

Najaf, Iraq

&

Minneapolis, USA

Sister City Proposal
Originally presented June 27, 2008
Revised July 17, 2009

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Congressman Keith Ellison

Sami Rasouli, Muslim Peacemakers Team

Lynn Cibuzar, Pax Christi

Carol Witte, Community of St. Martin

Alliant Action

July 17, 2009
Members of the City Council
City of Minneapolis

Dear Council Members:

In July of 2007 several Minneapolis community members and I formed the non-profit organization, Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project (IARP). We did this after several years of hearing first-hand stories from Iraq, mostly from Sami Rasouli. In 2004, Mr. Rasouli (both an American and an Iraqi citizen) had been living in Minneapolis for over twenty years. Mr. Rasouli was the owner of Sinbad's restaurant on "Eat Street" and an active member of Whittier Neighborhood group. That year, he decided to move back to his hometown of Najaf, Iraq. Since then he has returned each year to Minneapolis for a few months to speak about his experiences in Iraq. From what we learned from Mr. Rasouli and others, we decided to form this organization with the goal of spreading good will between the United States and Iraq with a focus on his hometown of Najaf.

We at IARP have also developed a connection between Mr. Rasouli's Muslim Peacemaker Teams in Iraq (MPT). The mission of the Muslim Peacemaker Teams (MPT) is to bring all Iraqi groups together in peace to work for the good of the country. MPT is a NGO in Iraq working in cooperation with the IARP.

To date we have been moving forward on several projects with Najaf. One of our projects is "Letters for Peace," we work with students in the metro area to exchange letters with students in Najaf. This has been a great experience for the children on both sides. Our other major project is "Water for Peace." We work with Minneapolis groups to fund raise. MPT then takes over to purchase and install water filtration technology for schools and hospitals in Najaf. To date ten sites now have clean and safe water to drink because of our program. Our MPT partners follow up with the schools and hospitals for six months to ensure that the filtration equipment is maintained properly.

Also, since 2004 we have been showing and selling original fine art sent by working artists in Iraq.

The interest in a sister city relationship came first from the people of Najaf. In their conversations on the street and in meetings with Mr. Rasouli, they expressed interest in the United States and the city he had lived in. A Sister City relationship between cities in the United States and Iraq is not unprecedented. Sister Cities International has an active plan to increase their Sister Cities in the Muslim world and currently lists nine official relationships between cities in the United States and Iraq. The cultural, professional and educational exchanges supported and nurtured by a formal Sister City relationship will enhance and expand on the opportunities presented by the rich sharing already going on between our cities.

Currently we are working with our partner, the University of Minnesota, to host a delegation from Najaf in September 2009. Further information is included in this proposal, and the delegation list is attached.

We welcome your questions and look forward to hearing your thoughts on establishing a Sister City relationship.

Respectfully,

Kathleen McKay, Executive Director
Iraqi & American Reconciliation Project

Demographic Profile

The city of Najaf, located at the center of the province of the same name, in the Euphrates river valley is roughly one hundred miles south of Baghdad. The city has a population of about one half million. The community is known for its intellectuals, medical specialists and religious scholars. Businesses in Najaf include manufacturing, handicrafts and farming in the outlying areas. There are many religious schools which are attended by students from around the world. In addition, there are scientific universities, colleges for humanitarian studies, as well as technical and vocational institutes. The best known of these is Kufa University.

Najaf is of special historical and religious importance to Iraq and the entire region. The city is considered one of the holiest places in the Islamic world as the home of the shrine of the Imam Ali, cousin of the prophet Mohammed. About three million pilgrims visit each year.

The city is the religious capital of the Shiite Islamic sect. Najaf hosts religious scholars and offices of most of the ayatollahs. Najaf accommodates enormous burial grounds for the Shiite sect which brings some extra money for the local people. One cemetery in Najaf is the largest in the world.

Najaf is safe in comparison to other provinces in Iraq. There are pressures exerted on Najaf to help fleeing families from other parts of Iraq. Families come to seek shelter and safety after leaving their homes in Baghdad and surrounding areas.

Economically, the city attracts local and foreign investors who buy real estate, and invest in the construction of homes, hospitals and health care facilities. Simple manufacturing and tourism continue to grow as well. Hotels are busy with business people and tourists. In June of 2009 a new three star hotel opened in the downtown area of Najaf.

The international Najaf Airport opened in July of 2008. This allows residents, tourists and commerce to travel directly from Najaf province avoiding the dangerous road to the Baghdad airport.

Still there is high unemployment, and many members of the community rely on monthly rations. High inflation and the rise in the prices of food and other necessities have forced many of the farmers to the city to seek jobs or volunteer for the police and army. There is also an ongoing concern about the lack of safe drinking water.

