



**For further information, contact:**  
Doris Abdel Messieh  
Director of Public Relations  
[dabdelmessieh@copticorphans.org](mailto:dabdelmessieh@copticorphans.org)

### **Nermien Riad Selected as a Nonprofit Congress Delegate**

Nermien Riad, executive director of Coptic Orphans, represented the Commonwealth of Virginia at the Nonprofit Congress National Meeting, held October 16 – 17, 2006 in Washington, DC. Riad's selection as one of the delegates to the Nonprofit Congress on behalf of all nonprofits in Virginia demonstrates the leadership role that Coptic Orphans has taken among nonprofits in innovation, effectiveness, and accountability, even as a relative newcomer to the sector.

Coptic Orphans is an organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable children in Egypt through education, health, housing, and mentorship. Riad founded the organization in 1988, which has since directly benefited over 14,000 children, initiated programs to attack illiteracy, spearheaded a grassroots network of over 200 volunteer child advocates, and mobilized thousands of donors and supporters internationally through awareness campaigns. Coptic Orphans has been widely recognized among nonprofits since Riad became the full time executive director in 2000 after having led the organization on a voluntary basis for 12 years.

The Washington Post has recognized Coptic Orphans for its organizational teamwork, its effective and innovative involvement of board members, volunteers, and donors, and Coptic Orphans' ability to build strong partnerships. NPower has recognized Coptic Orphans for its innovative use of technological resources to enhance our effectiveness. The Association for Fundraising Professionals invited Coptic Orphans in 2005 to speak to other Nonprofits about its innovative use of in-kind donations to drastically cut administrative overhead, and the Catalogue for Philanthropy currently features Coptic Orphans in the 2006-07 catalogue as one of the most overall effective nonprofits in the greater Washington, DC area.

As a delegate, Nermien Riad acted as an ambassador for future of the nonprofit world. She helped identify the top issues, priorities, and values that connect all charitable organizations, she assisted in the identification of priority and policy alternatives to be included in the nonprofit Congress action plan, and she assisted in the formation of an action plan for uniting the nonprofit sector and enhancing its effectiveness.

The recent formation of the Nonprofit Congress represents a growing sense that the nonprofit sector needs to unite and become more effective through greater coordination, accountability, and efficiency. Given the previous successes of Coptic Orphans, it is appropriate that among the three future priorities for the nonprofit sector that Riad helped vote through the Congress are a focus on nonprofit organizational effectiveness, especially accountability and leadership, and a focus on more effective and coordinated advocacy.

#####