

**SOUTHERN SUDANESE COMMUNITY CENTER**



Southern Sudanese Community Center  
4077 Fairmount Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92105

## Background of Community Service and History of Sudanese People in San Diego

### Who we are

The Southern Sudanese Community Center is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), established here in San Diego in 1995. Our programs support youth, adults, and families. The after School Tutoring program is our largest program. We offer one-on-one tutoring to students K-12<sup>th</sup> grades, with pre and post California Educational Standard testing. We also provide field trips for students to professional sporting events, the symphony, theatre shows, and cross cultural events which we attend and participate in. We work hard to help every student succeed in school while promoting College as a viable and attainable goal.

### Our mission

To support and empower Southern Sudanese refugees, and other members of the community, to advance in the areas of education, health, employment, and socialization while promoting their unique cultural and heritage.

### Sudanese in San Diego

The Sudanese people are large in number in San Diego and they are located in different parts of San Diego county such as North park, El Cajon city, City Heights, Sky Line, in the College area, Linda Vista any many other locations. The largest group of Sudanese people lives in City height and North park. The general population of Sudanese people in San Diego is about 3000-4000, but due to the scarcity of jobs in the area, some people have moved away from San Diego County to other states such as Nebraska, Alaska, Georgia, and other states.

### Why did the Southern Sudanese come to San Diego?

Due to the war in Sudan between the North and South, many people fled to escape persecution and ended up as refugees in many neighboring countries including Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Congo, Egypt and many others. The war was caused by political, religious and economic strife in Sudan. Many Sudanese chose to come to San Diego due to the good weather that was similar to our homelands in Sudan (no snow), but the economic challenges have proven too hard for many people and many have decided to move away to find jobs in other states. If there is a way to find jobs in San Diego, people would stay.

## **Overview of Activities**

The Southern Sudanese Community Center is a hub for social services provided at no cost to current and new members of the San Diego Community. Located in the City Heights Neighborhood, the center is visited daily by community members who are seeking services or utilizing the myriad of daily activities hosted by the Southern Sudanese Community Center.

### After School Tutoring Program

Our motto at the Southern Sudanese Community Center is, "Make a difference, and mentor a child." To this end, we offer a daily tutoring program for students grade K-12 from the hours of 3:30 PM - 6:30 PM. Students receive expert tutoring in Math, Reading and a host of other academic subjects. The tutoring program is a joint venture with University of San Diego Service Learning Center, teaming up to provide highly motivated and talented volunteer tutors from the university. Each of the tutors receives an orientation and meets a preset criterion before engaging the students seeking tutoring. Furthermore, these tutors are supervised directly by certified teachers who oversee and direct the learning program.

The value of tutoring is tremendous to the students who visit the Southern Sudanese Community Center. Comprised of primarily Sudanese immigrants, the majority of the students represent homes where parents are English learners themselves. These families and children heavily rely upon the tutoring that SSCC provides for their educational needs. Other students come from families of various ethnic backgrounds such that the tutoring services SSCC provides are essential to the students' academic success.

In addition to academic tutoring, the student are provided with a nutritious snack and are mentored though motivational speakers, field trips, and incentive programs designed to promote educational achievement and promote leadership amongst students.

A full service computer learning lab, multimedia center and outdoor recreation area supplements the students educational learning programs. All students are welcome, of any age, nationality or creed.

The No Child Left Behind academic tutoring module has served over 100 students with personal tutoring in the San Diego Unified and San Sedro School Districts. This U.S. Department of Education program ensures that students receive tutoring in the critical subject areas of Math and Reading at their skill level. SSCC has been proud to coordinate tutoring services across San Diego County, from Linda Vista to San Ysidro since its inception.

### Divine Roots Dance Troupe

Celebrating the rich culture and traditional value of dance, The Divine Roots Dance Troupe presents the traditional cultural dance of Sudan to the world. This dance group features student Middle School and High School Age who learn academically, and practice their talent for dance at the Southern Sudanese Community Center. The dance

group's talents have been featured locally at cultural celebrations, Water for Sudan Fundraisers, open houses and recently live on KUSI Good Morning San Diego television broadcast.

#### Sudanese Student Union

Several graduates of the SSCC tutoring program, along with leaders in the collegiate and young adult population have formed an organization to promote student leadership and foster community excellence through the Sudanese Student Union. This outstanding group is headquartered at the SSCC and provides weekly opportunities for Senior High and College Level students to network and encourage participation in scholarship programs, student government and extracurricular activities. The Sudanese Student Union is fortunate to have dynamic leadership that is well respected across San Diego County.

#### Sudanese Dual Citizenship

Officials from the Sudanese Government recognize the SSCC and hosted a passport workshop at the SSCC. This workshop enabled Sudanese nationals to receive official documents from the Sudanese Government to facilitate travel to visit family in Sudan and to have a voice in the political process of the ancestral homeland.

#### Translation Services

The SSCC seeks to aid new immigrants to the San Diego Community in their cultural and social transition to our way of life. To facilitate the needs of new immigrants, the SSCC provided language translation for Nuer, Arabic, Spanish and English languages.

SSCC also avails its computer lab services to job seekers and those community residents seeking affordable housing. The SSCC serves as a facilitator, connecting those in need to valuable social services, from health clinics, homeless shelters, grief counseling and a myriad of other support services.

#### All People's Health Fair

The SSCC hosted the first annual All People's Health Fair to provide a one stop shop for free health and wellness services in the City Heights Community. In partnership with La Maestra, and a host of other agencies, the entire San Diego Community was welcomed to receive free vision, dental, blood pressure, and diabetes screening. This event was announced in a televised broadcast and free healthy snacks, live music and a kids fun zone made this event a success. Children received valuable health screenings as well as balloon sculptures and face paints.

#### Sudanese Cultural Day

The SSCC played a central role in the city-wide celebration of the Sudanese Culture at the Market Creek Plaza. This celebration of Sudanese Culture and Heritage featured speakers, musicians, cultural dance and food from Sudan. SSCC was pleased to provide the planning and host the talent that traveled from across the nation to join in the San Diego based celebration

### Invisible Children

The Invisible Children campaign actively strives to end the practice of creating child soldiers in Uganda. Neighboring the nation of Uganda, is Sudan, many of whom fled to Uganda escaping the travesties of war. As Invisible Children strives to help those in Uganda, the SSCC recognizes that many of these child soldiers are also of Sudanese Heritage. In show of this solidarity of stance for peace, the leadership of the SSCC provided a speaker at the San Diego County Wide Invisible Children Rescue Event and afforded SSCC students the opportunity to fellowship with others who have joined in this noble cause.

### Where to find us

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