Mutual Benefits

Our two cities share many similar characteristics, including being located on and near important rivers surrounded by agricultural communities. Both cities claim multiple institutions of learning, including church related schools and a world renown University. Economic opportunities abound, tourism is vibrant and each city has active civic engagement programs.

The driving force behind our desire to partner with Najaf is to facilitate our citizens coming to know Iraqi citizens as elected representatives, family members, business people and educators. Due to the current military situation we believe that residents from both cities could potentially hold an unrealistic perception of each other. Our goal is to counteract negative perceptions. We have undertaken several initiatives that are in various stages of implementation and believe that more can be done. Through a sister city relationship we believe we can realize even more of these mutual benefits.

Cultural Exchanges

We have participated in Art-A-Whirl in Northeast Minneapolis with a display and sales booth for two consecutive years, showcasing original art from the Najaf area of Iraq.

In September and October of this year IARP will have over 40 pieces of art on display at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Minneapolis. In addition to the art show, concurrent with a show of paintings of the Galilee, there will be two nights of programming, October 15 and 22. The program will include Palestinian dancers, short talks on Judaism in Iraq, Hebrew and Arabic calligraphy (children will have the opportunity to have their name written in both languages), and a music presentation of children's choirs singing in Arabic, Hebrew and English.

Also in September and October of 2009 Cornucopia Center in Lanesboro, MN is hosting an Iraqi art exhibit at which all of the delegates visiting from Iraq will be honored in late September.

All of these enrich Minnesotans awareness and expand their perceptions of other citizens in the world. They also support the City of Minneapolis International Goals, specifically the goal to “provide more options for citizens to experience understand and appreciate other cultures.”

Economic/Business Linkages

Iraq, coming out of a stressed status due to conflict and being centuries old, will be a ready and active economic partner for Minneapolis and the region.

Per Paul Hansen of the Minnesota Trade Office, Anderson Windows already has a sales person in Turkey. This spring Toro Company entertained Iraqi's who were here buying their products.

Specific to the Najaf-Minneapolis relationship, the principal of Prairie Wind International, a Minnesota company, will be meeting with an executive from Najaf during their visit in late September. They will be moving forward a major housing initiative which has already been discussed with officials in Najaf.

The president of the Chamber of Commerce in Najaf is also expected to be among the delegates requesting to meet with his counterparts here. The complete list of delegates is attached.

The previous mentioned Paul Hansen from the Minnesota Trade Office has agreed to convene a meeting of interested Minnesota businesses with the appropriate delegates from Najaf.

It is our position that any solid sister city relationship must include economic development initiatives as well as cultural and/or humanitarian exchanges.

University of Minnesota Partnership

Sara Axtell, PhD, Community-Campus Health Liaison at the University of Minnesota has taken leadership in active and ongoing correspondence between the University of Minnesota and the President of the University of Kufa.

The College of Education and Human Development, in conjunction with Family Social Science, has secured a grant to support a symposium titled: *Water for Peace; An Iraqi-US Partnership*. This event, to be held in September of 2009, is intended for all at the University and the off-campus community. It will spotlight issues of the need for clean water and the currently existing cooperative venture between IARP and MPT benefiting schools and hospitals.

Various exchanges have also been discussed for the longer term. Several University of Minnesota professors are involved and anxious to find ways to share resources.

These include:

- Dr. Ali Al-Khalidi, of the Arabic Literature Department at Kufa has proposed exchanging literature professors (see attached letter).
- Materials on Geriatric Nursing have been forwarded to Dr. Al-Radi, Dean of the College of Nursing, for a new program within the Kufa Nursing School.
- Dr. Khafaf, Dean of Liberal Arts at Kufa will meet with Urban Planning professors to explore ideas of a green belt around Najaf to mitigate the effects of sand storms.

These are just a sampling of the exchanges already planned. All of the above professors are expected here in September of 2009.

These listed exchanges are considered the beginning of a long term relationship between the University of Kufa and the University of Minnesota for the benefit of students, faculty and the broader communities.

Membership List

IARP Board

Name	E-mail Address	Mailing Address	Telephone Numbers
Al Nettles, Practicing Attorney	alnettles@usinternet.com	Fifth Street Towers 100 South 5 th St., Suite 1025 Minneapolis, MN	612-767-7502
Kathy McKay, Licensed Psychologist; Senior Mgr, Behavioral Medical Interventions Executive Director, IARP	Kathy@reconciliationproject.org	1346 Westwood Hills Rd. St. Louis Park, MN 5526	952-545-3370
Mary Beaudoin Executive Director; Women Against Military Madness	wammdirector@mtn.org	310 E. 38 th St.,#222 Mpls., MN 55409	612-827-5364
Paul Perkal Program Manager, University of Minnesota	pperkal@yahoo.com	2409 W. 65 ½ St. Richfield, MN 55423	612-866-4786
Steve Clemens Writer, Peace worker	steveclemens@msn.com	2912 E.24 th St. Mpls., MN 55406	612-724-3255
Tim Carlson Retired Teacher, Wayzata Public School System	timcarls@msn.com	18520 32 nd Ave. N. Plymouth, MN 55447	763-476-2718
Matthew Gilroy, recent University of Minnesota graduate	Gilr0003@umn.edu	2609 Hennepin Ave. S Minneapolis	952-250-8410

