



MEETING MINUTES

September 18, 2019 – Noon – 2:40 pm
ARAB AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

Commissioners Present:

Manal Saab Chair
Michael Romaya Vice-Chair
Sharif Hussein- Second Vice Chair
Lina Hourani-Harajli, Treasurer
Suzanne Sukkar, Secretary
Nabeel Obeid, M.D., Trustee at Large
Adel Mozip

Susan Dabaja
Dave Abdullah
Fay Beydoun
Martin Manna
John Daoud

State Staff Present: Ghida Dagher (State Director of Appointments), Ron Robinson (State Assistant Attorney General), Charles Schoder (Civil Rights Specialist, MDCR), Karen Phillippi (Director, Office Global Michigan), Fayrouz Saad (Executive Director, Office of Global Michigan), Joe Miszcak (Constituent Service Coordinator for U.S. Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence).

Commissioners Absent:

Rihan Issa, Nadine Kalasho, Ronald Haddad

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Saab at 12:05 P.M. Chair Saab congratulated newly appointed Executive Director Fayrouz Saad for The Office of Global Michigan. Chair Saab also welcomed Director of Appointments for the State of Michigan, Ghida Dagher and Joe Miszcak, the Constituent Service Coordinator for U.S, Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

On Motion duly made and supported, the Meeting Agenda was approved. *Motion carried unanimously.*

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES



On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the meeting minutes of June 12, 2019 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. COMMISSION UPDATE

Chair Saab announced the Commission's official move under the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) as of August 11, 2019. Chair Saab welcomed the Executive Director of the Office of Global Michigan, Fayrouz Saad. The Director for Office of Global Michigan and the Director of the Department of Civil Rights, shall serve as the only ex officio, non-voting members of the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs.

Chair Saab also welcomed Director of Appointments for the State, Ghida Dagher who updated the Commission on CMEAA's transition to LEO. Director Dagher indicated that the Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) has a new Interim Director, Mary Engelman.

Director Dagher updated the Commission about the budget talks at a state level which is tied to the road funding and discussions are still to be determined. Governor Whitmer is trying to avoid a potential government shut down, but we don't anticipate that will be happening.

Chair Saab welcomed Director Fayrouz Saad, Office of Global Michigan. The office of Global Michigan was newly created and is home to the three ethnic commissions and the House of Social Services.

Director Saad joined Governor Whitmer's office in January and her appointment to the Office of Global Michigan became official in mid-August of this year. Director Saad updated the Commission on The Department of Talent and Economic Development that has been renamed Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). Director Saad stressed that LEO is not only a change to the name, rather, a change in the mission and how we look at the economic development at the state of Michigan. LEO wants to become a place to align and serve communities in the state through growing labor opportunities. Several other offices and agencies from across state governments were also transferred to LEO including the Michigan Office of New Americans (MONA).

Director Fayrouz and her team are currently working on LEO's 5 years strategic plan. Sub agencies were asked to work on their strategic plans as well (including Office of Global Michigan). The Commission is expected to take that route for strategic planning and will hear formally or informally. Director Saad added, that we are actively working on the 60 by 30 initiative. By 2030, MI population will have 60% post-secondary educational attainment. However, getting from 45 percent (current percentage) to 60 percent is not possible with the current population demographic. Therefore, the Governor's office has looked to our office (LEO) and asked us on how to play a role in helping achieve that goal. We will make a joined effort in retaining our international students, re-educating students who have access to post-secondary education. We will



want to attract people from across the world and from different states to Michigan. We will serve as a vessel for international students to consider Michigan their home state. All of us are encouraged to tap into our networks to attract talent to MI as well.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the Treasurer's Report through YTD August 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. CMEAA ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Administrator Maan provided the following updates:

CMEAA Lansing Legislative event October 16

- Speaker Pro-Tempore Jason Wentworth and Representative Abdullah Hammoud to cohost CMEAA's lunch event in Lansing on October 16, 2019
- An e-invite will be circulated to both houses on behalf of the Representatives 3 weeks before the event takes place
- Timeline- 11:30 am to 1:30 pm to give chance for Legislators to come in and out between sessions
- We will prepare materials including demographics, MEA economic impact to share and raise awareness about the work we do at CMEAA.
- Good opportunity for our Commissioners to engage legislators

Meeting with Global Detroit

Global Detroit is running their Global Entrepreneur-In-Residence (Global EIR) Program to enhance economic collaboration and innovation in Michigan with Middle Eastern American Entrepreneurs. Middle Eastern immigrants have the highest entrepreneurship rate at 21.3% compared to any group in the United States according to a study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

As a collaborative partner with Global Detroit and Global EIR, Global Detroit would like to collaborate with CMEAA to support in helping recruit and identify high-skilled, Middle Eastern entrepreneurs in STEM fields who seek to launch their business in Michigan and/or the U.S. Together, we can build economic bridges and empower immigrant entrepreneurs in Michigan.

Looking for America Dinner

- Represented CMEAA in Looking for America Dinner at the Detroit Historical Museum



- Round table dinner included local Detroit Artists, high school students, and various bi-partisans' organizations.
- As background, Philippa Hughes began organizing small cross-political dinners in D.C. after the 2016 election, which culminated last October in curating an art exhibit about immigration in the Heurich House Museum and organizing a dinner for 50 people from across the political spectrum to discuss immigration.
- The art exhibit was a jumping off point for a conversation about what it means to be an American. That event led to partnering with New American Economy and the School of Public Affairs at American University to organize "Looking for America," a series of dinners + art shows + conversation in six cities across America, including Detroit.
- Local artists in each city will be asked to answer this question: "What does it mean to be American in your community?" The purpose of these dinners is to gain more understanding between people who might not normally meet using art as a frame for the conversations.
- They aren't trying to persuade anyone of a position, only make connections and build empathy.

