

Arab America Foundation Team Leaders 2022 in Attendance at the Summit

Ahmed Aly (Florida)

Born in Egypt and raised in Kuwait, Ahmed is an Egyptian-American engineer, with degrees from both Virginia Tech (BS) & Georgia Tech (MS). He currently works in Orlando as an Operations Engineering Manager at Lockheed Martin supporting the production of fighter-jet aircraft simulators and logistics equipment and leading automation projects that enable Digital Transformation efforts. Ahmed co-founded a Mediterranean & Middle Eastern group at Lockheed Martin to promote the people, culture, and history of that region by initiating an annual corporate-wide Arab American Heritage Month celebration. He also serves as his company's Diversity & Inclusion site lead, where he organizes employee engagement activities and supports strategic inclusion planning across the corporation. Ahmed has been an avid supporter of his local community by co-founding an Egyptian Student Association during his time at Georgia Tech, mentoring university students, and volunteering at the local Arab American Community Center where he also helps coordinate the annual Orlando Arab Festival.

Stefan Ateek (Texas)

Stefan Ateek, LMSW-AP, LMFT, LCDC, is an Associate Professor of Social Work at Collin College. Ateek was born in Nazareth, Palestine, and he is passionate about serving his community. Stefan serves on numerous community boards and local chapters of respected organizations such as Health Outreach to the Middle East Board Member DFW Chapter, Arab America Foundation Texas Team Leader and Member of the National Team, Catholic Charities Urban Manor Board Member, Arab American Friends of Nazareth Outreach Board Member, and the Nazareth Hospital Ambassador in the US. Finally, Stefan is a Nazareth Project Inc. Board Member and a Mariam Foundation Ambassador in the US.

Maria Banou (Co-Team Leader, Michigan)

Maria Banou is a first-generation Iraqi American accounting professional who resides in metropolitan Detroit, Michigan. She has been championing Arab American Foundation's mission since Spring of 2021 and is an awardee of Arab America's 30 Under 30 Class of 2022. Maria is an Accounting Advisory Consultant for Deloitte, a leading global professional services firm. At Deloitte, she helps Fortune 500 companies identify technologies that enable automation and promote efficiency within their accounting and finance organizations. Outside of client work, Maria is an active contributor to Deloitte's growing MENA & Allies DEI Community objective of working on creating a positive impact on the broader MENA community through collaboration with external NGOs. She also serves as the Treasurer of the Board of Directors at Hope House Detroit, a

non-profit that offers after-school programming for children residing in inner-city Detroit. She has been providing her accounting expertise to the organization since 2015, along with volunteering with their girls' empowerment program.

Khadija El Barkaoui (Maine)

Khadija El Barkaoui is a Team Leader of the Arab America Foundation. Khadija is from Morocco and now lives in Maine, where she has recently completed her service as an AmeriCorps VISTA member serving Arab immigrants in southern Maine. She has been actively involved at local and international levels in supporting her community through social and economic development initiatives. She has been selected to represent her community abroad for international study visits. Khadija is a Ph.D. candidate and an Adjunct Professor of Business specializing in International Human Resources Management. She has developed an interest and expertise in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Khadija is passionate about cultivating women's economic empowerment. She owns and runs COELLE, a women's wellness global platform with a mission to connect women locally and globally through storytelling, events, and travels.

Naderh Elrabadi (Co-Team Leader, Illinois)

Naderh Hana Elrabadi is an Attorney and sole proprietor of Elrabadi Law, a Plaintiff's Injury Law Firm in Chicago. She is of Jordanian descent. Ms. Elrabadi is actively involved in the Chicago Bar Association where she currently serves as Chair of the Anti-Human Trafficking Committee. She was appointed to serve as a Human Rights Commissioner for the Commission on Human Relations for the City of Chicago by Mayors Rahm Emanuel and Lori Lightfoot where she served for over 10 years adjudicating discrimination complaints under the Human Rights Ordinance. Elrabadi was the Past Secretary and Board Member of the Arab American Bar Association of Illinois and mentorship program liaison for Arab American law students. She mentors through the Chicago Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, and the Diversity Scholarship Foundation and was a delegate for the Arab Lawyers Forum in London, England. Elrabadi received her Bachelor's degree from Loyola University Chicago in Communications and Political Science, her Master's Degree in Sociology, and her Juris Doctor from the John Marshall Law School.