Others involved with IARP

Sami Rasouli-Advisory	Rasouli264@yahoo.com	Iraq/US	612-229-4662
Luke Wilcox-MA-International Relations; Arabic speaker, Communications Director	Luke@reconciliationproject.org	St. Paul, MN	605-360-6020
Jessie Witte, Art Director	Jessie@reconciliationproject.org	628 Jackson Street Minneapolis	608-628-5037

Work Plan

Our plans for the next two years are multi-faceted. They include the following:

Programs

1. Continued showing of original Iraqi art for education purposes and for sale. [50% of proceeds go directly to the Iraqi artists and 50% of proceeds benefit the work of the Muslim Peacemakers Team, the Najaf NGO partnering with IARP.]
2. Yearly speaking tour for Sami Rasouli, an Iraqi and American citizen.
3. Planning and implementation of collaborations between the University of Minnesota and Kufa University. This includes a September 2009 visit of delegates sponsored by the University of Minnesota.
4. Development of Power Point instructions for teachers and other group leaders on the Letter writing Project and Water for Peace filter project. You Tube videos depicting the work of Muslim Peacemaker Teams in Iraq and eliciting support for peacemaking activities, especially among younger people are in consideration.
5. Continuation of a letter writing program between Iraqi grade school children and American children. To date hundreds of letters have been exchanged. Some of these letters are compiled in a book about the “Letters for Peace” project. Our plan going forward is to publish all letters, translated, on a web site.
6. Continue to fundraise and implement the installation of water filtration systems under “Water for Peace.” This is a project IARP works on in coordination with MPT. Our goal is to provide clean water for schools and hospitals in the Najaf area. IARP will continue to encourage service projects in the United States for the purchase of water filters and the requisite generators in Najaf.

Administrative

1. We plan to continue fundraising from foundations and individuals. We have been fortunate to receive small grants from several sources. Current board members, as well as other community members, have also been financially supportive and plan to continue to do so in the future. We will continue selling cards and posters developed from the art provided by the artists of the Najaf area.
2. Should this initiative be successful we plan to continue to build a strong and vibrant Sister City program to join with the other healthy exchanges currently in place. We will continue to expand our membership base through art shows, a regular newsletter, press releases about activities, and sharing information at events. We will continue to update and expand our web site, www.reconciliationproject.org

Budget

Expected Sources of Income

150 Local members @25.00	3,750
Once a year event centered on art show, dinner and silent auction	7,000
Small Business sponsorships 5 @ 1000	5,000
Large Business or Foundation sponsors 2 @ 5000	10,000
	<hr/>
Total	25,750

Expected Expenses

Hosting 10 guests from Iraq Dinners, events, gifts	6,000
Mailings, membership drive	1,000
Expenses of benefit event	1,500
Brochure, educational information on Najaf	600
Transportation/maintenance Support for student exchanges	10,000
Miscellaneous	6,650
	<hr/>
Total	25,750

Provencial Council
Of Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf

NO:

DATE:



جمهورية العراق

مجلس محافظة النجف الأشرف

باسم اهالي محافظة النجف الأشرف:

العدد: ٤٤٤ / ك

التاريخ: ٢٠٠٨ / ١٠ / ٢٠

إلى/الفريق الإسلامي من أجل السلام في النجف الأشرف

السيد سامي عبد الزهرة رسولي المعمار المحترم

م/رسالة جوابية

السلام عليكم...

يهديكم مجلس محافظة النجف الأشرف أطيب التحايا...

في الوقت الذي نقدم شكرنا وتقديراً للجهود المبذولة من قبلكم تؤكد لكم رغبتنا
الأكيدة في بناء علاقة توأمة بين مدينتنا النجف الأشرف ومدينة منيابولس في ولاية
مينيسوتا الأمريكية والتي نأمل أن تكون هذه العلاقة مبنية على أسس مبادئ الثقة والاحترام
والتفاهم الحضاري الهادف لخلق جو من التعايش السلمي بين مدينتينا ولأمد بعيد ، ونرجو
إكمال إجراءاتكم لإنشاء هذه العلاقة مع شكرنا وتقديرنا.

المحامي
عبد الحسين موسى الموسوي
رئيس مجلس محافظة النجف الأشرف

٢٠٠٨ / /

نسخه منه إلى/

- عضو مجلس المحافظة/السيد كاظم حمود المحنه/ للتفضل بالاطلاع مع التقدير .
- مكتب رئيس المجلس/للتفضل بالاطلاع مع التقدير .
- الاضبارة الشخصية .
- الأوليات.

