



Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois (KCCI) 2025 Activities and Events:

We, the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois, are very grateful to 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. Please see what we accomplished during the past year:

January 1: KCCI welcomed the new year with a joyful community gathering. Families and individuals came together at the Center to celebrate unity, renewal, and hope for the year ahead. The event strengthened bonds among community members and set a positive tone for the year.

January 9: Throughout the winter months, KCCI hosted weekly Board Game Nights every Thursday at 7:30 PM. These gatherings provided a relaxed and inclusive environment where community members of all ages connected through friendly competition, conversation, and laughter. The initiative helped foster consistent engagement and social cohesion.

January 17: KCCI was honored to host Illinois State Representative Abdelnasser Rashid (IL-21st District). During his visit, community members shared their needs, concerns, and aspirations. The meeting strengthened civic engagement and reinforced KCCI's commitment to representing Kurdish voices and building relationships with elected officials.

February 5: KCCI organized a screening of Neighbours at Wayfarer Cinema in Highland Park in collaboration with the Jewish United Fund and the New York Kurdish Film Festival. The event attracted community

members and film enthusiasts, sparking meaningful discussions on Kurdish history, identity, and resilience. The screening contributed to cultural awareness and dialogue beyond the Kurdish community.

February 13:KCCI hosted a five-week Kurdish Dance Workshop, offering participants the opportunity to learn traditional Kurdish dances. The workshop celebrated cultural heritage through movement and music while encouraging intergenerational participation and cultural pride.

March 8: KCCI marked International Women’s Day with a special event honoring the achievements, strength, and resilience of women. The gathering highlighted the vital role of women in Kurdish society and the broader global community.

March 16: Community members gathered at the Center to honor and remember the victims of the Halabja chemical attack. The event served as a solemn moment of reflection, remembrance, and education, ensuring that this tragedy remains acknowledged and never forgotten.

March 23:KCCI celebrated the main Kurdish holiday, Newroz, with its members, friends and community at large at the Crystal Grand Banquet. We welcomed the coming of the spring along with our singers’ performance (Farqin AzadTuran Yapistiran, Arash, Azad). It was a memorable night to reconnect through joy and revive community bonds.

March 30: KCCI hosted an Eid celebration bringing together families and friends for a warm and festive gathering. The event emphasized unity, generosity, and shared cultural and religious traditions.

April 15: KCCI celebrated Çarşema Sor, the Ezidi New Year, recognizing the rich cultural and religious diversity within the Kurdish community. The event promoted inclusivity, understanding, and respect for Ezidi traditions.

May 1 & May 8: KCCI hosted Kurdish Music Nights on two Thursdays, featuring traditional music and communal singing. These evenings created a lively atmosphere and reinforced music’s central role in Kurdish cultural expression.

May 11: Community members gathered for a potluck breakfast, sharing homemade dishes, playing games with children, and enjoying Kurdish dance. The event strengthened family connections and encouraged active participation across generations.

May 17–18: KCCI proudly participated in the Skokie Festival of Cultures, showcasing Kurdish heritage through traditional clothing, cultural displays, and informational exhibits. The festival provided an important platform to share Kurdish culture with the broader and diverse Skokie community.

May 25: KCCI welcomed members of the Kurdish Culture & Music Association from Nashville. The visit fostered inter-community connections, cultural exchange, and collaboration between Kurdish organizations across states.

June 1: Another community breakfast brought families together for shared food, children's games, and Kurdish dance, reinforcing KCCI's role as a welcoming community space.

June 6: KCCI members and friends celebrated Eid together at the Center, enjoying a festive day filled with joy, conversation, and cultural traditions.

June 12: KCCI hosted Kurdish students and professionals from various colleges and universities. The gathering focused on networking, mentorship, and building connections to support academic and professional growth.

July 3: KCCI celebrated U.S. Independence Day with a documentary screening and an educational discussion led by Bahadin H. Kerborani from the University of Chicago. The session explored constitutional rights and civic values, encouraging informed civic participation.

July 13: Members enjoyed a summer picnic featuring a potluck of Kurdish dishes. The outdoor gathering promoted relaxation, cultural sharing, and community bonding.

September 3: KCCI hosted a jam session for music enthusiasts interested in playing instruments, learning, and practicing variations of govend. The event encouraged artistic expression and collaboration.

September 7: A second summer picnic brought members together once again for food, conversation, and cultural celebration in a warm and welcoming environment.

September 25: KCCI met with representatives from the Jewish United Fund to discuss collaboration, invite them to the Kurdish Film Festival, and explore opportunities for cultural exchange between Jewish and Kurdish communities.

October 9: KCCI resumed its popular Board Game Nights every Thursday. The event attracted a large and diverse group of participants and is scheduled to continue through April 30, 2026.

October 13: In partnership with the Chicago Welcome Center, KCCI began offering English classes at the Kurdish Cultural Center. The program supports language learning, integration, and empowerment for community members.

October 19: KCCI hosted a pumpkin carving event that brought families together for a fun and creative seasonal celebration.

November 16: KCCI participated in an exhibition showcasing Assyrian heritage through the artwork of George Shamoun. The event highlighted intercultural solidarity and appreciation among Middle Eastern communities.

November 25: KCCI organized an event raising awareness about violence against women, emphasizing advocacy, education, and solidarity with global efforts to end gender-based violence.

December 13–14: KCCI hosted Chicago’s second Kurdish Film Festival at the Kurdish Cultural Center of Illinois and Loyola University. The festival attracted a large audience and partner organizations, receiving positive feedback and reinforcing Kurdish cinema as a powerful cultural and storytelling medium.

December 28: KCCI held a Town Hall meeting to inform members about upcoming board elections and committee structures, promoting transparency, participation, and democratic governance.

December 29: KCCI closed the year with a lively New Year’s Eve celebration featuring traditional music, dance, and a joyful countdown. The event brought the community together to welcome 2026 with unity and excitement.

Board Members of 2025

<u>Co-Presidents:</u> Bahadin H Kerborani Gonul Zerya Duzer	<u>Vice President:</u> Serhat Yesilmen <u>Secretary:</u> Ferat Imrak
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Treasurer: Rewan Zagros

Board Members:

**Abdulhaluk Akpinar
Ahmet Dursun
Biekhal Alkhalifa
Ramazan Balikci**

If you have any questions or suggestions please let us know. We will be happy to hear your feedback to strengthen our community together. **Address:** 4217 North Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60641
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