New American Appreciation Gala 2020

We are working on confirming dates for the New American Appreciation Gala in Detroit. We have initial confirmation on September 28, 2020 from the Marriott Renaissance. We will keep you posted as we confirm the dates with our Governor and align with the rest of the ethnic Commissions.

VII. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Director Karen Phillippi updated the board on an addition to the latest legislative update circulated. Michigan Attorney General William Tong joined a coalition of attorneys general opposing the Trump Administration's effort to subject immigrant children and their families to indefinite detention. Director Phillippi also informed the board that they are working on identifying a Legislative lead replacing Frank Waters for LEO. Director Phillippi is working closely with Director Saad to identify new contacts for everyone and send those out to the Commission Chairs and Coordinators.

Director Phillippi also highlighted that all invoicing to go out to LARA by Sep 30 for fiscal year 2019.

VIII. UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY (UMS)

Mr. Mathew VanBesien, President of UMS, shared his excitement to partner with our commission on including Middle Eastern arts in UMS's programs. He provided a historical review of UMS and the objective of the partnership between UMS and CMEAA. UMS plans to inaugurate its first Middle Eastern advisory council to help guide and influence the organization to build art series that addresses a big range of Middle Eastern Arts in the state of Michigan.



Support from CMEAA is requested at \$20,000/year for the next three UMS seasons: 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22.

On June 12, CMEAA already granted support to UMS for season 2019-20. The Commission will vote in December meeting on continued support for UMS for seasons 2020-21 and 2021-22.

IX. ZAMAN INTERNATIONAL

Mrs. Najah Bazy, Founder and CEO of Zaman presented her proposal to the board asking USD 22,000 in support for social needs of marginalized women living below USD 10,000 per year. The money if granted by CMEAA will help break the poverty cycle amongst Middle Eastern American Women (Mostly housewives). Moreover, Zaman is teaching those women skills like sewing and cooking to further empower them to take positive next steps leading to sustainability. Zaman's impact will further empower the Middle Eastern American community in Michigan.

On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the motion to accept Zaman proposal funding and grant an amount of \$15,000 for the upcoming 2019/2020 season. Motion carried unanimously

X. CHALDEAN CULTURAL CENTER (CCC)

Mary Romaya, the founder of The Chaldean Cultural Center presented to the board a history of the Chaldean People and the objective behind the inauguration of the Cultural Chaldean Center. The CCC is seeking \$40,000 from the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs (CMEEA). The CCC's ask is \$20,000 per year for two years. Funding will allow the CCC to continue to develop and purchase materials that provide resources needed to educate our youth through school group visits to the Museum and learn more about the development of Middle Eastern civilization. The school groups would include elementary, middle school, high school, and post-secondary students.

The CCC will provide progress reports as requested by CMEAA to show how the grant money is spent. This initiative will educate our youth and raise awareness about the Chaldean Culture and the Middle Eastern population.

On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the motion to accept Chaldean Culture Center (CCC) proposal funding and grant an amount of \$15,000 for the upcoming 2019/2020 season. Motion carried unanimously

XI. ENVIROMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) UPDATE

Commissioner Adel presented to the Commission the update on the Environmental Justice Report. The group's work vision is to strive for Michigan to be a national and global leader in



environmental justice. Commissioner Adel spoke about the history of the Environmental Justice from inception to establishing with Governor Whitmer under executive decision 2019-16.

Commissioner Mozip updated the Commission on Training and Curriculum recommendations (Pending) as follows:

- Develop and implement environmental justice training
- Develop and implement environmental justice curriculum
- Develop a training and curriculum toolkit for residents
- Increase environmental justice recruitment and retention

In addition to updates on Policy Recommendations (Pending):

- Decision Making (8)
- Enhance Tracking, Monitoring, and Metrics (6)
- Increase Funding and Align Tax Policy with Environmental Standards (3)
- Improve Collaboration Across All Levels of Government and with Tribes (4)
- Create Tools and Resources for Residents (4)

Chair Saab thanked Commissioner Adel for his hard work in being part of the EJ committee.

XII. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH TO ACTION (EHRA)

Dr. Carmel Price, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Dr. Nathalie Sampson, Assistant Professor of Public Health at the University of Michigan- Dearborn presented to the Commission the history of EHRS and how and why it was created. Recent research in Metro Detroit assesses the extent to which negative environmental exposures and associated health risks are disproportionately experienced, particularly by communities of color, but this research does not explicitly account for the experience of Arab Americans. Community and academic partners mapped the proximity of sensitive populations to hazardous land uses, their exposure to air pollutants and associated health risks, and social vulnerabilities, as well as the resulting cumulative risk index that combines proximity, exposure, and vulnerability. Analyses clearly show that Southeast Dearborn is among the geographies with the greatest exposure to physical environmental exposures and associated health risks in the region.

During Summer 2019, we have expanded the EHRA Academy in two keyways:

EHRA Mentorship Program: Piloting a mentor program to build local youth capacity and leadership during and after the EHRA Academy. Teams of 3-5 fellows are matched with professionals in the Dearborn or greater Detroit area who have knowledge of air pollution, environmental justice, public health, government, policy advocacy, or experience working with youth. The mentors are a sounding board for youth to get their professional and educational questions answered and supporting teams in identifying, arranging, and preparing a public presentation (e.g. city council, public hearing, school board, coalition meeting) within 6 months of EHRA Academy.

2. EHRA Indicators Project: During the 2019 Academy, EHRA facilitated a participatory mapping session with community leaders and youth which will inform where youth collect air monitoring data. While low-cost air pollution sensors cannot be



used for regulatory purposes, increasingly communities are using air pollution sensors to identify hotspots, investigate local exposure sources, educate community members, and advocate to decision-makers with data. Using air sensors, the EHRA Indicators Project focuses largely on-air quality as a well-documented and community-prioritized concern in Metro Detroit, particularly South Dearborn. Furthermore, gaining accessible platform using story maps to host and publicly communicate EHRA Academy community science activities, including data collection through handheld air sensors and participatory mapping during the EHRA Academy, as well as interpretation and dissemination of data in English and Arabic.

