

Yazidi Cultural Center - Local Board

Hatim Ido



Hatim Ido joined the Yazda organization as volunteer in Spring of 2015. He entered to the United States as a legal permanent resident through Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program in 2013. He received his US-citizenship status in 2018. Hatim moved to Lincoln, NE from Sinjar where he born and raised. Previously, he worked for the United States military as an interpreter and cultural advisor from 2008 to 2011. Before traveling to the US, Hatim completed his first year of medical laboratory school in Zakho technical institute in Kurdistan region, Iraq in 2012. He is attending Bryan College of Health Science as undergraduate student majoring in Cardiovascular sonography. In his free time, Hatim loves meeting family, friends and playing soccer ball.

Shahnaz Osso



Shahnaz Osso is a Yazidi located in Lincoln, NE. She has lived in the United States since 1999. Before moving to the US, Shahnaz's family was based in a refugee camp in Syria from 1989 - 1999, where she was born. Shahnaz is very passionate about human rights and hopes to pursue a career in human rights and activism, through education and politics. She also advocates for refugee mental health and is a translator for Yazidis while working at Pine Lake Behavioral Health.

Nawaf Ashur



Mr. Nawaf Ashur is a Yazidi from Sinjar, Iraq currently based in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he is a master's Candidate at University of Lincoln-Nebraska. He is an alumnus of Reagan-Fascell Fellowship with National Endowment for Democracy. He is also an alumnus at the American University of Iraq-Sulaimani (AUIS), where he majored in business and minored in journalism. He worked as the director of Yazidi Cultural Center, as field reporter for Iraqi Oil Report, as a translator for RYOT on the documentary film "On Her Shoulders," as a business development officer for the International Organization for Migration and as an interpreter for US troops in Iraq. Before graduating from the American University of Iraq-Sulaimani (AUIS), he founded several youth-based civic education initiatives in the Sinjar district of Ninewa province, where he sought to strengthen the principles of pluralism through regular workshops in local villages. As a Yazidi activist, he has discussed issues related to sectarian conflict and democratization in several major and he published in local news outlets, including 1001Iraqithoughts, CIMA, Iraqi Oil Report, and Niqash. He was featured in Iowa Review Magazine NPR, PRI, Al-Jazeera, The New Yorker and the Vogue.

Marvin Almy



Marvin Almy received two degrees from UNL: B.A History 1967 and J.D. 1970. He worked 25 years in the automotive aftermarket serving 11 years as President of the Parts Plus Program Distribution Group in Memphis, TN. Parts Plus provides marketing, purchasing, training and national account support for 3,000 stores in the U.S. and Canada. He returned to Lincoln and served as Executive Director of the Human Services Federation and then as refugee coordinator for Lincoln Literacy.

Marvin has served as both secretary and chair of the University of Nebraska Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's (OLLI) advisory council. He currently chairs OLLI's Contemporary Issues Curriculum sub-committee. He is one of the founders of OLLI's Politics Interest Circle.

He remains active as a volunteer working with immigrant and refugee populations and as an ELL instructor. He has served for many years on the Board of the Good Neighbor Community Center. He is also a graduate of the Leadership Lincoln's Fellows Program.

Julia



Julia is a human rights researcher, educator, and advocate. She works as an academic research consultant, instructor for UNL's Department of Political Science, and outreach coordinator for UNL's Forsythe Family Program on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. She is an active servant of the Lincoln community: in addition to her work with Yazda, she served as the President of the UNL Graduate Student Association and currently advocates for the due process rights of sexual assault survivors in Nebraska. She holds a BA in international relations and Spanish from Colgate University and a PhD in political science, with a specialization in human rights and humanitarian affairs, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Julia joined Yazda Lincoln's board in 2019.

Babier



Babeir is Yazidi activist, he was born and raised in Sinjar, he worked with the USA troops in Iraq that helped him to resettle in the USA, he is a citizen now. after ISIS committed genocide against Yazidi in Iraq in 2014, Babier dedicated his time to help Yazidi and he did a lot of work through his volunteer job with Yazda.

Bakir Khammoo



Bakir Khammoo studied English Language and Literature, meanwhile was a linguist with US army in Iraq, 2008-2009. He taught English as Sencond Language for several level. He started to help his community as an activist after ISIS attacked Sinjar in August 2014, he had three years of working volunteer with NGOs, journalists, freelancers, and at teaching (ESL).

Laila Khoudeida



Laila Khoudeida is a Social Worker, Co-founder and Director of Women Affairs at Yazda Organization. Laila was born and raised in a refugee camp in Syria after her father fled the war in Iraq during Saddam Hussein's regime. Laila and her family lived in refugee camps for nearly ten years and were later granted refugee status in the U.S. A graduate of Wesleyan University, Laila currently works in the mental health field. She became an activist after the Yazidis were targeted for Genocide by ISIS in August 2014. She has been involved in addressing the issue of violence against Yazidi women and victims of the Yazidi Genocide in the Middle East. Laila co-founded Yazda, a global Yazidi organization that continues to help Yazidi victims in the aftermath of the fall of Sinjar, Iraq. Laila was a part of the Yazidi delegation that held meetings with representatives at the White House when ISIS carried a genocidal attack against the Yazidi minority. This resulted in the US intervention to authorize airstrikes targeted at ISIS locations and humanitarian airdrops to the thousands of Yazidis that were trapped on Mount Sinjar. Laila has been traveling the world to create awareness of the Yazidi case. In 2015 Laila received the Public Citizen of the Year award through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and in 2016 she was nominated for the Inspire award for her advocacy work for the Yazidi community.

Ziyad Smoqi



Ziyad Smoqi has more than five years of experience with nonprofit organizations in the position of program director and served on the board of two different organizations. He holds a master's degree in mechanical engineering and applied mechanics and currently works as a graduate researcher and PhD student in the department of mechanical and materials engineering at the university of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Hailey Dorner



Hailey is a fourth-year student at UNL majoring in geology and French, she is originally from St. Louis, Missouri, but she is love living in Lincoln. She is enjoying cooking, reading and playing soccer.



Hadi Pir

Hadi is a co-founder and vice president of Yazda organization, previously he worked with the USA army in Iraq as an Interpreter and Cultural advisor, after he came to the USA he worked as a teacher in Lincoln Public School. Hadi holds a Bachelor's degree in Arts, English as a second language from the University of Mosul in Iraq and a Master of Arts in education from UNL.

Currently, Hadi is a Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska.

Saad Murad



Saad Murad is as human rights activist with special interest on minority rights, Saad lost his young brother and two cousins in 2014 ISIS genocidal attacks on Yazidi in Sinjar, Iraq. also, he was trapped by ISIS for 20 days over the mount Sinjar before he manages to survive. Saad has a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Duhok, Iraq. After graduating he worked as a journalist with many local news agencies, Saad is fluent in English, Arabic, and Kurdish (Kurmanji) with 4 years' experience of translation and interpretation, Saad worked as human rights manager for Yazda Organization. Saad also worked as an Administrative and Media manager for 2018 Nobel Peace Laureate Nadia Murad (Nadia's Initiative).

Saad came to the United States from Iraq, Sinjar in March of 2017, and currently working as a Director of Media and relations at Yazda organization and serving as an advisory board member for Yazidi Cultural Center, Based in Lincoln NE.