Translation from Arabic text

Republic of Iraq

City Council of Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf

In the name of the people of Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf

Reference No: L/3449

Date: July 3rd, 2008

Email: **CouncilofNajaf@yahoo.com**

Mr. Sami A. Rasouli

Muslim Peacemaker Teams in Najaf, Iraq

Subject: A response letter

May Peace be upon you.

The City of Najaf Council sends you its best greetings.

While we appreciate your good work, we would like to assure the City Council of Minneapolis of our genuine interest to establish the sister city relationship between our city of Najaf with the city of Minneapolis in the state of Minnesota in the USA, based on principles of trust, respect and mutual cultural understanding. Our goal is to create an atmosphere of a lasting peaceful relationship.

Please pursue the necessary required procedures.

With our gratitude,

Attorney

Abdul Hussein M. Al-Mussawi, President

Council of Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf Province

Copies go to/

Mr. Kadhum H. Mhana, city council member, for review

Council President office, for review

Personal folder

Originals

September 2009 delegation list					
#	Last or Family Name	First or Given Name	Middle Name or none	Date of Birth	Position in home country (teacher, business person, master's degree student, etc.)
1	Abdul Husain	Salih	Yousif	1/7/1944	Teacher
2	Al-Asadi	Ali	Hadi abbas	1/7/1953	General Manager Of Afaaq Foundation for Studies & Researches
3	Al-Haddad	Malka	Ali Kadhim	12/6/1970	University of Kufa, Assistant Professor, Chair of Najaf Cedaw Group
4	Al-Halawi	Sameera	Ismail Rasool	1/7/1957	Project Coordinator, Muslim Peacemaker Teams, Najaf Chamber of Commerce active member
5	Al-Hasson	Batool	Farooq Mohammed Ali	4/4/1964	PhD degree student, former Najaf City Council Member , Chair of Women NGO
6	Al-Janabi	Asaad	Abdulhamza Hasani	3/3/1961	Professor, College of Medicine, University of Kufa
7	Al-Kanaji	Mundhir	Ubais	1/7/1966	Chair of "Najaf, the Capital of Islamic Cultural 2012" Committee, former Najaf City Council Member
8	Al-Khafaf	Abed Ali	Hassan Aboud	1/7/1943	Dean of College of Liberal Arts, University of Kufa
9	Al-Radhi	Abdulkareem	Abdulla	7/14/1959	Dean of College of Nursing, University of Kufa
10	Koudhur	Najm	Abed Askori	1/7/1944	Professor, College of Science, University of Kufa
11	Mohan	Ali	Shaalán	12/16/1973	General Director of Planning, Ministry of Displacement and Migration
12	Sharba	Zuhair	Mohammed Redha	05/20/1948	President of Najaf Chamber of Commerce, former Najaf City Council Member
13	Zahid	Abd-Alameer	Kadhūm Salih	1/7/1950	Dean of College of Islamic Science, University of Karbala Chair of National Forum for Culture and Reflection in Najaf

**FISCAL SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT
FUND OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT**

On March 24th, 2009, Springboard for the Arts (from heretofore referred to as "SPONSOR") approved undertaking a program consistent with its 501(c) 3 charitable objective to act as fiscal agent for the donations received in respect to **Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project** (referred to as "SPONSOREE"). Therefore, Sponsor has agreed to distribute any and all amounts received for this purpose, less any administrative charges as set forth below, to Sponsoree, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Sponsoree shall provide Sponsor with his/her social security number or federal identification number and permanent legal address.
2. Sponsoree shall use the donations solely for the project described in the Project Statement accompanying the proposal, and shall repay to Sponsor any portion of the amount granted which is not used for that project. Any changes in the purposes for which grant or donation funds are spent must be approved by Sponsor before implementation. Sponsor retains the right, if Sponsoree breaches this Agreement, or if Sponsoree's conduct of the project jeopardizes Sponsor's legal or tax status, to withhold, withdraw, or demand immediate return of any and all donation or grant funds, and to return such funds to the donor. Any tangible or intangible property, including copyrights, obtained or created by Sponsoree as part of this Project shall remain the property of the Sponsoree.
3. Sponsoree may solicit gifts, contributions, and grants to Sponsor, earmarked for the project. Sponsoree's choice of funding sources to be approached and the text of Sponsoree's fundraising materials, are subject to Sponsor's prior approval. All grant agreements, pledges, or other commitments with funding sources to support this project via Sponsor shall be approved and executed by Sponsor.
4. An administrative charge of 7 percent of all grant and contributions to this project shall be deducted by Sponsor to defray Sponsor's costs of overseeing and administering this program.
5. Nothing in this Agreement shall constitute the naming of Sponsoree as an agent or legal representative of Sponsor for any purpose whatsoever except as specifically and to the extent set forth herein. This Agreement shall not be deemed to create any relationship of agency, partnership, or joint venture between the parties hereto, and Sponsoree shall make no such representation to anyone.

to carry out the project, except to the extent that such claims, liabilities, losses or expenses arise from or in connection with any act or omission of Sponsor, its officers, director, employees or agents.

11. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota applicable to agreement made and to be performed entirely with such State.
12. This Agreement shall supersede any prior oral or written understanding or communications between the parties and constitutes the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof. This Agreement may not be amended or modified, except in a writing signed by both parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement effecting on the 24th of March 2009:

For Sponsor:

Laura Zabel 3/24/09

Laura Zabel, Executive Director
Springboard for the Arts

DATE

For Sponsoree:

Kathleen McKay 5/7/09

name of individual signing
for sponsored organization

DATE

For Sponsoree:

second sponsoree signature if applicable DATE

Kathleen M. McKay, MS
Licensed Psychologist

Behavioral Medical Interventions

7211 Ohms Lane
Minneapolis, MN 55439
(952) 927-0184

Personal

Behavioral services executive with 30 years in a variety of settings including management of providers, network development, fiscal systems implementation, and clinical services in both mental health and chemical dependency. Recent nine years working in area of psychiatric disability case management.

Experience with multiple non-profit Boards as member and consultant.

Employment

1999-Present

Case Manager, Behavioral Medical Interventions

- Management of psychiatric disability cases supporting return to work
- Review of psychiatric disability files. Assisting insurers in their assessment of impairment.
- Reviews include consultation with physicians and therapists, and professional opinions to insurers.

1998-1999.1

Case Manager, Behavioral Healthcare Providers

- One of three case managers reviewing and authorizing mental health services for major carrier in Minnesota market.
- Covered lives included mental health services for medical assistance population of children and adults in five most populous counties.

1985-1998

President, Midwest Health Network

- Exclusive responsibility for utilization review authorizations for all inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services for 28,000 lives.
- Provided case management services directly, occasionally referring cases to outside specialty reviewers.
- Supervised CCDC-R reviewer of chemical dependency services.
- Prepared authorizations for multiple Third party Administrators

1/92-6/92

Program Manager, St. Paul Ramsey Medical Center

Merged adolescent treatment program, *New Connection Program*, into *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program* at Ramsey Hospital.

1989-1991

Executive Director, *New Connection Program*

- Assumed operational responsibility for financially stressed non-profit with in/out patient chemical dependency services for adolescents and their families at six locations throughout the twin cities

- Recovered and/or improved contractual relationships including Group Health, Med-Center, Ramsey Clinic, MCC and Ramsey County. *New Connection Programs* became primary or exclusive adolescent treatment program for these plans.
- Successfully guided clinicians from adversarial relationship with managed care to a leadership position in the delivery of customized quality care.

1974-1988 *Sagaris*, Rule 29 Mental Health Agency

- Developed all business systems for group of 12 professionals including payroll, SEP-IRA, computerized billing system, various lease negotiations
- As clinician carrying full caseload including 25% medical assistance clients.
- Negotiated managed care contracts with various plans.
- Compliance officer for Rule 29 and medical assistance services.

Education

Master of Science, Counseling Psychology, 1974
George William’s College, Downer’s Grove, Illinois

Bachelor of Arts, History, Secondary Ed., Library Science, 1965
College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minnesota
Graduated with Honors

Licensed with Minnesota Board of Psychology
License # 2535 1979 to Present

Non-Profit Board Memberships

YWCA Children’s Center Minneapolis, MN.	1975-1977
Harriet Tubman Woman’s Shelter Minneapolis, MN President of Board	1979-1983
PRIDE Chemical Dependency Treatment Program for Gay and Lesbian Population	1983-2000
Judson Family Center Counseling Clinic (Rule 29) Way To Grow Program (City of Mpls.)	1993-1996
Northwest Youth and Family Services Annual Gala Event Planning Committee	2004-Present
Iraqi & American Reconciliation Project Executive Director	2007-Present

EDUCATION

Master of Arts, International Relations, January 2008

Boston University, Boston, MA

- GPA 3.85/4.0
- Masters Thesis: "Morocco's Equity and Reconciliation Commission and an Altered Civil Society: The Significance of 'Top-Down' Reform"

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology and Humanities, *summa cum laude*, May 2006

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN

- GPA 3.9/4.0
- Graduated with Scholar distinction from Christ College (the interdisciplinary honors program)
- International Studies Program, Cambridge, England, Fall 2004

EXPERIENCE

Intern and Contract Employee, International Public Policy, March 2008 to September 2008

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Washington Office, Washington, DC

- Communicated daily with individuals at all levels of government and non-profit organizations to plan and implement advocacy strategies. Coordinated 80 meetings with Members of Congress and staff for 30 ELCA Bishops attending a three-day fly-in conference. Researched, designed, and authored a 70-page, 5-week study guide on the future of Iraq and U.S. policy, to be used by ELCA members across the U.S.

