

Empowering Syrian Refugee Women and Children for a Better Future: Challenges and Innovative Solutions in Early Childhood Development (SDG4.2)

CSW60 Parallel Event | 24 March 2016, 10:30AM-12:00 PM | Boss Room, 8th floor, CCUN

Moderator:

Judith T. Wagner, Ph.D. Professor of Child Development and Education at Whittier College, Whittier, California; Deputy President of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEPE)

Speakers:

Firas Kayal, Sr. External Relations Officer, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Selcuk Sirin, Ph.D Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology, New York University
“Syrian Refugee Children's Mental Health and Education Needs”

Eline Caillaud, INSAN Association, non-profit for marginalized peoples, Beirut, Lebanon
“Children of Refugees in Lebanon”

Ambreen Qureshi, Deputy Executive Director, Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC), Brooklyn, New York
“Culturally Competent Programming to Empower Women and Children: The Settlement House Model and the Arab-American Family Support Center”

Patricia Talisse, UN Youth Representative for Close the Gap; MSW candidate, Fordham University; from Aleppo, Syria
“The Syrian Conflict through the Lens of Syrian Women and Girls”



NGO Committee
on Migration

World Organization of
Early Childhood
Education 

UN Photo/ Mark Garten



Event sponsored by: World Organization of Early Childhood Education (OMEPE), UNHCR, NGO Committee on Migration, Poverty Elimination and Community Education (PEACE) Foundation, Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO)

Speaker Biographies

Judith T. Wagner is a professor of Child Development and Education at Whittier College in Whittier, California and principal of the campus laboratory/demonstration school, The Broadoaks Children's School. She is Deputy President of OMEP, World Organization for Early Childhood Education, and also its Vice President for North America and the Caribbean. She also coordinates OMEP's "WASH from the Start" project at UNICEF, which the goal of bringing water, sanitation and hygiene education to young children in homes, communities and preschools. Judith teaches classes on Global Children's Issues and Child Advocacy, focusing most recently, on refugee children and families and on child-related migration policies and practices in Europe; she has published numerous articles and reports.

Judith was Fulbright Scholar in Research and Teaching and was named 2009 Children's Champion in the Los Angeles area and has twice received recognition from U.S. Senate for her achievements.

Firas Kayal is currently the Senior External Relations Officer at the Bureau at the Middle East and North Africa Bureau, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva. His service with the Agency spans for almost 13 years and includes working as a Legal Protection Officer in many countries including Iraq, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Sudan, the Gulf Region, and Switzerland. In his current position Mr. Kayal works closely with diplomatic missions, donor countries, UN agencies and international organizations on matters related to public and government relations, public and private fundraising as well as media relations.

Mr. Kayal holds a B.A. in Law from Damascus University and a Master in International Law from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He is also a Fulbright Scholar.

Dr. Selcuk Sirin is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology at New York University. His research is focused on the lives of immigrant and minority children, with the goal of increasing professionals' ability to better serve them. His work has been published in numerous scholarly journals and he is co-author of the book *Muslim American Youth: Understanding Hyphenated Identities through Multiple Method*. He is the recipient of Young Scholar Award from the Foundation for Child Development for his work on immigrant children, and the Review of Research Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA) given in recognition of an outstanding articles published in education.

Dr. Sirin holds a PhD from Boston College in Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology. He obtained his MS at the University at Albany, SUNY in Counseling Psychology, and his BS at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, also in Counseling Psychology.

Eline Caillaud is currently the Fundraising Officer at INSAN Association, a Lebanese non-profit organization in Beirut, Lebanon. There, she works on fundraising and international partnership coordination for INSAN, whose mission is promoting and defending the rights of marginalized people in Lebanon including female migrant domestic workers, refugees, and stateless persons. The organization provides education and psychosocial support for these populations, and won the esteemed "With and For Girls Award" in 2015.

Ms. Caillaud earned her MA in Humanities, focused on International Cooperation, from the Université Stendhal (Grenoble III) in France. She obtained her BA in Languages and Economics at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest in Angers, France, with part of her studies taking place at the Universidad de Monterrey in Mexico.

Ambreen Qureshi is the Deputy Executive Director at the Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC), in Brooklyn, New York. AAFSC is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization that empowers new immigrants with the tools they need to successfully acclimate to the world around them and become active participants in their communities. Prior to joining the AAFSC in 2012, Ms. Qureshi was the Program Director at Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE). She also worked for the Jordan Red Crescent Society and on global awareness campaigns including "The End of Polio" with UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO), and "Chasing the Dream: Youth Faces of the Millennium Development Goals" with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Ms. Qureshi has an MA in International Affairs from the New School in New York City, and a BS in Biology from the City College of New York.

Patricia Talisse is an MSW candidate at Fordham University's graduate program in social work. She is originally from Syria, and her interest in social work grew after she experienced the Syrian civil war. Patricia is a Youth Representative to the United Nations for Close the Gap, an international non-profit that focuses on providing technology to the developing world. During her undergraduate career, Patricia volunteered extensively both as a Girl Scout leader and with the Jesuit Refugee Services, where she helped Iraqi refugees adapt to life in Syria and organized activities for refugee youth and children. She holds a BS in Counseling Psychology from Aleppo University, Syria.