



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Celebrates Community and Inclusion During Welcoming Week

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF WELCOMING NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego is celebrating Welcoming Week 2022 from Sept. 9-18, with activities at City libraries and recreation centers to showcase how San Diego is a welcoming city. The annual Welcoming Week campaign is an international effort that brings together communities around the world that seek to build and strengthen welcoming places for all people, especially immigrants.

As part of the Welcoming Week festivities, the City's Office of Immigrant Affairs is hosting a welcome note drive for San Diegans to decorate butterfly-themed welcome notes for newly arrived refugees and immigrants. The notes will be available at Welcome Stations located in all San Diego Public Library [locations](#) and several City recreation centers for people to decorate.

Starting tomorrow, Balboa Park will also be illuminated in teal, orange, red and green, the colors of the Welcoming Week campaign.

“Welcoming Week is an opportunity for our region to come together to remind newly arrived immigrants and refugees that they are welcome here in San Diego,” said Rita Fernandez, Executive Director of the Office of Immigrant Affairs. “Welcoming Week events that take place throughout the country and in other parts of the world celebrate immigrants and promote a sense of belonging for newcomers. The welcome notes that we will be preparing are a way for us to demonstrate our support for the many immigrants and refugees that come here from all parts of the world, and let them know as a welcoming city, that they are accepted and embraced in this community.”

City leaders and community members will help kick off the welcome note drive on Saturday, Sept. 10, at 10:30 a.m. at the City Heights/Weingart Library. Patrons are invited to [RSVP](#) to attend and decorate welcome notes for newly arrived refugees and immigrants.

After Welcoming Week, the notes will be delivered to partner community organizations, including the International Rescue Committee in San Diego, Jewish Family Service, Catholic Charities and Alliance for

African Assistance. The organizations will distribute them to the individuals and families they assist through their immigration programs.

“The San Diego Public Library is proud to partner with the Office of Immigrant Affairs to celebrate Welcoming Week,” said Library Director Misty Jones. “As a place of inclusion and a community resource for all residents, each of our 36 library locations features in-person and online resources for recent immigrants, including welcoming stations, library cards, an international language book collection and materials on citizenship and learning English.”

During Welcoming Week, participants of all backgrounds are encouraged to come together to build a more inclusive community. To learn more about San Diego Public Library programs and events, visit sandiego.gov/public-library/news-events.

About the Office of Immigrant Affairs

The City of San Diego’s Office of Immigrant Affairs was launched in July 2022, as part of Mayor Todd Gloria’s Fiscal Year 2023 “Ready to Rebuild” budget. The office aims to advance the civic, social and economic integration of immigrants and refugees in the region by implementing the City’s Welcoming San Diego Strategic Plan. The office focuses on workforce development for the immigrant population, promoting inclusive resources to help foreign-born communities through the integration process, advocating for immigrant rights and ensuring the City provides other inclusive services so all San Diegans can flourish. Find more information at sandiego.gov/welcomingsd.

About Welcoming Week and Welcoming America

Launched in 2012 by Welcoming America and its members, Welcoming Week provides individuals and communities the opportunity to proclaim welcoming values through events and local initiatives that foster mutual understanding between immigrants and non-immigrants, as well as deeper belonging for all people.

Welcoming America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that leads a movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs. Through the Welcoming Network, we work to change systems and culture by providing communities the roadmap they need to create welcoming policies and share new approaches to inclusion to create an environment where everyone can truly thrive. Learn more at welcomingamerica.org.

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