Intern, September 2007 to January 2008

The Multi-Cultural Center, Sioux Falls, SD

- Surveyed local businesses, performed statistical analysis, and offered conclusions in a report used by the Director of the Multi-Cultural Center to increase local involvement and buy-in of the Center. Assisted with interpreting services for Arabic speakers and helped refugees and immigrants utilize community services. Supervised volunteer staff at the After School program for refugees and immigrants and helped organize large events.

Summer Cooperative African Language Institute, summer 2007

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL

- Completed a seven-week intensive intermediate Arabic course with a 4.0 GPA. Presented my Masters Thesis research at the Institute's Research Forum.

Graduate Assistant, 2006-2007

Boston University, Boston, MA

- Assisted International Relations professors with courses on U.S. foreign policy and Christian-Muslim relations. Provided research and administrative support. Met with students to provide academic support as needed.

Research Trip, May 2007

Rabat, Morocco

- Interviewed human rights activists, government officials, professors, and journalists as part of Masters Thesis research. Attended the "Moroccan-American Youth Dialogue on Democracy and Security."

English Language Teacher, summer and fall 2005
Lutheran Social Services, Sioux Falls, SD
Lutheran Aid to Medicine in Bangladesh, Dinajpur, Bangladesh

- Helped teach English language classes.

PUBLICATIONS

- “Reshaping Civil Society Through a Truth Commission: Human Rights in Morocco’s Process of Political Reform,” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* (forthcoming), <http://ijtj.oxfordjournals.org/>.
- “Secularists and Islamists in Morocco: Prospects for Building Trust and Civil Society through Human Rights Reform,” *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 7.20 (Summer 2008): 3-25, <http://www.jsri.ro/>.
- “Iraq: A Lutheran Study Guide on the Future Role of the U.S.” (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, forthcoming).

SKILLS/ASSETS

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Flexible and able to communicate well with diverse groups of people
- Experienced international traveler
 - Morocco, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Japan, England, other European countries

AWARDS/HONORS

- Speaker, University of Sioux Falls Multi-Cultural Activity Series, October 2008
- Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship for study of Arabic, Summer 2007
- Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Scholarship, 2006-2007
- International Relations Department Research/Travel Grant, May 2007
- Mortar Board member, national senior honor society, 2006
- Pi Gamma Mu member, national social sciences honor society, 2006
- Lumina Award, College of Arts and Sciences, Valparaiso University, 2006

ACTIVITIES/PERSONAL INTERESTS

- Engage MN, Writer, November 2008 to present.
- Genocide Intervention Network Minnesota, Speaker, October 2008 to present.
- Relay for Life, Team Captain, American Cancer Society, Spring 2005 and 2006
- Psi Chi (National Psychology Honor Society), Chapter Vice President, 2006
- Bridge Builders, campus chapter co-founder, 2004-2006
- Chamber Concert Band, Trombone Choir, Brass Ensembles, 2003-2006

LANGUAGES

- Arabic: advanced
- Spanish: intermediate

REFERENCES

Academic, employment, and personal references available upon request.

الى السيد سامي رسولي رئيس الفريق الاسلامي من اجل
السلام

تحية طيبة

ترسيخا لاواصر العلاقة بين شعبينا العراقي والاميركي
وتوثيقا للعلاقات الثقافية والعلمية بين الجامعات العراقية
والاميركية ارى من الضروري ان يكون الادب احد
عوامل تمتين تلك العلاقات لطابعه الانساني الشامل
ولغرض تبادل الخبرات والمعارف بين جامعة الكوفة
وجامعة مينسوتا الاميركية والاطلاع على حركة الابداع
الادبي في العراق والولايات المتحدة الاميركية ان
يقوم الفريق الاسلامي من اجل السلام بقيادة السيد سامي
رسولي بتنظيم زيارات متبادلة بين اساتذة الادب
الاميركي في جامعة مينسوتا واساتذة الادب العربي في
جامعة الكوفة وقد يسهم ذلك في اشاعة روح التسامح
ونشر فلسفة السلام بين الشعوب بعيدا عن لغة الحرب
والعنف والعداء المقيتة.
وفي الختام اعبر لكم عن استعدادي للقاء محاضرة في
احدى الجامعات الاميركية بصفة استاذ زائر وفي اي
وقت مناسب.

مع تقديري لجهودكم الطيبة ...