The 2019 Academy had 200 applicants, primarily from Dearborn, with over 1/3 representing communities affected by disproportionate environmental burdens in zip code 48120.

EHRA request is for \$25,000. The money will cover the cost of participant and fellow stipends for 2020 summer Academy.

The Commissioners discussed EHRA proposal with great interest. Further discussion and support for EHRA will be considered at future meetings of the Commission.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS; AANM UPDATE

Dr. Diana Abouali, PHD, Director for the Arab American National Museum presented to the Commission the update on the result of CMEAA's grant money that was offered. The AANM was able to host 35 classroom visits from schools across Michigan.

Dr. Diana also presented a video presenting Zyara's school visit feedback from parents and friends of the museum.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Hearing no comments from the public, the meeting was adjourned 2:40 P.M.

Manal B. Saab, Chair

Suzanne Sukkar



FY CMEAA Budget Expenditure Report Through Aug '19

ETHNIC COMMISSIONS (PA 107 of 2017)															
Commission for Middle Eastern American Affairs (36660)															
FY 19 Spending Plan															
											Projections Based On:				
											Remaining Completed	12 Mth 11.0	13 Mth 2.0 11.0	Based on PR Remaining Completed	2.5 23.5
PLAN				ACTUAL EXPENDITURES					PROJECTION						
Categories	FY 18 ACT YTD	Financial Plan	Adj	Adjusted Financial Plan	Current Month Expend	YTD thru Expenses	8/31/2019 Encumb.	Total	Projected Remaining* Expend.	Anticipated Full Year Expenditures	Anticipated Balance	Percent Of Plan	Percent Guideline		
Authorized Approp	125,000	125,000	0	125,000											
Carry-Forward	21,359		0	0											
Available Appropriation:	146,359	125,000	0	125,000											
Salaries & Wages	-	0		0				0	0	0	0	0.0%	100.0%		
Longevity & Insurance	-	0		0				0	0	0	0	0.0%	100.0%		
Retirement & FICA	-	0		0				0	0	0	0	0.0%	100.0%		
Terminal Leave	-	0		0				0	0	0	0	0.0%	100.0%		
Travel	-	0		0				0	0	0	0	0.0%	84.6%		
Communications	570	600		600	50	476		476	50	525	75	79.3%	84.6%		
Contractual Services	68,403	45,371	(8,628)	36,743	5,318	24,308	12,435	36,743	0	36,743	(0)	100.0%	91.7%		
Supplies & Materials	25,000	25,370	1,500	26,870		25,660		25,660	(0)	25,660	1,210	95.5%	84.6%		
Equipment	-	0		0		0		0	0	0	0	0.0%	91.7%		
Grants	40,000	10,000	20,000	30,000		30,000		30,000	0	30,000	(0)	100.0%	84.6%		
Cost Allocations	7,509	7,500		7,500		5,250		5,250	2,250	7,500	(0)	70.0%	91.7%		
IT Costs - 6112	-	80		80	20	60		60	20	80	(0)	75.0%	91.7%		
TOTAL Expenditures	141,482	88,921	12,872	101,793	5,388	85,754	12,435	98,189	2,319	100,509	1,285				
Remaining Approp.	4,877	36,079	12,872	23,207							24,491				

SUMMARY BY FUNDING SOURCE	Appropriated	Adj.	Rev. Appr.					Expenditures	Lapse
GF/GP 1000	125,000		125,000		85,754	12,435	98,189	100,509	24,491
Total	125,000	0	125,000		85,754	12,435	98,189	0	100,509

NOTES:
 \$25K for National Arab Orchestra sponsorship
 \$10,000 for sponsorship for children
 Raya's contract adjusted down to \$5,049.82
 Lillian's contract adjusted to \$16,222
 Added \$15,000 for contract with Maan
 JULY - Added \$20,000 To Grant Enc for University Musical Society (paid in July)



**CMEAA Administrator's Report
Exhibit A**

September 18, 2019

CMEAA Lansing Legislative event October 16

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- An e-invite will be circulated to both houses on behalf of the Representatives 3 weeks before the event takes place
- Timeline- 11:30 am to 1:30 pm to give chance for Legislators to come in and out between sessions
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Meeting with Global Detroit

Global Detroit is running their Global Entrepreneur-In-Residence (Global EIR) Program to enhance economic collaboration and innovation in Michigan with Middle Eastern American Entrepreneurs.

Middle Eastern immigrants have the highest entrepreneurship rate at 21.3% compared to any group in the United States according to a study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Global EIR enables international student graduates and immigrant entrepreneurs a unique visa pathway along with the opportunity to launch their startup business in Southeast Michigan, while working in ways that further the educational mission of a Michigan university. The Global EIR program is one of fourteen programs in the U.S. that have successfully helped scores of immigrant founders launch startups over the past half-decade.

As a collaborative partner with Global Detroit and Global EIR, Global Detroit would like to collaborate with CMEAA to support in helping recruit and identify high-skilled, Middle Eastern entrepreneurs in STEM fields who seek to launch their business in Michigan and/or the U.S. Together, we can build economic bridges and empower immigrant entrepreneurs in Michigan.

Looking for America Dinner

- Represented CMEAA in Looking for America Dinner at the Detroit Historical Museum
- Round table dinner included local Detroit Artists, high school students, and various bi-partisans organizations

As background, Philippa Hughes began organizing small cross-political dinners in D.C. after the 2016 election, which culminated last October in curating an art exhibit about immigration in the Heurich House Museum and organizing a dinner for 50 people from across the political spectrum to discuss immigration. The art exhibit was a jumping off point for a conversation about what it means to be an American. That event led to partnering with New American



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Economy and the School of Public Affairs at American University to organize “Looking For America,” a series of dinners + art shows + conversation in six cities across America, including Detroit.

