



**UTAH COUNCIL FOR  
CITIZEN DIPLOMACY**

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**ARMENIAN LEADERS EXAMINE LGBTQ INCLUSION IN  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH — The Congressional Office of International Leadership, an agency of the U.S. Congress, will send a delegation of Armenian leaders in the field of LGBT+ nonprofits to Salt Lake City, Utah, from February 3 - 11, 2023. The delegation consists of five professionals and will be accompanied by an Armenian Embassy bicultural facilitator and an interpreter. While in Salt Lake City, the Open World program participants will be hosted by local nonprofit Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy.

Prior to their arrival in Salt Lake City, the participants completed an orientation in Washington, D.C. Delegates had policy meetings with Members of Congress, including Congressman Chris Stewart (UT-2).

In Salt Lake City, the delegates will collaborate on best practices for forming new nonprofits focused on LGBT+ Inclusion. Additional activities include meeting with local nonprofits such as Equality Utah, Encircle, the Utah Pride Center, the Utah AIDS Foundation, and Utah Nonprofits Association. They will also participate in activities that make Utah unique, including an NBA JAZZ game, touring the Utah Natural History Museum, and exploring the Park City Olympic Park. While in Utah, the delegation will stay in the homes of local residents who serve as host families.

“It is clear that people in Utah are taking steps to create a more inclusive society for the LGBT+ community in our state. For this reason, we are delighted to welcome our Armenian delegation to meet with local nonprofits tackling this topic in Utah. The purpose of these meetings is for the Armenian delegation to learn from these organizations and

share ideas and resources,” says Felecia Maxfield-Barrett, Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy Executive Director.

Maxfield-Barrett continues, “While it is clear that there is much more work to be done in Utah and around the world to ensure LGBT+ inclusion and basic human rights are embedded into our everyday culture, we hope that the Armenian delegation will see how many people in Utah have respect for one another and their diverse perspectives, that people of the world are interconnected, and that people in Utah are willing to engage in open and respectful dialogue.”

More than 29,000 current and future leaders from post-Soviet era countries have participated in the Open World program. Open World offers one of the most effective U.S. exchange programs to promote mutually beneficial options for depolarized engagement between future national leaders. It is a unique but no less powerful tool for Congress to engage legislatures in critical regions of the world.

For more than fifty-five years, Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy has been Utah's civil sector leader in shaping foreign relations in Utah by fostering people-to-people connections. Its mission is to promote respect and understanding between the people of Utah and other nations through citizen diplomacy, the concept that every individual has the right, even the responsibility, to help shape U.S. foreign relations one handshake at a time. To learn more about Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy’s programs and services, please visit [www.utahdiplomacy.org](http://www.utahdiplomacy.org).

### **Congressional Diplomacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Founded in 1999 by Congress, the Congressional Office for International Leadership (formerly the Open World Leadership Center) maintains a vast network of more than 29,000 alumni in strategic countries, including Russia, Ukraine, and others in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. Open World supports legislative diplomacy efforts for Members of Congress by conducting exchanges that establish authentic communication and enduring relations that are maintained through its extensive alumni network. Program participants are provided with exposure to Congressional diplomacy, American politics, accountable governance, and volunteerism while being home hosted by American families. To learn more about the Open World program, please visit [www.openworld.gov/](http://www.openworld.gov/)

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