

# INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

## ENGAGING YOUTH THROUGH MUSIC A Regional Project for the Near East and North Africa

These visitors are invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Their program is arranged by World Learning.

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**September 19 - October 7, 2016**

**Accompanied by:** To be Determined

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### PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES

The Department of State has outlined the following specific objectives for the project:

- Illustrate the role of music as it relates to constitutionally guaranteed free speech and its power and potential to shape contemporary values and build civil society;
- Examine outreach programs that use music to engage at-risk youth in society and teach youth leadership and conflict resolution skills;
- Demonstrate how local musicians and activists support or react to political agendas and social concerns in urban and rural communities;
- Explore the diversity and roots of distinctively American genres of music, including rap/hip-hop, jazz, blues, and rock while illustrating how this contributes to a dynamic social system; and
- Highlight various means of distributing and sharing music including social networking web sites, digital sharing sites and other on-line activities.

## PARTICIPANT LIST

<b>Algeria</b>	<b>Ms. Anissa BENSEHIL</b> Freelance Artist, Singer, and Pianist
<b>Algeria</b>	<b>Mr. Reda HAMIMED</b> Freelance Rapper, Singer, Composer, and Producer
<b>Egypt</b>	<b>Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim ZEIDAN</b> Owner, Room Art Space and Café
<b>Jordan</b>	<b>Ms. Jolyana AL EID</b> Music Teacher, King Abdullah II School for Excellence
<b>Jordan</b>	<b>Mr. Bashar Jamal KHRIES</b> Music Teacher, Zaha Center
<b>Lebanon</b>	<b>Mr. Antoine Elias EL RAYESS</b> National Coordinator and Conductor, Lebanese Band Association for the Promotion of Music
<b>Morocco</b>	<b>Mr. Mahmoud BELLAHCEN</b> Head, Cultural Affairs Service, Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Culture, Meknes
<b>Palestinian Territories</b>	<b>Mr. Masood ALDRAIMLI</b> Composer, Oud Player, and Singer, Deal Production Company
<b>Palestinian Territories</b>	<b>Ms. Wfaa ALNEJAILI</b> Nurse, Scientists Medical Center

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

### **Algeria**

*Name:* **Ms. Anissa BENSEHIL**

*Present Position:* Freelance Artist, Singer, and Pianist

*Education/Training:* Special School for the Blind, Algiers

*Address:* 59 Rue des Frère Djedaimi  
Mouzaia, Blida 09000  
Algeria  
Email: abensehil@gmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), French

*U.S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* Egypt, Tunisia

*Professional Background:* Ms. Anissa Bensehil is a singer and pianist in Algeria. Visually impaired, she has overcome social stigma to thrive as a musician. In 2014, she participated in Alhane Wa Chabab, the Algerian equivalent of America's Got Talent, and finished in second place. She has also collaborated with popular Algerian musician Cheb Akil. Ms. Bensehil engages youth through music, often focusing on themes in everyday life, and is an advocate for people with disabilities. She is interested in the use of social media to promote music and musicians; she also looks forward to discussing innovations in youth engagement.

## **Algeria**

*Name:* **Mr. Reda HAMIMED**

*Present Position:* Freelance Rapper, Singer, Composer, and Producer

*Education/Training:* Certificate in Business and Marketing, Private Business and Management School, Algiers, 1999

*Address:* Cite Ain Allah, Bt 209 A  
Dely Ibrahim  
Algiers  
Algeria 16032  
Email: reda3city16@gmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), French

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* France, Italy, United Arab Emirates

*Professional Background:* Mr. Reda Hamimed is a popular Algiers-based freelance rapper, singer, composer, and producer. One of the founders of rap in Algeria, his music speaks to issues in young people's everyday lives, their difficulties, and their hopes. In 2011, he started his own production company. Additionally, Mr. Hamimed hosts a televised show on Echourouk TV called Ghir Legriffa, which features and promotes young Algerian artists. Focusing on Algeria's youth, he aspires to use music as a tool to enhance understanding. Mr. Hamimed is interested in learning about youth engagement through music in the United States.