Local artists in each city will be asked to answer this question: “What does it mean to be American in your community?” The purpose of these dinners is to gain more understanding between people who might not normally meet using art as a frame for the conversations. They aren’t trying to persuade anyone of a position, only make connections and build empathy.

New American Appreciation Gala 2020

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- Initial confirmation on September 28, 2020 from the Marriott Renaissance
- Will keep you posted as we confirm the dates with our Governor and align with the rest of the ethnic Commissions.



Legislative Update- Director Karen Phillippi

State legislation:

- 1) HB4724: Creates a new “Law Enforcement Information Sharing Act” and prohibits the use of state and local law enforcement resources for the enforcement of federal immigration laws. This bill was introduced on 6/13/19, and has been referred to the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security.
- 2) HB4725: Amends the code of criminal procedure to eliminate “stop-and-frisk” policies except for investigative purposes, if there is reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, or if there is suspicion that the suspect is armed and dangerous. This bill was introduced on 6/13/19, and has been referred to the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security.
- 3) HB4726: Creates new “standards for responding to federal immigration holds” act and prohibits law enforcement from detaining individuals on the basis of federal immigration holds. This bill was introduced on 6/13/19, and has been referred to the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security.
- 4) HB4727: Creates new “nonprofit legal organization contract act” and establishes legal aid for individuals in deportation proceedings. This bill was introduced on 6/13/19, and has been referred to the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security.
- 5) HB4679: Requires US citizenship or permanent resident status for loan eligibility under the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966. This bill was introduced on 5/28/19 and has been referred to the House committee on Financial Services.
- 6) SB382 and SB383/HB4083 and 4090: Creates the “County Sanctuary Policy Prohibition Act” which prohibits counties from enacting or enforcing certain immigration rules, and creates the “Local Government Sanctuary Policy Prohibition Act” to do the same for local governments. These bills were introduced on 6/19/19 and have been referred to Senate Government Operations committee. (MONA submitted a card of opposition to this legislation at the committee hearing.)
- 7) SB45: Requires the state/state departments to create a language access plan. This bill was introduced on 1/22/19 and has been referred to the Senate Government Operations committee.

Federal updates:

On 8/14/2019, the US Dept of Homeland Security issued the final rule changing the Public Charge policy. An overview of the changes can be found at:

<https://cliniclegal.org/resources/dhs-finalizes-public-charge-rule>.



National lawsuits or coalitions which Michigan AG has joined:

- 1) Michigan AG Dana Nessel has joined with 21 other state AGs to oppose the restriction of asylum process access: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-92297_92299-504943--,00.html.
- 2) Michigan AG Dana Nessel has joined with 12 other state AGs in a lawsuit against the U.S. Dept of Homeland Security regarding the new DHS public charge rule: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-92297_47203-504861--,00.html.
- 3) Michigan AG Dana Nessel has joined a coalition of 20 AGs to keep immigrant children safe in civil detention: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-92297_47203-501576--,00.html.

News Update:

- 1) Governor Whitmer favors driver's licenses for all Michiganders: <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2019/08/02/whitmer-undocumented-immigrants-drivers-licenses/1898066001/>



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Burton Memorial Tower | University of Michigan
881 North University Avenue | Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1011

UMS (University Musical Society) Proposal to the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs May 22, 2019

UMS (University Musical Society) respectfully requests support from the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs (CMEAA) for a three-year partnership with the Commission to spotlight, highlight, and promote Middle Eastern American (MEA) culture through performances and related educational events to be offered to the general public in Southeast Michigan.

Support is requested at \$20,000/year for the next three UMS seasons:

- 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22. Plans for each year include:
 - 2019-20 – Presentations and planning: UMS will present two sets of performances featuring Middle Eastern American artists and carry out other community building activities:
 - o January 2020: “As Far As My Fingertips Take Me,” where audience members listen to the story of two Syrian refugees who traveled from Damascus to Sweden while an illustrator maps their journey by drawing it on the audience member’s arm. “Fingertips” is presented in collaboration with the Arab American National Museum (AANM) and will be installed for a week in both Ann Arbor and at the Museum in Dearborn. The work can be experienced in either English or Arabic.
 - o March 2020: A concert by the Tarek Yamani Trio, led by Lebanese American musician Yamani, whose music is a fusion between Black American jazz and classical Arabic music.
 - o Date TBD: UMS will partner with AANM to co-promote a performance at the Museum by an MEA performing artist, to be selected in the coming months.
 - o At several points over the course of the year, UMS will convene a community council, comprised of CMEAA members and others of the regional Middle Eastern American community, to help guide planning around a more extensive Arab Arts Series in 2020-21 (below). UMS has already consulted about the project with former and current UMS Board members Wadad Abed and Abe Jarjoura, both of whom have strong connections to UMS and to regional MEA communities.
 - 2020-21 – Arab Arts Series: UMS will present a series of 5-7 performances featuring Middle Eastern and MEA performers, showcasing the rich diversity that exists in the arts of Arab/Middle Eastern nations including diversity in genre, geography, culture, traditional and contemporary performance, and other factors. Public performances will be accompanied by learning and community activities that will include daytime performances for regional K-12 classrooms, in-class visits and lectures at area universities, public artist interviews, and other events, all designed to provide context and engage as many Michiganders as possible.
 - 2021-22 – Continuation and evaluation of presentations: UMS will continue to present Middle Eastern and MEA artists, and will evaluate progress with the community council with an eye toward planning for future programs. Our goal is to highlight and celebrate the culture and artistry that exists in the Middle East and among Middle Eastern American artists and art forms, and to showcase one of Michigan’s most vibrant communities. In addition to convening and celebrating the regional MEA community, the project aims to break down prejudices and bias against Middle Eastern Americans through community education, cultural exchange, and partnership.
- phone** 734.764.2538 | **fax** 734.647.1171 | **twitter** @UMSNews | **facebook** /UMSNews 2014
National Medal of Arts Recipient



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1- What organization or initiative would you like CMEAA to support?

