

Looking Back Moving Forward



*Iranian American
Jewish Federation*

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Most Recent Events at a Glance

Inspiring and Uplifting High Holiday Services: Beth El Synagogue affiliated with the Iranian American Jewish Federation is proud to have provided High Holiday services for community members for decades. Creating a spiritually meaningful and vibrant blend, the compelling and moving services led by Rabbi Dr. Isaac Norman, and Hazzanim: Dr. Babak Eghbalieh, Dr. Sammy Eghbalieh, Mr. Isaac Yaghoubieh, Mr. Ezatolah Nazarian, and Mr. Ezri Pedouim.

Seeking to present a contemporary and spiritual Judaism through easy to follow services, Drs. Babak and Sammy Eghbalieh created prayer handbooks which offer explanations and insights ensuring a unique interpretive and uplifting service.

We had an illuminating presentation by Assembly member Travis Allen who authored the anti BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel) Assembly Bill 2844 along with Assembly member Richard Bloom. The bill which was signed into law by Governor Brown on September 24, 2016 prohibits California from entering contracts with businesses that participate in boycotts against Israel. Mr. Allen is very passionate about the land of Israel and he insisted on Israel's safety and equal access to opportunities.

Our distinguished member, Dr. Ruben Melamed addressed the congregants on the recent wave of Antisemitism and the efforts made by IAJF in conjunction with other organizations to combat the movement and support the historic anti BDS Bill.

Hundreds of congregants attended the services to renew and revitalize their Judaism and as always we welcome all members of the community especially young professionals to our services.

IAJF Honors Menasheh Amir: On October 27th, 2016, the Iranian American Jewish Federation, IAJF, hosted an honoring ceremony in recognition of Mr. Menasheh Amir's contributions to the Iranian community as a radio broadcaster, commentator, and expert on the Middle East over half a century.

More than 400 Iranians of different faiths, beliefs, and political views enthusiastically joined IAJF to celebrate Mr. Amir's accomplishments. Consul Generals, ambassadors, assembly-members as well as prominent journalists were among the guests.

Mr. Amir is highly respected and praised for providing comprehensive coverage of the news and broadcasting accurate and objective information on the Voice Of Israel "Kol Yisrael" radio network. He is especially well-known for hosting the popular show "Seday-e shoma dar seday-e Israel" (Your Voice on the Voice of Israel) which provides an opportunity for Iranian listeners in Iran and worldwide to voice their opinions and exchange ideas.

Following the reception, Mrs. Azizzadeh welcomed the attendees, delivered the opening address and insisted on IAJF's commitment to support cultural and social efforts. Dr. Mehdi Aghazamani hosted the ceremony as the MC. The honoree, Mr. Amir addressed the audience followed by a Q&A session. The evening also featured remarks by esteemed speakers: Honorable Sam Grundweg Consul General of Israel to western region of the United States and Lisa Daftari, an outstanding journalist. Assembly-member Richard Bloom was presented an Appreciation Plaque. Persian classical music was performed by distinguished artists, Shahram Fassazadeh and Shahla Sarshar.

We commend Mr. Amir and wish him much success in his future endeavors.

New Addition to Executive Board: Iranian American Jewish Federation welcomes the Real Estate Division to the Executive Board. This group was formed with the interest and compassion to grow the young leadership, exchanges of ideas, networking and prosperity which would directly benefit the recipients of assistance through the Emergency Fund.

The inauguration breakfast was held on November 17th, 2016 at the Beverly Hills Il-Fornaio by invitation with presence of many successful members of various industries in Real Estate, Banking, Lending, Legal, and Escrow Services. This meeting has resulted in joint ventures while several checks have been received to help families in need. We take this opportunity to thank co-chairs of the committee, Mr. Sean Nass and Mr. David Yashar for their dedication to enhancing the lives of the individuals in our community.

StandWithUs Fundraiser Gala: On December 11, Mr. and Mrs. Chadorch, extended a generous invitation to the IAJF President Mrs. Susan Azizzadeh to attend a gala honoring Debbie and Naty Saidoff of StandWithUs, the organization which has been a significant arm in fighting BDS and Anti-Semitism in US and around the world. Mr. and Mrs. Travis Allen were special guests in this gala for pioneering the bill 2844 which was presented by Assembly Member Richard Bloom and passed in September 2016. Mr. & Mrs. Elie Alyeshmerni made a generous donation on behalf of the Iranian American Jewish Federation for which we are grateful.

Revisiting the classical approach to Agunah cases (Jewish Divorce): Iranian American Jewish Federation's human rights advocates and activists joined Nessah Synagogue in sponsoring an informative program on 15th of December. In this program Rabbi Simcha Krauss and Rabbi Abraham Lieberman discussed their approach to allowing the women to obtain their Jewish Divorce, GET, based on the understanding of the Jewish Laws. Esther Mecner, a family law attorney and many attendees brought examples of the implications to the women and their children when GET is not awarded timely and used as a revengeful bargaining tool. The collective suggestion in this gathering was that forming coalitions of community leaders, victims, and attorneys are necessary to start dialogues with the spiritual leaders and Beit Din to protect the community and bring justice to women in the processes of divorce.

Upcoming Board of Directors Election: The Iranian American Jewish Federation (IAJF) will hold Board of Directors election. In accordance with the provisions of its by-law, IAJF Board of Directors is elected by the vote of the community members to serve a four-year term alongside the representatives of IAJF's affiliated organizations and the elected community trustees.

IAJF endeavors to strengthen and sustain both Iranian and Jewish heritage, culture and values, so as to ensure leadership succession. We invite you to participate in our upcoming election and shape the future of our community.

Susan Azizzadeh
President



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