## **Egypt**

*Name:* **Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim ZEIDAN**

*Present Position:* Owner, Room Art Space and Café

*Concurrent Positions:* Owner, The Anonymous List Cinema, Cairo

*Previous Positions:* Freelance videographer and editor, CNN, 2013-2016  
Director, short fiction films and documentaries, 2011-2014  
Freelance work, television and commercial, 2010-2012  
Freelance videographer, 2005-2009  
Freelance graphic designer, 2003-2004

*Education/Training:* Bachelor's degree, Fine Arts and Architecture, Helwan University, Cairo, 2005  
Fayoum Winter Academy Art Workshop, conducted by Alba Mohamed, 2008

*Address:* Email: zeidanstudio@gmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), English

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* Belgium, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Lebanon, Netherlands, Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

*Professional Background:* Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Ibrahim Zeidan is the founder and owner of two art venues in Cairo, Room Art Space and The Anonymous List Cinema. The former, a constantly evolving art space, dance studio, performing arts venue, and café, provides professional and aspiring artists a place to create, collaborate, and perform. The venue also features popular storytelling nights that encourage expression. The Anonymous List Cinema screens hard-to-obtain films and hosts filmmaking workshops. Additionally, Mr. Zeidan founded a production company, Film Factory, which supports and rents professional equipment to independent filmmakers. He looks forward to exploring new business models, possible partners, and gaining tips on how to navigate the challenging environment of small business ownership.

## **Jordan**

*Name:* **Ms. Jolyana AL EID**

*Present Position:* Music Teacher, King Abdullah II School for Excellence

*Previous Positions:* Music Teacher, University of Jordan, Aqaba, Jordan  
Music Teacher, SOS

*Address:* Tenth Region Aqaba  
Aqaba  
Jordan  
Email: [essamabulail@yahoo.com](mailto:essamabulail@yahoo.com)

*Languages:* Arabic

*U.S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* Egypt

*Professional Background:* Ms. Jolyana Al Eid works as a music teacher at King Abdullah II School for Excellence. Additionally, she volunteers as a concert and festival organizer and also leads a local community choir. Previously, Ms. Al Eid taught music at branch campus of the University of Jordan. She is committed to working with marginalized populations in her region, including youth and orphans. She hopes to utilize music as an alternative mode of engagement for youth.

## **Jordan**

*Name:* **Mr. Bashar Jamal KHRIES**

*Present Position:* Music Teacher, Zaha Center

*Concurrent Positions:* Member, Rum Band  
Percussionist, Caravan Band, Roya TV  
Manager, Drum Jam Band

*Previous Positions:* Sound Designer, MIT group, 2013-2014  
Wall Painting and Design, Gardens Hospital, 2012-2013  
Drums and Backing Vocals, Gazdara Band 2008-2012  
Percussion Instructor, Amman Bacaloria School 2011  
Store Supervisor, Adidas, 2008-2013

*Education/Training:* Bachelor of Visual Arts, University of Jordan, 2013  
Certification, Digital Film Making, 2013

*Address:* Rum Tariq Al Nasser Group  
Amman  
Jordan  
Email: bkhries90@gmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), English

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* India, Lebanon

*Professional Background:* Mr. Bashar Jamal Khries is a professional percussionist and drummer. He is a graduate of the University of Jordan's Visual Arts program and a member of many local bands including Rum, one of Jordan's most famous ensembles. Mr. Khries also teaches music at the Zaha Center, is a member of Roya TV's Caravan band, and founded the street group Drum Jam. Drum Jam brings together talented percussionists for street shows that invite the audience to participate in making music. He would like to strengthen ties between artists in Jordan and the United States and discover new ways to engage young generations of musicians through art.

## **Lebanon**

*Name:* **Mr. Antoine Elias EL RAYESS**

*Present Position:* National Coordinator and Conductor, Lebanese Band Association for the Promotion of Music

*Concurrent Positions:* Music Theory and Rudiments Teacher, Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music

*Previous Positions:* Music Theory and Rudiment Teacher, Institut Professionel St. Michel-Bikfaya (IPSM), 2004-2011  
Graphic Designer and Quality Controller, Impressions Press, Mansourieh, 2003-2004  
Graphic Designer, Raidy Printing Press, 2001-2003

*Education/Training:* License in Music Rudiments, Lebanese Higher National Conservatory of Music, 2014  
Bachelor's degree, Music Theory and Rudiments, Lebanese Higher National Conservatory of Music, 2005  
Bachelor's degree, Graphic Design, Notre Dame, 2000