Zaman - Building Ongoing Opportunities through Skills Training (BOOST) Workforce Development Program

2- Please provide a statement of need (definition of the issue the proposal is addressing)

STATEMENT OF NEED

Zaman's overarching goal is to help marginalized single females who are heads of households and mothers live sustainable lives. It targets crisis-stricken women with serious hurdles to employment. Divorce, abuse, mental illness, disability, and abandonment have touched most clients. Many of them speak English as a second language or identify as refugees. Nearly all live and care for their children on about \$10,000 a year. Increasing these women's earning potential is essential to lifting them and their families out of poverty and paving a more prosperous path for future generations

Zaman's work is concentrated in Inkster, Dearborn, and Dearborn Heights, urban areas bordering the city of Detroit. Data from March 2018 documents Inkster's unemployment rates as 7.5 percent, among the highest in Michigan. Conversely, rates in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights are among the lowest at 3.3 and 3.7 percent respectively. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, poverty rates in Inkster, Dearborn, and Dearborn Heights are 33.2, 29.1, and 19.2 percent respectively - all among the highest in the state. This suggests that while the unemployment rates in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights are low, many families are not earning wages high enough to lift them out of poverty.

The decline in Michigan's unemployment rate is challenging employers to find qualified workers to fill no fewer than 90,000 job vacancies, many in the manufacturing and service industries. The state's continued economic recovery could stall unless this problem is resolved.

The Department of Labor confirms that training and recruiting women for non-traditional occupations is one solution to the labor force issue. Through its workforce development programs, Zaman is doing just that, addressing both the need for qualified workers and clients' desire for self-reliance.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

Many workforce preparedness programs emphasize skill development without taking into account the full set of inter-related solutions necessary for students to be successful. This oversight has the greatest impact on people with low income and women who are more likely to face barriers that disrupt their training. Building Ongoing Opportunities through Skills Training (BOOST) was designed to address the connection between employment and poverty by incorporating the supports students need to remain stable throughout their instruction.



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BOOST, Zaman’s apprentice program, consists of two hours each of English acquisition (ESL) and vocational training in sewing or culinary arts. ESL instruction improves fluency, reading, writing, and conversation as well as offers civics education and college/career ready activities. The sewing program’s objective is to prepare participants for sewing-related work and assists them in finding employment. Instruction includes basic mending and alterations, following patterns, custom tailoring and use of industrial machines. Culinary arts teaches basic and advanced skills in food preparation and safe handling. Each program integrates enrichment courses to develop customer service, critical thinking, and self-management skills. Classes are offered twice weekly for 33 weeks.

When a student is accepted into BOOST, they are assigned to a case worker who ensures that lack of access to basic necessities doesn’t interfere with learning. Zaman provides them with food, clothing, utility assistance, and benefits enrollment. The organization struggles, however, to meet the demand for help with childcare, rent, and transportation. Invariably, attrition, tardiness, and absences are due to clients’ inability to pay for one or more of these needs. Statewide and regional policy discussions (especially around transportation and childcare) are ongoing, but changes aren’t happening fast enough, which is why Zaman is stepping in to fill the gap. If awarded, CMEAA funds would be used to provide rent, transportation, and day care assistance as well as other resources that minimize barriers to successfully completing Zaman’s apprenticeship programs

3- How much money should CMEAA allocate to this initiative and over what time period?

Zaman is requesting \$22,000 for the period spanning 11.01.19 – 07.31.20.

4- Please indicate the number of projected recipients impacted by the program.

Directly, 100 women will be impacted by this program, but that does not take into account their children and other family members who will benefit from the food and household goods clients receive. Families also benefit from the self-confidence, knowledge, and skills the matriarch attains over the course of the program.

5- Please break down the cost allocation.

Direct Family Assistance

Utilities	\$5,000	\$500 per family
Rent/Short Term Shelter	\$6,000	\$600 per family
Childcare	\$5,000	\$500 per family
Transportation Assistance	\$1,500	\$150 per family
Household Necessities	\$2,000	\$200 per family
Mattresses	<u>\$3,000</u>	\$300 per family

Total Expenditures **\$22,500**

6- How does the mission of this initiative relate to CMEAA’s mission?



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CMEAA's mission to empower, promote and advance the Middle Eastern American community in the State of Michigan is well aligned with Zaman's goal to end intergenerational poverty. In 2018, 63 percent of the women served identified as Arabic. The assistance and skills they receive empower them to take positive next steps leading to sustainability. Their growth and independence are witnessed by their children, who will feel equally confident to make choices that only enhance the family's stability. Ultimately, the cycle of poverty is broken, improving the overall state of the Middle Eastern community.

7- Please provide background information about the organization.

The most effective way to break the cycle of generational poverty is to help families realize opportunities through stabilization and skills training. Under the guidance of a caseworker, clients turning to Zaman in crisis or extreme poverty complete a self-assessment survey identifying their immediate needs and longer-term personal goals. Zaman furnishes material items (e.g., food, shelter, clothing, utility assistance, school supplies) for up to one year to stabilize clients and their families. Once stabilized, they can enroll in literacy and job skills training to help them obtain reliable income.

Zaman's story is one of vision-guided growth, beginning in 1996. Zaman CEO and founder, Najah Bazy, encountered desperate poverty in metro Detroit while making house calls as a registered nurse to refugees and immigrants. Starting with family members and friends, Bazy mobilized a grassroots network of donors willing to provide basic necessities to these marginalized families. This humble initiative grew steadily to become Zaman International. In 2018, Zaman served 34,395 people in southeast Michigan, distributed 170,452 pounds of food, and provided 13,141 free meals to children through a summer feeding program. It's also important to note that 91 percent of every donated dollar directly supported program.

8- Would CMEAA's funds be supporting a new initiative or support an ongoing, pre-established initiative?

Basic needs provision has been part of BOOST since its launch in 2016.