الاستاذ المساعد

الدكتور علي محمد حسين الخالدي

كلية الاداب جامعة الكوفة

(Translation from Arabic text)

Aug 30th, 2008

To: Mr. Sami Rasouli, Director
Muslim Peacemaker Teams

Kind Greetings,

I would like to emphasize that in order to consolidate a cultural and scientific relationship between the US and Iraqi people, it is imperative for us to invest in an active relationship between the language & literature department of both universities. The University of Kufa and the University of Minnesota can exchange and share in both research and studies.

It is also important that both faculty representatives exchange visits periodically to oversee the developments at both universities. Our goal would be to promote the spirit of friendship and a culture of nonviolence moving away from unnecessary wars and animosities.

I hope Muslim Peacemaker Teams will help organizing such efforts.

In closing, I would like to offer Arabic literature lectures at your university any time our sister universities program allows.

Appreciate your candid consideration.

Best wishes,

Ali M Al-Khalidi, PhD.

Assistant Professor

Arabic Department

University of Kufa

Najaf, Iraq

August 16th, 2008

Dear MPT,

Thank you so much for the good work that would provide the opportunity of cultural exchange for both university of Kufa and University of Minnesota to benefit from each other through a genuine scientific-cultural relationship.

I would like to present the following suggestions:

- To provide University of Kufa all kinds of books of medical, engineering, physics, chemistry, theories and pure science, humanitarian and researches accomplished by academics in the US that should enhance the library of UOF. Also books published in the US about Middle East, Muslims and Arabs. UOK will do the same.
- To establish a joint scientific research collaboration (institute) between both universities.
- To exchange journals that is issued periodically by both universities.
- To enhance the English department at the College of Liberal Arts at UOK by providing at least two English major teachers. Providing at least two Arabic major teachers to establish or improve the Arabic department (language and literature) at UOM if there is any.
- To attend common scientific conferences held by both parties annually.
- Establishing a bilateral committee to provide oversight of post graduate study discussions done by academics (students) of both universities.
- To exchange, publish and circulate both researches done by scholars of both universities.
- Exchange scholars for training purpose.
- Exchange students for study purpose.
- Forming an Iraqi academic delegation of at least ten professionals ASAP to meet with UOM academic professionals to discuss thoroughly above mentioned suggestions and to put forward an adequate mechanism, plans and programs to shape up our prospective academic relationship.

Looking forward eagerly for a real accomplishments.

Best wishes,

Dr. Abd Ali Al-Khafaf, PhD
Dean of College of Liberal Arts
University of Kufa
Najaf, Iraq
Email: dr_alkhafaf@hotmail.com

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

*Family Social Science
College of Education and Human
Development*

*290 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Office: 612-615-1900
Fax: 612-615-4227
<http://cehd.umn.edu/fss>*

January 9, 2009

Professor Abdul Razzaq J. Al-Essa
President
University of Kufa
Najaf, Iraq

Dear Professor Al-Essa,

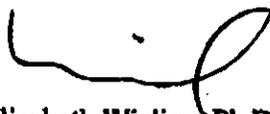
We were very pleased to receive your letter. We are sharing it with leaders on our campus, who will help us identify the next steps we need to take. We also had the chance to meet with Mr. Sami Rasouli in September, and he provided us with letters from several Kufa faculty members about their ideas for collaborative projects. We have begun to share these with faculty here, to identify areas of common interest.

We look very forward to more discussion with you about the potential relationship between our campuses, and we are eager to explore the mutual benefits that such a relationship can bring.

Sincerely,



William A. Toscano, Ph.D.
Professor and Head
Environmental Health Sciences
University of Minnesota



Elizabeth Wieling, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Family Social Science
University of Minnesota



Sara Axtell, Ph.D.
Community-Campus
Health Liaison
University of Minnesota

KEITH ELLISON
5TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55411
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ellison.house.gov



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
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RIGHTS, AND CIVIL LIBERTIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP,
REFUGEES, BORDER SECURITY, AND
INTERNATIONAL LAW

June 27, 2008

The Honorable RT Rybak
Mayor of Minneapolis
City of Minneapolis
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Mayor Rybak:

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits and good health.

I understand that Sami Rasouli and the Muslim Peacemaker Team in Iraq are working to establish a Sister City relationship between Minneapolis and Najaf. It is my understanding that Mr. Rasouli has previously discussed this proposal with the members of the City Council of Najaf, and is seeking to pass a formal resolution in July.

Since coming to Congress, I have worked tirelessly to bring an end to the war in Iraq, and I have worked toward reconciliation between our two nations. As a part of that process, I support the movement to establish a Sister City Relationship between the City of Minneapolis and Najaf, Iraq.

I strongly believe that the Sister City movement is a viable means to foster educational, cultural, business, and other social relations with a foreign entity. These relations can then be utilized as a vehicle for a people-to-people process for peace, transcending traditional government-to-government processes. I believe Sister City relationships with countries as diverse as China, Finland, Russia, Chile and Kenya have served Minneapolis well. I hope you consider reaching out to the people of Najaf, Iraq in the same spirit of exchange and mutual understanding.