Yousef Elyassin (Oklahoma)

Yousef Elyassin was born in Jordan and he has lived in Oklahoma for more than 40 years after moving to the United States in 1978. Elyassin has a bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering from Tulsa University. Yousef has over 25 years of restaurant experience and management. He has owned and operated IHOP and Jimmy's Egg franchisees for more than 10 years, and he has also owned and operated Zam Zam

restaurant in Oklahoma City for the last 15 years. Elyassin is married and a father of five beautiful children.

Youssef Elzein (Ohio)

Youssef Elzein is a 25 years resident of the Dayton, Ohio Area. Practicing as a Civil Engineer for 35 years and has served his community with dedication and diverse ways: in the City of Dayton Department of Aviation, in the Parents Leadership Council at the University of Dayton, on the board of the DAAF, and on the Dayton Christian Connections Interfaith Trialogue. In 2020, and with a full-time job, he single-handedly led and established the Dayton/Salfit (Palestine) Sister City Relationship, one of 7 relationships in the nation with a city in Palestine. Youssef has also served as: a volunteer and current board member of Dayton's American Red Cross Chapter, a current mentor with the Montgomery County Ohio College Promise, a Catholic Social Services volunteer working on Refugee Resettlement, and a Habitat for Humanity volunteer working on three home builds. Elzein was honored to receive the 2021 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award from the Dayton Presidents' Club and the recipient of the 2021 Volunteer of the Year Silver Medal from the President of the United States of America.

Dr. Manal Fakhoury (Florida)

Dr. Manal Fakhoury calls herself a personal development addict. Her friends call her the opportunity maker. Her passion intersects leadership with service. Manal is the Founder and CEO of Fakhoury Leadership International, where she coaches executives, mentors youth, and assists inmates in resetting their lives. Manal is a graduate of Leadership Ocala, Leadership Florida, a Distinguished Toastmaster, a member of the National Speakers Association, and serves on local and multiple national boards. She and her husband, Riadh, also are passionate about helping the community create legacy wealth with their investment vehicle, Vestech Partners.

Nabeleh Ghareeb (Co-Team Leader, Michigan)

Nabeleh Ghareeb, President and CEO of A-Z Consulting & Project MGT,LLC a business consulting firm that leads and manages projects in a turnkey process from strategic thoughts to creating state-of-the-art programs for non-profit agencies, Nabeleh served in various leadership roles in nonprofit organizations and Higher education institutions. In 2021 Nabeleh was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs. Nabeleh volunteers with several organizations such as the Arab America Foundation, where she coordinates the project, Recognizing Arab American Rising Leaders and she chaired the 2021 Empowerment Summit in Detroit. Nabeleh is active with the Arab American Women

Business Council where she served two terms as President of the Council, and is still involved with the Grant Committee. Nabeleh completed her undergraduate studies in Business Management at Wayne State University and her master's degree in Education Administration and Postgraduate at the University of Toledo.

Dr. Mahbuba Hammad (California)

Dr. Mahbuba Hammad of Palestinian and Chilean heritage is quadrilingual and served under many capacities of multiple projects and national/international initiatives in public educational and non-profit organizations. In education, she has integrated contemporary issues of Arab and Islamic culture, such as healthcare, environment, human rights, media, and film into the classroom. She has extensive experience in grant development, instruction, teacher training, assessment, and program administration and has worked with students in K-16. She was named by the International Literacy Association (2019) as one of 30 Under 30 literacy leaders and visionaries, creating positive change in the global literacy landscape. She was also honored (2019) by California Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes as one of 30 Under 30 individuals who exemplify dedication, innovation, and service in the 47th district in the Inland Empire; and was also recognized by the Arab America Foundation as one of 40 Under 40 rising Arab American leaders.