9- How will the services be sustained once CMEAA's funds run out?

Operating with an annual budget of \$1.6M, Zaman uses a multi-channel approach to fundraising that includes special events, individuals, and grants from foundations, corporations, and government. BOOST and the basic needs programs are Zaman's mission, and the organization continues to build its fundraising capacity to sustain them.

10- If CMEAA does not grant the total requested amount, is there an alternative resource available to secure the remaining amount needed for the initiative?



Zaman has funding requests pending with the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, Bank of America, Ally Financial Foundation, and Islamic Relief Fund USA. Based on interactions with these funders, it's highly likely one or more will be approved.

11- Will the granted organization provide progress reports on the outcome of the funding as requested by the commission?

Yes, Zaman's current data collection practices will meet the committee's reporting expectations. Metrics are based on the organization's mission, vision, and strategic objectives. The qualitative measures illustrate the change in participants' feelings about themselves, their comfort level in helping their children with homework, and willingness to deepen social connections.

Quantitative data collection is extensive. Zaman warehouses information on the number of:

- Clients served
- Training hours delivered
- Volunteer hours contributed
- Pounds of food distributed
- People securing employment
- Points of service delivered
- Value of household goods, clothing, and rent assistance delivered
- Donors - in-kind and monetary
- Referrals made
- Orphans served
- Active clients
- Average household income

Collecting data has a dual purpose. First, to inform the staff about the efficacy of interventions and what adjustments need to be made to achieve optimal outcomes. Second, to demonstrate that Zaman's model of combining wraparound services with workforce development is the most promising way to transform the lives of marginalized women. Progress sometimes feels insignificant, but if half-dozen women secure stable employment that allows them to improve the quality of life for their families, it's a win. Documenting also creates buy-in and develops champions for Zaman's mission and creates credibility among funders.



Chaldean Cultural Center and Museum Proposal to the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs

The Chaldean Cultural Center (CCC) was formally established in February, 2003. A primary goal of the CCC was to build a boutique museum covering over 5000 years of Chaldean history, part of western civilization. The Chaldeans are Christians who come from ancient Mesopotamia and immigrated to the U. S. at the turn of the 20th century. The early immigrants came in search of better social and economic opportunities while later immigrants, especially those today, are coming to escape religious persecution. The pioneers came to Detroit and went into the grocery business. From humble beginnings, they established themselves in the economic community of Detroit. Chaldeans are entrepreneurial and have largely owned their businesses, starting out as grocers and then expanding into owning large supermarkets, gourmet food stores, gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants, hotels, etc. The Chaldean community is multi-generational and many children and grandchildren of these pioneers are still in the food delivery system. The Chaldeans play a vital economic role, primarily in southeast Michigan, and the community continues to grow. It is estimated that there are over 180,000 Chaldeans in the tri-county Detroit area and they own over 33,000 businesses.

The museum has 5 galleries for visitors to see. The first Gallery is Ancient Mesopotamia and has artifacts such as cylinder seals used as accounting tools and clay tablets showing cuneiform writing. An authentic replica of Hammurabi's Code of Laws is on display. It was purchased from the Louvre Museum. The Faith & Church Gallery highlights the fact that the Chaldeans were converted to Christianity from its beginnings and they still speak the Aramaic language used in Christ's time. The Village Gallery has artifacts and costumes from the towns in the Nineveh Plain of northern Iraq where the Chaldeans lived. There are farming tools, cooking utensils, and clothing from the early 1900s. The Journey to America Gallery describes how the Chaldeans came to America and why they specifically settled in the Detroit area. The last Gallery is Chaldeans Today showing the diaspora of Chaldeans throughout the world.

However, there remains a lack of knowledge about the Chaldean People. The CCC Museum, located in West Bloomfield, Michigan, is dedicated to providing insights into the rich cultural heritage and contributions of the Chaldean people. The CCC Museum, which officially opened in September, 2017, is the only one in the world to tell the unique history and culture of the Chaldean people. The museum serves three purposes. One is to honor those Chaldean pioneers who were the first to come to America. A second purpose is to allow the children, grandchildren, and future generations to know and embrace their legacy. A third purpose is to tell our history to the larger, non-Chaldean community through tours and presentations with schools, corporate and community groups, interfaith organizations, public officials, and to be open to the public at large.



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To foster an understanding of our sometimes misunderstood culture, programs, sponsored events, exhibitions, and multiple learning resources play an integral part of the CCC's activities. The CCC continues to participate with the programs of New Detroit, for example, which is an organization that seeks to breakdown ethnic and racial misunderstandings and stereotypes. The Chaldean Cultural Center/Museum is seeking \$40,000.00 from the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs (CMEEA). We are asking for \$20,000.00 per year for two years. Funding will allow the CCC to continue to develop and purchase materials that provide resources needed to have school groups visit the Museum to learn more about the development of civilizations from ancient times to today. The school groups would include elementary, middle school, high school, and post-secondary students. One focus of this grant request is to coordinate Social Studies curriculum for secondary school students based on the galleries and exhibits contained in the Museum. The curriculums would align with the State of Michigan Standards for Grade Level Expectations in the various Social Studies fields such as World History, Civics, Geography, and Contemporary World Issues. During the 1st semester of the 2019/2020 school year, schools in Oakland County would be contacted because of proximity to the Chaldean Museum in West Bloomfield. This would be expanded to include schools from Wayne & Macomb counties as the school year continues. Funding would also be used to help with transportation costs for students to visit the Museum, if necessary. Grant monies would help to supply learning materials such as activity books and work sheets dealing, for example, on Ancient Mesopotamia (i.e. Kids Discover Magazine). These materials could be used on site or provided to the teachers for follow-up activities. The grant money would be used to reinforce and enhance what is being taught in the schools by providing additional resources such as books, videos, and learning an ancient alphabet - whatever is appropriate for the grade level of the students. In the summer, 2020, there will be an evaluation of the programs and materials that were used and modifications will be made where appropriate. The CCC would also like to develop a mobile museum whereby artifacts can be taken to the schools or other sites, as appropriate.

