmen
Treasurer: Ibrahim H Munigu	Member: Abdulhaluk Akpinar Ramazan Balikci Gonul Duzer	Member: Dilek Ariya Serbest Ahmet Dursun	Member/Advisory Board Osman Cen

If you have any questions and suggestions please let us know. We will be happy to hear your feedback to strengthen our community together.

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