Hanan Ismail (Co-Team Leader, Tennessee)

Hanan Ismail is a Syrian American who moved to the US from Damascus in 1982. She is a trained architect and a proud mother of three girls. She and her husband, Dr. Sami Ismail, co-founded Parents Reaching Out, a non-profit organization in Nashville, TN that provides support, connection, and education for parents of premature or medically complex children. She is passionate about maintaining a strong connection with the Arab history and culture for her children and is a part of Arab America to help share this with current and future generations of Arab Americans and our supporters.

Eynas Jarrar (New Hampshire)

Originally from Jenin, residing in New Hampshire, Eynas Jarrar is a Palestinian-American who is the team co-leader for Team New England. She works in contact tracing for MedStar Health; a healthcare organization based in the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area. She is a recent graduate from Southern New Hampshire University where she obtained a bachelor's degree in public health. Starting next fall, she will be attending the University of Bridgeport to pursue her MPH in Global Health.

Aida Mady (Maryland)

Born in Cairo, Egypt, Aida is the youngest of eight children. Her passion for cooking blossomed from a young age as she helped her mother in the kitchen. She is now living in Northern Virginia where she and her husband raised their three children. In 2012, she launched Cooking and Beyond with the help of business training and mentoring from Empowered Women International (EWI). Aida is using the art of cooking as a unifying language of multicultural understanding. She is an active member of different NGOs and helps in many fundraising events. In 2017, she self-published a hand-illustrated planner/recipe book "Heart to Heart", An Egyptian Experience with a portion of the proceeds going to organizations that help women and children.

Hajar Moutawakkil (Co-Team Leader, District of Columbia)

Hajar is a Moroccan American Linguist who is passionate about the Arabic language and its dialects, she has been teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, providing cultural training, and conducting language testing. She supports Arab and local communities and promotes causes related to the Middle East. She developed a strong sense of devotion to the nonprofit sector by serving in charities and nonprofit organizations as a program coordinator. When not teaching, she enjoys singing and playing music, she is active in several musical groups and religious Nasheed troupes in the DMV area. One of her main hobbies is walking the runway, as she has experience modeling in several showcases and fashion shows such as New York Fashion Week, DC Fashion week, and others.

Siroor Quhshi (New York)

Siroor Hassan is a proud first-generation Yemeni-American woman from Brooklyn, NY. She is an Account Director at one of the largest global advertising agencies in the world with a history of orchestrating successful multi-million dollar campaigns designed to meet clients' goals. She is experienced in corporate communications, account management, strategic planning, and campaign development & execution. She has over 7+ years of experience in progressive roles working with Fortune 500 clients. Siroor also leads her agency's MENA Employee Resource Group (ERG) with the goal of increasing employees' sense of belonging and fostering inclusivity within the workplace. In addition to her professional life, Siroor is currently exploring MENA artistry, craft, music, poetry, and more with the hopes of launching awareness initiatives with artists. During her downtime, you can find her spending quality time with loved ones and drinking Yemeni tea.

Mona Sadeq (Virginia)

Mona Sadeq-Omar currently leads a team of over 60 Arab Americans promoting the organization's goals and objectives in Virginia and nationally. Team Virginia is the host

team for this year's Connect Arab America: Empowerment Summit. She received her B.A. from Lebanese American University in 1980 and her MPA from George Mason University in 2002. She has extensive experience working for private and public sectors in finance and accounting. In addition to her activism with the Arab America Foundation, Sadeq-Omar has been actively involved and supportive of several non-profit organizations. In 2020, she became the executive director of the American Palestinian Women's Association-APWA. In 2015, she helped co-found the National Arab American Women's Association-NAAWA as treasurer and then president. She is a current board member of the Muslim Women's Association. A proud Arab American of Palestinian heritage, and a long-time activist, Sadeq-Omar will receive the 2022 MVP (Most Valuable Person) Award on Saturday, November 5, 2022, at the Al Rabitah Gala Hafla.

