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For more media inquiries, please contact

House of Lebanon
Lebanese American Foundation, Inc.
4800 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Dina Abou Salem, Managing Director
Email: dina@houseoflebanon.com
Phone: (323) 965-8000

The House of Lebanon Opens Its Doors During Grand Opening Ceremony

[Los Angeles, CA, 10/7/2019] – The Lebanese American Foundation, Inc held a **grand opening ceremony** on **Saturday October 5, 2019** to celebrate its reopening following the remodeling of the House of Lebanon and the launch of its **development and mentorship programs** targeted at young professionals.

Dignitaries such as the Lebanese Ambassador to the United States His Excellency Gabriel Issa; Consul General of Lebanon in Los Angeles Mirna Khawly; Los Angeles Superior Court the Honorable Judge James Kaddo; Dr. Ray Irani, Deputy Mayor for International Relations, Ambassador Nina Hachigian of the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti; Lourdes Saab, Chief of Protocol County of Los Angeles; Ambassador President and CEO of the American Task Force on Lebanon Edward M. Gabriel, Ret; and key figures in the Lebanese American community attended the function.

The House of Lebanon Co-Chairman Dr. Mohamed “Mike” Ahmar called on the young Lebanese American generation to take in the asset that this building represents. “Truthfully, you are in control of the future of the House of Lebanon,” he said.

He also addressed the sustainability of the House of Lebanon and reassured that not only will it be sustained; it will also serve as the foundation for future community leaders to thrive as they continue to strengthen the American Lebanese presence in the region.

“Years ago, I was asked if our plan was a sustainable one; if an American Lebanese cultural center, the first of its kind in our country, could survive for generations beyond ours,” said Dr. Ahmar.

Also, Co-Chairman Dr. Paul Wakim thanked the community for its support for the last twenty years and acknowledged the concerted and tireless efforts of all those involved in making the House of Lebanon possible.

“I want to specially thank Dr. Ray Irani for his unrelenting support for the House of Lebanon since its inception,” said Dr. Wakim.

“Now is the time for our next generation of young professionals, artists, entrepreneurs, athletes, and talents to take the lead and follow in our legacy,” said Lebanese American Foundation President Architect Joseph Karaki during his inaugural speech.

He also mentioned that the House of Lebanon has established a number of programs catered to the professional needs of young Lebanese Americans and is in the midst of creating a Young Professional and Student Advisory Board for the House of Lebanon.

“The advisory board will be commissioned to provide strategic advice to the management and growth of the organization. The advisory board will allow young, mid-career, members of the community, unable to afford House of Lebanon membership fees, to serve the House of Lebanon as non-voting members in providing resources, advice, ideas, and alternate perspectives,” said Karaki.

The ceremony also included a star studded program that highlighted the history of the House of Lebanon and its mission, acknowledged its supporters, and showcased Lebanese young talents such as award winning and world renowned musician Massya Karaa, Leila Milki, and Alex Wakim writer of the Broadway musical play “An American in Beirut.”

The Lebanese American Foundation, Inc was founded in 1999 as a non -profit organization. The Center will provide social programs and cultural services to unite and benefit the Lebanese Americans, Americans of Lebanese Descent and to preserve the Lebanese Heritage and Culture. It is also a manifestation of the contributions of the Lebanese Community in Southern California.