



UNITED LEBANESE ORGANIZATION

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is with great honor that I write to you in our first issue of ULO's Newsletter. In the eleven years I have lived in Southern California, I met a lot of Lebanese individuals

and families who are very successful in every aspect of their careers, however, I noticed they only managed to make contacts with few Lebanese families, even after so many years of living in Southern California which hosts one of the largest Lebanese communities in the US.

The majority of us share the feeling of not belonging here, and we have been saying that we are going back home next year for the last twenty years plus. Time is passing us fast, our kids are growing up, and some are starting to forget their native Arabic language. Others didn't learn it at all, and we are demanding from them to say they are Lebanese or Lebanese American when they don't know much about Lebanon's history, culture, or language.

In various Lebanese family gatherings, we discussed how successful we are at an individual level, but not as a group, and why so many Lebanese organizations have failed in the past. The answer was that we need to build a stronger Lebanese community that caters to all Lebanese with no exception. The idea of United Lebanese Organization was born.

The big question we faced was how to support ULO and keep it going, and the answer, I am sure, lies in how we all demonstrate the power of gratefulness of being together here, thousands of miles away from Lebanon. But we need to translate that into action, and that can only be achieved by giving. Those of us who want to make a positive difference in our communities often find it easiest to put a check in the mail to our favorite organization. This is wonderful. But sometimes we feel called to take a personal role in impacting the groups we admire and belong to. Donating time and lending expertise are as valuable and much appreciated way of also showing others how much you care.

Your support ensures that we can continue to educate ethical, social, and cultural leaders for generations to come. Your participation, regardless of the dollar amount, time, or expertise, will help put ULO closer to achieving its goals for promoting the values it stands for.

Yours,

Fadi Ghattas

WHY ULO

The United Lebanese Organization ("ULO") was established in 2009 by a group of Lebanese Americans inspired by a common vision: to serve the social, recreational, educational, and humanitarian needs of the Lebanese and Lebanese-Americans. Our mission is very simple: to promote the educational, cultural, social, and athletic affairs of the Lebanese American community while preserving the rich heritage and traditions of our Lebanese Arab ancestors. The ULO serves as an institution dedicated to enhance community relations through the sponsorship of a multitude of activities in the greater community by promoting programs for youth to learn the Arabic language and culture, athletics and social events.

Our bylaws are detailed and published on our website. Types of membership are clearly spelled out, as well as the description of the governing body, meetings frequency, elections, terms of service, and other related clauses. Currently, the governing body is made up of: Fadi Ghattas, President, Ahmad Shamroukh, Vice President, Rawa Shamroukh Treasurer, Marwan Nael, Secretary serving a term of one year.

We are 100% supported by your donations, and are not affiliated with any political, social or any other organization. For your support, please contact us at:

Web: www.UnitedLebanese.org , Email: info@UnitedLebanese.org , Phone:(412) LEBNANI.

ULO LAUNCHING CEREMONY

On Friday October 23, 2009, the official launching of ULO took place at the Hampton Inn In Buena Park, Ca. The event was attended by many members of the community, and was marked by a detailed presentation by Mr. Fadi Ghattas, current ULO President, who introduced current ULO's governing body and a brief background of ULO. The public got a hands-on description from Mr. Ghattas of ULO's structure, mission, goals, and plans. The floor was then opened for Q&A by the public and Mr. Ghattas, who answered the attendees questions and concerns. The public then shared their ideas and feedback on upcoming events, particularly Thanksgiving Picnic and New Year's Eve Party. The night was concluded with members and attendees socializing over refreshments served.

HELP US HELP YOU

ULO is completely reliant on the membership fees and donations from its members to finance out activities and events. We aim, quite simply, to promote educational, cultural, social, and athletic affairs of the Lebanese American community coupled with preserving the rich heritage and traditions of our Lebanese Arab ancestors.

Most people in our community are working, honest, fair minded people who just want a decent deal from life for themselves & their families.

Help us to promote this by joining ULO. With your help we can become more influential. You can do that by becoming a member for \$30 per year, or whatever amount you can afford. You may do so by visiting our website : www.UnitedLebanese.org or calling us at 412-LEBNANI.

We thank you in advance for caring enough to want to help us.



UNITED LEBANESE ORGANIZATION

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Rola Nael | LEAD DESIGNER

Born in Beirut, Rola moved to Canada at the age of 13. Having a strong affinity for art, she studied Industrial Design at the University of Montreal where she had a wide exposure to multiple design disciplines. After a design internship in Milan, she moved to Los Angeles in 2000. Since, she has been practicing graphic and website design.