Respectfully Yours,

KEITH ELLISON
Member of Congress



June 24, 2008

Kathy McKay
1346 Westwood Hills Road
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Dear Kathy McKay,

Subject: Sister City Proposal

I am writing to indicate the interest of several groups in Najaf, Iraq in furthering understanding between our two cities through the Sister City program.

Members of Muslim Peacemaker Teams, including myself, have had thorough discussions throughout the past year with the following groups in Najaf. Those interested include members of the Najaf local government council, the President and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts of University of Kufa, and several Iraqi registered NGOs in the city of Najaf.

On behalf of these many groups MPT is glad to express its firm desire to establish a Sister City relationship between Minneapolis, MN, USA and Najaf, Iraq.

We appreciate whatever you can do to convey our interest to the City Council of Minneapolis, MN. We look forward to more sharing between government officials, educational institutions, cultural facilities and everyday citizens.

Please do your best to prepare the submission of Minneapolis-Najaf Sister City proposal at your convenience.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Respectfully yours,

Sami Rasouli
Founder & director
Muslim Peacemaker Teams
(A registered NGO in Iraq)

PAX CHRISTI

Twin Cities Area

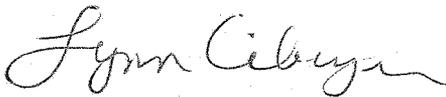
June 23, 2008

Kathy McKay, Director
Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project
1346 Westwood Hills Rd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Re: Letter of Support for Sister City proposal between Najaf, Iraq and City of Minneapolis

The Twin Cities Area Chapter of Pax Christi, an international Catholic peace and justice organization, is excited and supportive of the work of the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project in working to heal and restore relationships and bridges with the people of Iraq. We are grateful for IARP's leadership in attempting to form a Sister City relationship between the city of Najaf, Iraq and Minneapolis and strongly support this process. We encourage our elected officials to approve the application for the establishment of this Sister City agreement. We celebrate the diversity we find in our Twin Cities and wish to communicate an atmosphere of welcome and engagement with the people of Iraq. As an organization committed to peacemaking, projects like Sister Cities can help us learn about each other and recognize our common humanity.

Sincerely,



Lynn Cibuzar, President
on behalf of the Pax Christi Twin Cities Area Board.

(651) 645-1611

Community of St. Martin

Community of St. Martin Ministries
2001 Riverside Avenue S.
Minneapolis, MN 55454
Phone: 612-341-0871

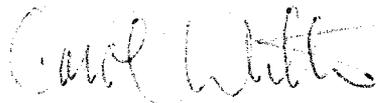
June 24, 2008

Kathy McKay, Director
Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project
1346 Westwood Hills Rd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Re: Letter of Support for Sister City proposal between Najaf, Iraq and City of Minneapolis

The Community of St. Martin, an ecumenical Christian worshipping community in Minneapolis is excited and supportive of the work of the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project (IARP) in working to heal and restore relationships with the people of Iraq. We are aware of IARP's leadership in attempting to form a Sister City relationship between the city of Najaf, Iraq and Minneapolis and strongly support this process. We encourage our elected officials to approve the application for the establishment of this Sister City agreement. We celebrate the diversity we find in our city and wish to communicate an atmosphere of welcome and engagement with the people of Iraq.

Sincerely,



Carol Witte,
President
on behalf of the CSM Community Council



AlliantACTION.org

Kathy McKay, Director
Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project
1346 Westwood Hills Rd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Re: Letter of Support for Sister City proposal between Najaf, Iraq and City of Minneapolis

The AlliantACTION Vigil, a peace and justice group of activists working to make our world a safer place which is free of weapons of war is excited and supportive of the work of the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project in working to heal and restore relationships and bridges with the people of Iraq. We are aware of IARP's leadership in attempting to form a Sister City relationship between the city of Najaf, Iraq and Minneapolis and strongly support this process.

We encourage our elected officials in Minneapolis to approve the application for the establishment of this Sister City agreement. We celebrate the diversity we find in our Twin Cities and wish to communicate an atmosphere of welcome and engagement with the people of Iraq.

Sincerely,

John Delmud
Susan Jeffrey
Susan Jeffrey
Lisa Corcoran
Karen Kosel Lundgren
Nita McDonald
J. Schubert
Don Braun
on behalf of AlliantACTION
June Gittelsohn
Sarah Martin
Archie
Seamus
W. Benkins
Tom Sullivan
Kathleen
Pepper
Tom B
Kate McDonald
Brida McDonald
Ward Brennan
Nicholas Huelster
Roger W. Culbertson
John P. Hughes

WHO PROFITS? WHO DIES?
alliantaction.org/circlevision.org