*Memberships:* League of Music Teachers, National Higher Conservatory of Music, Lebanese Graphic Design Syndicate

*Address:* Elias Nassif El Rayess Building, Ground floor  
Himlaya Main Street  
Himlaya, Metn  
Lebanon  
Email: aerayess@gmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), French

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* France, Jordan, Switzerland

*Professional Background:* Mr. Antoine Elias El Rayess coordinates and conducts the Lebanese Band Association for the Promotion of Music Lebanese (LeBAM). In this role, he encourages students to participate in organized music ensembles, plans year-long schedules and programs for music students in community-based music ensembles, and serves as a resource for music ensembles and musicians throughout the country. Mr. Rayess has also worked as a freelance graphic designer. He is interested in music teaching, particularly as a method of conflict resolution.



## **Morocco**

*Name:* **Mr. Mahmoud BELLAHCEN**

*Present Position:* Head, Cultural Affairs Service, Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Culture, Meknes

*Previous Positions:* Cultural Educator and Animator, Artistic and Cultural Centers, Meknes and France, 1995-2004

*Education/Training:* Diploma, Drama and Cultural Animation, Higher Institute of Drama and Cultural Animation (ISADAC), Rabat, 1994

*Memberships:* Association Spectacle Libre, 2004  
Festival Meknes de la Fiction TV, 2012

*Address:* Direction Regionale de la Culture  
Avenue Bir Anzarane  
Meknes  
Morocco  
Email: mahmoudtheatre@yahoo.fr

*Languages:* Arabic (primary), French

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* France, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Spain, Tunisia

*Professional Background:* Mr. Mahmoud Bellahcen is Head of the Cultural Affairs Service within the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Culture in Meknes, where he manages cultural programming for the region. He also serves as the artistic director of festivals of traditional music organized by the Ministry. Mr. Bellahcen organizes an annual regional book fair in Meknes, plays Moroccan percussion instruments, and is a comedian. He regularly organizes presentations and workshops for young people that offer an introduction to Moroccan heritage and explore ways of fusing modern and traditional musical styles. Mr. Bellahcen believes that arts should be used for promoting social change and supporting democracy through outreach to disaffected youth. He is interested in learning about different musical genres, developing his professional network, and gaining hands-on experience on how the performing arts can engage young people to contribute to a more peaceful world.

## **Palestinian Territories**

*Name:* **Mr. Masood ALDRAIMLI**

*Present Position:* Composer, Oud Player, and Singer, Deal Production Company

*Concurrent Position:* Composer, Mashareq

*Education/Training:* Degree, Management, Alazhar University

*Address:* Deal Production Company, Alremal-Aljawhara Tower  
Gaza  
Email: masod705@hotmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic

*U.S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Professional Background:* Mr. Masoud Aldrainli is a Palestinian musician and performer. Since the age of 16, he has performed on the piano, guitar, and oud, a stringed instrument popular the Near East and North Africa. A composer, his music has been featured on Palestine TV and other Egyptian channels. Mr. Aldrainli looks forward to interacting with artists from the United States and other countries and exchanging experience and ideas with them. He is also interested in networking with U.S.-based artists and art institutions.

## **Palestinian Territories**

*Name:* **Ms. Wfaa ALNEJAILI**

*Present Position:* Nurse, Scientists Medical Center

*Previous Positions:* Emergency Nurse, Elshefa Hospital

*Education/Training:* Diploma, Emergency Nursing, Khan Younis Training College

*Memberships:* Member, Palestinian Nursing Association

*Address:* Email: wafaa\_aj@hotmail.com

*Languages:* Arabic

*U. S. Travel:* No previous U.S. travel

*Other Travel:* Italy

*Professional Background:* Ms. Wfaa Alnejaili is a nurse at the private hospital, Scientists Medical Center. Previously, she worked in the emergency room at Elshefa Hospital, the largest hospital in Gaza. Ms. Alnejaili frequently treated the sick and conflict wounded using her nursing skills and her singing voice. She has also served as a health educator, participating in youth-centered reproductive health, sexually transmitted disease, and family planning projects. Ms. Alnejaili looks forward to examining new ways to use music in social work and youth outreach.