Her approach focuses on conceptual treatment and deep analysis of the subject. Detail oriented and a perfectionist by nature, her work demonstrates unique elegance with intelligence.

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DID YOU KNOW...

Our Economy, then and today

JOBLESS: The unemployment rate during the Great Depression (1929-1933) reached 25%. Today it is at about 12%

GONE: 40 % of U S banks failed during the Great Depression. 118 Banks have failed so far in the US as of November 2009, out of 8,451 FDIC Insured Banks (almost 1.4%).

BAD DEBTS: as of 1/1/1934, 43% of homeowners in the US were in default. Currently, the number is approximately 13.6%, including defaults & foreclosures.

IRONIC: When Ben Bernanke took over a vacant slot on the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors in August 2002, he was required to set aside a 120 page book he had started earlier entitled: "Age of Delusion: How Politicians & Central Bankers Created the Great Depression"

BOOK REVIEW

The Rock of Tanios ("Sakhret Tanios") by Amin Maalouf

The acclaimed story-within-a-story was set in the 19th century Lebanon. Its central characters are Sheikh Francis, a Christian Arab, and the sheikh's illegitimate offspring, Tanios. Through their fates and legends Maalouf creates a historical romance filled with local myths, worldwide political games, treachery, and love. The title of the book refers to a peculiar rock formation, looking like a great stone chair, that dominates the Lebanese village of Kfaryabda, where Tanios is said to have been seen last, before his mysterious disappearance. It was originally published in 1993 in French, and is available in English and Arabic.

UPCOMING EVENTS

New Year Eve Party

More info to come

YOUR THOUGHTS

Tell us what's on your mind. Email us info@unitedlebanese.com

KIDS CORNER

What is Hajj?

Hajj is the one of the 5 pillars of Islam, and it is simply an annual pilgrimage to Makkah, now in Saudi Arabia. It is an obligation only for those who are physically and financially able to perform it. Nevertheless, about two million people go to Makkah each year from every corner of the globe.

Although Makkah is always filled with visitors, the annual Hajj begins in the twelfth month of the Islamic year (which is lunar, not solar, so the Hajj and Ramadan fall sometimes in summer, sometimes in winter). Pilgrims wear special clothes: simple garments which strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand equal before God.

Among the rites of the Hajj, Muslims circle the Ka'ba seven times, and go seven times between the mountains of Safa and Marwa as did Hagar (Prophet Abraham's wife) during her search for water. Then the pilgrims stand together on the wide plain of Arafah and join in prayers for God's forgiveness. A visit to Madina, the place where Prophet Muhammad is buried is also recommended, either before or after heading to Makkah.

COMMUNITY TALK

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY IS ASKING?

Many in our community are having questions concerning ULO: what is ULO, who represents the governing body, what is its mission, and why should I join. In the following Q&A, we will attempt to answer some of these questions:

Q: What is ULO, and what is its mission?

A: The United Lebanese Organization (ULO) is a non-profit organization with no political affiliation, managed by all volunteer Board of Directors providing governance to the organization and serving all membership and the Lebanese community at large. This Organization was established in 2009 in Southern California as a community project aiming to serve the social, recreational, educational, and humanitarian needs of the Lebanese and Lebanese-Americans. The mission of the United Lebanese Organization (ULO) is to promote the educational, cultural, social, and athletic affairs of the Lebanese American community while preserving the rich heritage and traditions of our Lebanese Arab ancestors

Q: How is ULO funded?

A: ULO is completely reliant on the membership fees and donations from its members to finance our activities and events. We do not receive any funding from any social, political or any other type of groups.

Q: Who is the current governing body?

A: Currently, the body is as follows: Fadi Ghattas President, Ahmad Shamroukh Vice President, Rawa Shamroukh Treasurer, and Marwan Nael Secretary. Our bylaws are available to you if you require more information on the organizational structure of ULO.

Q: How much is it to join, and why should I be a member?

A: \$30/year, or whatever you can afford. Nowadays, and more than ever, our Lebanese-American community is in dire need of social bonding. We see cultural clashes everyday, and we all wonder what our kids will make of all this later in life. What kind of traditions will they pass on? ULO is here to do something about it by bringing our community together, socialize, educate, and promote a sense of belonging to our next generation.

Q: What are your future projects?

A: Among the many projects we have in mind are:

- Lebanese Cultural Club
- Youth Club
- Athletics Activities Group
- Lebanese Library
- Lebanese Newcomers Networking Group