



الجمعية الدرزية الاميركية  
American Druze Society

FEBRUARY, 2008 - Issue 1

## Welcome to the ADS E- Newsletter

Welcome to our first issue of the ADS E-Newsletter, a monthly electronic publication that will keep you informed and up to date with news about our community, activities, upcoming events, and the latest in the American Druze Society projects... So, please do not miss it.

We hope you enjoy it!!!

## The ADS National Office

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#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Ms. Carolina Masri*

## Quick Links

<http://www.marriottharborbeach.com/>  
[http://www.druze.com/membership\\_2007.pdf](http://www.druze.com/membership_2007.pdf)  
<http://www.druze.com/Convention2008/AD.pdf>

Join Our Mailing List!

Please feel free to sign up or invite a friend to joining us!!!

## 62nd Annual Convention



Fort Lauderdale, Florida

June 29th - July 6th

Marriott Harbor Beach Resort

For Hotel ADS Promotional Rates visit:

<http://marriott.com/llsb?groupCode=drzdrza&app=resvlink>

Come and join us in the beautiful Fort Lauderdale, where our friends of the South Florida Chapter are preparing themselves to welcoming everybody to this magnificent event at a fabulous resort to develop one week full of educational, cultural, fun and social activities for all ages, while showing us the true Druze hospitality of their Chapter and this year's Convention theme: *Our Children... Our Future!!!*

For more information please visit: [www.druze.com](http://www.druze.com)

# President's Message - The State of the ADS

Thank you - my beloved Druze community for all your support. I am honored to have your confidence, and the privilege to serve you. I promise to serve our community to the best of my ability so we can all help make our beloved ADS the professional organization it deserves to be.

I started my term as president of the American Druze Society with a tremendous sense of pride and optimism. I am very proud to be working with a team of dedicated, highly talented, selfless individuals serving on the ADS national board. I am confident that together we will wisely and efficiently manage the business of the ADS, guide it on the right track, and help achieve its mission. My mission will focus on extending the function of our beloved ADS beyond organizing conventions and collecting charitable donations. I will focus on two main areas:

## **1. Focus on our youth and their education, and**

2. Focus on transforming the ADS into the professional organization it deserves to be - a well organized and efficient organization at par with other successful top-notch charitable organizations.

Transforming the ADS will enable us to efficiently run the business of the ADS. We will start by streamlining and clearly documenting all of the ADS operational processes including membership, communication, conventions and cultural activities, elections (both at the national and chapter levels), charitable donations, accounting and finance, national board meetings, records and archiving, etc. The effort will result in a Standard Operating Procedures document for the ADS and its chapters. Executing these procedures will help us avoid wasting valuable time and energy on re-inventing the wheel. As a result, essential ADS business (like communication, membership, etc.) will become tasks in a clearly defined plan managed by the national board.

The second area of focus is near and dear to me and to most of you. It is the focus on our youth and their education. Our Youth are Our Future. My vision is for the ADS to become a beacon that guides our youth and help them maintain their Druze identity. We want to instill in our youth the never-ending quest for knowledge and understanding about their heritage. As the poet William Butler Yeats said "*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*" So, let's all help light the fire in our youth that drives their quest, throughout their lives, to learn and know more about our wonderful faith, heritage, and culture. We have delivered a major accomplishment by publishing the ADS educational curriculum on our web site. Please visit our educational web site at [www.druze.com/education](http://www.druze.com/education), examine the content and share it with your children and friends, and give us your valuable input and feedback.

I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments we have completed so far, and then highlight the things that we are working on. Here are some of our accomplishments:

- **Published the ADS Educational Curriculum - thanks to Dr. Wafaa Shaban and the wonderful volunteers on the Educational and Cultural Committee**
- **Published the first draft of the ADS Processes and Standard Operating Procedures document - a good first step in the efforts to transform the ADS**

- Completed and signed the hotel contract for the ADS 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida - June 29<sup>th</sup> to July 6<sup>th</sup> 2008. We have also created the convention program and preparations are underway
- Hired Ms. Carolina Masri as the new ADS national office manager / Executive Director. Carolina started working for the ADS in January 2008, and she has already proven to be a tremendous asset for the ADS - helping transform our ADS to the professional organization it deserves to be. We are proud to have her. Please help me welcome Ms. Carolina Masri to her new position. You can call Carolina at the new ADS toll-free number: 1-877-ADS-7330.
- Formed the ADS committees including the Ethics and Leadership committee that created and published the ADS Code of Conduct. The committee created posters listing rules of acceptable behavior at ADS events.
- Helped to reinstate the Ohio chapter, and we are helping to form a new Chapter in Raleigh, North Carolina, and reinstating the ADS chapter in Washington state.
- Awarded two scholarships to help pay the tuition of two Druze students in need in the US.

These are some of the accomplishments, and we still have a long road ahead of us. We need to transform the ADS web site to be able to handle member and event registrations, payments, contributions, membership drives, etc. We have created a document that listed all the ADS requirements for the new web site, and we have done an extensive search and analysis to find the appropriate off-the-shelf application to perform the required function. We found the application and the company to host our new web site, and now we are in the process of moving to the new site. We continue to document ADS processes and procedures and to make these Standard Operating Procedures an integral part of the ADS. This way we are not creating a document for the sake of documentation, but we are making sure that these procedures are part of the daily operating procedures of the ADS. It is also important for us to roll-out our educational program to all chapters. We are collaborating and communicating with ADS chapters on this and other issues. We are also working on innovative methods for fund raising to bring the ADS a steady stream of income.

I gave you a summary of the state of the ADS organization, and now I urge you to get involved as much as you can. Give the ADS and our beloved community a higher priority in your life. Encourage and motivate your children and friends to become ADS members and to volunteer to help out with your local ADS chapter and at the national level. Volunteers are the backbone of the ADS, and we all appreciate and salute our volunteers. Our fellow Druze in Lebanon and the Middle East face grave challenges in these unsettling times. No one knows what the future may bring. We need to be ready. We need to strengthen our resolve to be united and strong so that we can quickly lend a helping hand to fellow Druze all over the world, especially when they face crisis. We should aim to be a role model of Druze unity to Druze all over the world. Having a united, loving, and strong community is the basis for accomplishing all of our challenges.

Thank you. May God bless you, bless our ADS, and bless the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Dr. Akram Bou-Ghannam

# ADS MEMBERSHIP

Become a paid member by March 31st to be able to vote in the upcoming ADS elections for President Elect and Board members.

Download the Membership Form (see quick link access on the upper left block), fill it out and send it along with the payment to your local Chapter or to the ADS National Office.

For membership information, please contact your local chapter or the ADS National Office at [americandruzesociety@yahoo.com](mailto:americandruzesociety@yahoo.com)

**Your feedback is very important and can help us further improve your ADS contact experience.**

Please tell us what you think!

Carolina Masri

ADS Executive Director

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