Although a primary focus of this grant proposal is for students, monies would also be used for other initiatives sponsored by the CCC such as seminars, guest lectures, panel discussions, and book launches featuring books written by Chaldeans, about the Chaldeans, or on the Middle East in general. We have had such events in the past. The speakers have included Dr. Amir Harrak, a professor of Syriac studies at the University of Toronto and Dr. Emily Porter, a British professor who spoke about a book entitled, Memoirs of a Babylonian Princess written by a 19th century Chaldean woman. We host events for various community groups and we are always looking for ways to expand our outreach and to continue to improve upon the relationships we already have. To date in 2019, we have sponsored two book launches, After Saturday Comes Sunday, By Susan Adelman and 100 Questions & Answers About Chaldean Americans, published by Joe Grimm, professor of Journalism at Michigan State University, and his students. Within



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the Chaldean community and the greater Middle Eastern community, there are many talented artists in both the visual and performing arts. The CCC would like to showcase these artists, as well. The CCC will continue sponsoring events as part of its programming initiatives and grant money from CMEAA will support these efforts.

The Mission statement of the CCC is as follows: **The Chaldean Cultural Center (CCC) and the CCC Museum, celebrates and explores the extraordinary history, arts, traditions and contributions of the Chaldean people from ancient times to the present, serving as a repository of our collected history and stories. By forging relationships with other educational and cultural institutions, it not only nurtures pride within the Chaldean community, but also promotes greater understanding between communities.** This statement is in alignment with the mission of CMEAA which also seeks to promote and advance the Middle Eastern communities in Michigan which includes the Chaldean community.

The Chaldean People belong to a long list of Peoples who have experienced persecution and genocide creating now a Chaldean Diaspora. The Museum seeks to inform the public about what the experience was and is like for the Chaldean people in the metro Detroit area and throughout the world. In 2018, the CCC had over 2,000 visitors, primarily consisting of groups who toured the Museum and wanted to learn more about the Chaldean people. It is hoped that these numbers will continue to grow.

The CMEAA Grant request for \$20,000 per year for two years (\$40,000.00 total) would be used for the following purposes to support Educational Programming for school & community groups as well as individual guests to the CCC and its Museum:

- Printing or purchase costs for books, brochures, curriculum materials that can be used with elementary, secondary, and post-secondary school groups, as well as the general public
- Postage/Mailing of letters and pamphlets to schools and organizations
- Maintenance of CCC Museum/Equipment/Media for Tour Groups
- Funding for special exhibits
- Funding for special presentations including guest speakers
- Maintaining a research library in the CCC office which houses books in Aramaic, English, and Arabic that deal primarily with Chaldean history but also some Middle Eastern history
- Maintaining computers in the CCC office that students and other visitors can use to browse through the archives (artifacts, photographs, books, documents) of the CCC as additional learning resources

The CCC, a non-profit 501©3 organization, has received funding in the past from the federal government and the State of Michigan, as well as from philanthropic foundations, corporate

donations, individual donors, and through special events. The CCC will strive to continue its mission by being able to economically sustain itself through continued fund-raising efforts. The hope is that it will continue to grow by adding to its collection, whether through artifacts, photos,



**Environmental Health Research to Action
Proposal for funding**

To:



COMMISSION ON
MIDDLE EASTERN
AMERICAN AFFAIRS
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Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs (CMEAA)

Environmental Health Research to Action

Environmental Health Research to Action (EHRA, pronounced 'era') for Air Quality is a community-based research project intended to address cumulative environmental exposures and related health inequities in Dearborn and nearby communities.

EHRA Steering Committee

The EHRA Steering Committee is comprised of the following representatives:

Mahdi Ali, American Moslem Society
 A Baleed Almaklani, Yemen American Benevolent Society
 Karima Alwishah, Community Organizer At-Large (and Project Coordinator)
 Dennis Archambault, Authority Health
 Farah Erzouki, ACCESS
 Sara Gleicher, Healthy Dearborn, Beaumont
 Nicholas Leonard, Great Lakes Environmental Law Center
 Adel A. Mozip, Community Organizer At-Large
 Dave Norwood, City of Dearborn
 Carmel Price, U of M-Dearborn
 Natalie Sampson, U of M-Dearborn
 Susan Stanley, Dearborn Public Schools

Background

Today, health inequities are well documented in the U.S., but few studies specifically look at environmental health exposures and outcomes among predominantly Arab American communities such as Southeast Dearborn. Immigrants and refugees from Arab nations have often been left out of health disparities research altogether in the U.S. Many epidemiological studies rely on secondary population-level datasets that, mirroring the U.S. Census, do not collect racial or ethnic data in a way that recognizes Arab Americans as a separate group with a category such as 'Middle Eastern or North African.

Recent research in Metro Detroit assesses the extent to which negative environmental exposures and associated health risks are disproportionately experienced, particularly by communities of color, but this research does not explicitly account for the experience of Arab Americans. Local and state initiatives are underway across the U.S. to develop cumulative risk indices to capture environmental justice concerns in a systematic way. In Southeast Michigan, Community Action to Promote Healthy Environments draws on these models to account