Rawan Saleh (Kentucky)

Rawan Saleh is a first-generation immigrant from Jordan. She is a sophomore at the University of Louisville pursuing a public health degree on a pre-medical track. Saleh loves activism and social justice and helping others; this can be translated into her experience with developing speeches and performing them at different levels throughout school and other local, and national level where her statement and very own picture got featured in the New York Times online and print magazine. She is very involved in school and the community, in numerous clubs and extracurricular including the Beta Club, National Honor Society, the Y-club (KUNA & KYA), and DECA. As a freelancer, she has worked in a variety of declines and sectors including creating a temporary media business called "Mediaite", and work for YesBrands. Currently, she works as a shift manager at Plato's Closet, PAL leader at her university, at the Women's Center all as part-time, and being a full-time student.

Yaser Saleh (Co-Team Leader, Tennessee)

For decades, Arabs found their way to the United States often fleeing war and persecution in their home countries. Yaser Saleh is one of those Arabs. Yaser was born and raised in a city of El Bireh 13 miles away from Jerusalem. During his childhood and teenage years, the family lived under military occupation and experienced one of the worse apartheid regimes. In fact, during the first Intifada which took place from 1987-1993, Saleh was among other young teenagers who led our people in the resistance movement. As a result, Yaser was expelled from his home country of Palestine. And, so he ended up here in the US and specifically, Memphis, Tennessee. With the hopes of someday returning to Palestine, Yaser worked hard to give himself a better life. Saleh completed two associate degrees in three years and a bachelor of science degree all in the fields related to computers and engineering. He did so while working full time for a family owned business. In 1999, Yaser's life took a positive turn when he accepted a position as a quality engineer for a global service company called

Flex. During his 21 years there, he managed to run both the quality and engineering departments and hold different managerial positions. Today, Saleh is a successful business owner managing several family businesses across the Midsouth. In this great land of opportunity, he was able to achieve the American dream. In this next chapter of his life, Saleh's goal is to motivate the new generation of Arab Americans to remain active as they continue to strive for success. Additionally, he wants to motivate the youth to connect with their fellow Arabs abroad and help those that remain in our homelands so that we can essentially build a better, stronger, and more unified Arab world.

Osama Salous (Co-Team Leader, District of Columbia)

Osama Salous (أسامة سلوس): Born and raised in Amman, Jordan, he came to the U.S. to pursue his graduate studies, he received both his master's and Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech with a focus on transportation systems. He works in Washington DC in research and development for the aviation industry including government projects. Sam recently joined the DC team leadership this summer. He believes in Arab America's message to spread our culture, connect with fellow Arab Americans, and share our heritage with the larger community. He is passionate about music as a form of self-expression, he plays piano and composes his original music. He also plays Arabic percussion instruments like Tabla and Riq. In his free time, he enjoys dancing, sports, cooking, and outdoor activities."

Fatma Wasel (North Carolina)

Fatma Wasel, daughter of Yemeni and Egyptian parents was born and raised in Kuwait. Fatma has a Bachelor's degree in English Education from Sanaa university, is an Educational Planning, and Policy alumni from Penn State University. She also has an MA in International Relations and Conflict Resolution from American Public University, and is currently working on a doctorate in Executive leadership at the University of Charleston in VA. In her career, Fatma has worked in languages, on international projects, media, and Arabic curriculum building and was a certified language tester by ACTFL (American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages). Wasel is also an Activist and Yemeni community commentator. Furthermore, she has published society-oriented articles, been featured on YouTube and was CEO of the Women Alliance of Future Advancement (WAFA). Finally, she believes in women's empowerment, gender equality, and civic engagement.

Lydia Yousief (Co-Team Leader, Tennessee)

Lydia Yousief is the director of Elmahaba Center. She graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2017 after completing her thesis on the history of Coptic Nashville. She then graduated from the University of Chicago's Center for Middle Eastern Studies in 2019. She finished her thesis on Coptic identity-making through pilgrimage to Palestine in the modern era. She enjoys belting out to Oum Kalthoum, watering her plants, and embracing natural hair care. Lydia is also published at Elmahaba Center at <https://www.elmahabacenter.com/publications>