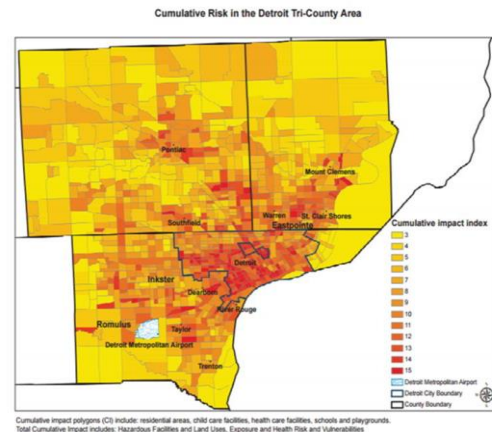


Figure 1. Cumulative Impact Index across Metro Detroit, which accounts for air pollution, hazardous land uses, and population vulnerabilities across the area. (Source: [CAPHE](#)) Also see: Schulz, Mentz, Sampson, et al., (2016) Social and physical environments and the distribution of risk: A case example from Detroit. *DuBois Review*, 13(2):285-304. doi:10.1017/S1742058X1600016



for cumulative risks in the development of their tri-county (i.e., Wayne, Macomb, Oakland) cumulative risk index. Community and academic partners mapped the proximity of sensitive populations to hazardous land uses, their exposure to air pollutants and associated health risks, and social vulnerabilities, as well as the resulting cumulative risk index that combines proximity, exposure, and vulnerability. While the data do not offer a clear story about cumulative exposures for Arab Americans, analyses clearly show that Southeast Dearborn is among the geographies with the greatest exposure to physical environmental exposures and associated health risks in the region.

The EHRA Academy

Most factors associated with environmental health inequities are beyond any individual's ability to control, and policy advocacy is needed to address the structural changes required to eliminate inequities, such as those experienced in Southeast Dearborn. In response the EHRA Steering Committee has designed the EHRA Academy. During summer 2018, EHRA was funded by UM-Dearborn and the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research to pilot an intensive 6-session summer experience for 20 youth (16-18 yrs. old), primarily from South Dearborn. The goal was to prepare them with basic knowledge and skills in environmental health and policy advocacy, specifically related to air pollution as a community-identified priority issue. Hosted in partnership with the American Moslem Society, this entailed interactive sessions, including:

- A bus tour with City of Dearborn's Sustainability Coordinator and Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition's State Coordinator to learn the basics of local environmental health and justice issues,
- A policy advocacy training with community leaders and scholars at the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center and Green Door Initiative to gain skills in power mapping and campaign development,
- An environmental health literacy training with faculty at UM-Dearborn to gain knowledge and skills in plain language and risk communication science,
- An air pollution policy session with the Interim Director of the Great Lakes Environmental Law Center to gain knowledge in air pollution epidemiology, policy, and monitoring,
- Practice with handheld air monitors with a community science expert at the University of Michigan Shapiro Design Lab to gain skills in data collection, air monitoring technology, and data interpretation, and
- A closing ceremony with community leaders and EHRA SC members, including a keynote from Ismael Ahmed, co-founder of ACCESS, former Director of ACCESS and the Michigan Department of Human Services, and former Associate Provost of Metropolitan Impact at the University of Michigan-Dearborn to gain access to a larger network of community leaders.

The program was evaluated by youth through pre-, post- and daily assessment surveys. Fellows reported a positive experience, enjoyed the interactive pedagogy, indicated high intentions of engaging civically, and showed marked increases in knowledge related to air pollution and



EHRA Fellows after completing an Environmental Justice tour of industry & transportation infrastructure in Dearborn, River Rouge, and SW Detroit

environmental health. Two suggestions emerged that inform this proposal: more community science and on-going opportunities for research-to-action with community and academic leaders. It is important to note that 74 applications were received to fill 20 available slots, suggesting this is viewed as a worthwhile endeavor by the community. In late June 2019, we administered an alumni survey and will be analyzing long-term impacts as well.



Justin Schell, UM Shapiro Design Lab, teaching EHRA Fellows how to sync Airbeam air sensors to their phones for data collection (left); EHRA Fellows role playing policy advocacy strategies after power mapping with Donele Wilkins, Green Door Initiative (right)

During Summer 2019, we have expanded the EHRA Academy in two key ways:

1. **EHRA Mentorship Program:** We are piloting a mentor program to build local youth capacity and leadership during and after the EHRA Academy. Teams of 3-5 fellows are matched with professionals in the Dearborn or greater Detroit area who have knowledge of air pollution, environmental justice, public health, government, policy advocacy, or experience working with youth. The mentors are a sounding board for youth to get their professional and educational questions answered and supporting teams in identifying, arranging, and preparing a public presentation (e.g. city council, public hearing, school board, coalition meeting) within 6 months of EHRA Academy. They are encouraged to connect EHRA students to additional resources and people and provide feedback on career and educational materials (e.g. personal statements, resumes).
2. **EHRA Indicators Project:** Participatory mapping is a type of community science used widely to engage lay persons in making observations on their local environment. Rooted in conservation biology, it has been increasingly adapted as a powerful tool for communities working to address environmental health and justice issues. During the 2019 Academy, we are facilitating a participatory mapping sessions with community leaders and youth which will inform where youth collect air monitoring data. In 2018, EHRA obtained four Airbeam2's by Aircasting, which 2018 EHRA Fellows used to track Particulate Matter 2.5, temperature, and humidity. While low-cost air pollution sensors cannot be used for regulatory purposes, increasingly communities are using air pollution sensors to identify hotspots, investigate local exposure sources, educate community members, and advocate to decision-makers with data (see: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/environmental-health-sciences/coec/air-sensor-stories-workshop/workshop-materials.aspx>). Through the use of air sensors, the EHRA Indicators Project focuses largely on air quality as a well-documented and community-prioritized concern in Metro Detroit, particularly South Dearborn. After the Academy we will be creating an

accessible platform using Storymaps to host and publicly communicate EHRA Academy community science activities, including data collection through handheld air sensors and participatory mapping during the EHRA Academy, as well as interpretation and dissemination of data in English and Arabic.

The 2019 Academy had 200 applicants, primarily from Dearborn, with over 1/3 representing communities affected by disproportionate environmental burdens in zip code 48120.



Group photo after closing certificate ceremony with Ismael Ahmed and EHRA SC members (left); EHRA Fellows presenting at *Cross-Cultural Interaction to Achieve Environmental Justice in Metro-Detroit* on October 30, 2018 (right)