ABOUT AANM

Since opening its doors in 2005, the Arab American National Museum (AANM) has remained the nation's only cultural institution to document, preserve and present the history, culture and contributions of Arab Americans. Located in Dearborn, Michigan, amid one of the largest concentrations of Arab Americans in the United States, AANM presents exhibitions and a wide range of public programs in Michigan and in major cities across the United States.

AANM is one of just four Michigan Affiliates of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. AANM is a founding member of Detroit-area arts collective CultureSource as well as the Immigration and Civil Rights Network of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. Most recently, AANM was selected to join the National Performance Network.

AANM is an institution of ACCESS, the Dearborn, Michigan-based human service agency founded in 1971.

At a gala ceremony in Amman, Jordan, on Nov. 25, 2017, the Arab American National Museum was named a TAKREEM Laureate and honored with the prestigious initiative's Cultural Excellence Award. Founded in 2009 by veteran Lebanese TV presenter and producer Ricardo Karam, TAKREEM celebrates the accomplishments of Arab men and women who are making history in their own way. TAKREEM provides an alternative image of Arabs in the fields of science, culture, environment, education, humanitarian aid and economy – one that speaks of hard work, productivity, creativity, success and excellence, and one that offers both pride and inspiration to future generations.
Our donors and corporate sponsors for their commitment to our cause and for financing many of the Museum’s programs and activities.

The Friends of AANM committee, deftly led by the remarkable co-chairs Rajaa Saksouk and Raghad Farah, who organized and executed a most successful gala fundraiser.

The Arab American community, throughout the nation.

The many friends and supporters, of every color, ethnicity and national origin.

And last, but certainly not least, the highly dedicated and super capable staff of the Museum.

Your humble Board Chair,

Fawwaz Ulaby

In 2005, ACCESS inaugurated the Arab American National Museum with a vision of empowering Arab Americans to tell their story while also working to dispel stereotypes and counter misinformation. This singular institution, national in scope and perspective, sought to be responsive to our communities’ diverse needs while using arts and culture as a way of building and transforming communities. Guided by ACCESS’ bold idea that cultural institutions could play a vital role in advancing the wellness of communities, the work of AANM challenges us to consider – and reconsider – what it means to be a 21st century museum.

Over the past year, during a time when American society roiled in change and struggled to interpret core democratic values, the innovative work of AANM reached extraordinary new heights while remaining true to our mission. AANM traveling exhibitions crossed the nation and illuminated minds at major cultural institutions, including the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration and the New Americans Museum. Educational and public programming provided space for critical discourse that examined both American history and current events from a community-based perspective. Temporary exhibitions explored our intersectional identities and our relationships with the Arab World. And, place-based work brought scores of people in contact with Arab Americans through immersive programs including the Yalla Eat! Culinary Tours and our new Artists + Residents residency program. Taken together, we provided space, voice and information to elevate awareness of Arab Americans’ rich contributions to our society.

There is much good news reflected in the pages of this report. As you will see, there is growing public recognition of our work, cementing AANM’s reputation as a museum of excellence and impact and a trusted resource. The best news: you and others like you made all this possible, with your passion, financial and moral support, and advice and service to AANM. Thank you!

Warmest Regards

Devon Akmon
It’s in our DNA: the Arab American National Museum builds community through the arts. AANM programs bring new visitors to Arab-owned businesses; unite people through food, music and literature; and give creative entrepreneurs the tools they need to succeed.

Founded by AANM parent ACCESS in 1993 and managed by AANM since 2005, the Concert of Colors staged a joyous 25th anniversary festival in Midtown Detroit for music lovers from throughout southeastern Michigan. Among the standout performers at this free celebration of music from around the world were Las Cafeteras, Mokoomba and Martha Redbone. The 10th annual Don Was Detroit All-Star Revue, a recurring festival headliner, focused on music inspired by Detroit’s 1967 rebellion.

New to the Museum is The Growth Center, formerly a department of ACCESS. It offers entrepreneurial training programs in English and Arabic, microloans and other forms of support to creatives, immigrants and refugees in business development. Successful graduates include Dengulianga Julia Kapilango, a graphic designer who went on to create social media assets for M Cantina, a new Dearborn restaurant founded by New York City mixologist Junior Merino.

Media coverage from National Public Radio, NBC affiliate WDIV-TV and others plus enthusiastic word of mouth kept Yalla Eat! culinary walking tours top of mind. The spring-to-fall tours alternating between Warren and Michigan avenues in Dearborn introduced hundreds of people to Arab-owned businesses and to Arab cuisine and culture. Yalla Eat! expanded with an educational iftar during Ramadan and pop-up dinners at the Museum including A Taste of Marrakech with chef Layla Outita.

The Russell J. Ebeid Library & Resource Center provided critical recognition to the Arab American literary community through the 10th annual Arab American Book Award program. Held at Lebanese American University’s New York Academic Center, the program included readings by Nathalie Handal and Susan Muaddi Darraj and paid homage to the renowned literary history of New York’s Little Syria neighborhood, home to a vibrant community of early 20th-century writers including Kahlil Gibran, Ameen Rihani and Afifa Karam.

AANM returned to the annual convention of the Southern Federation of Syrian and Lebanese American Clubs, held in New Orleans, to collect more oral histories. AANM’s Family History Archive of Syrian and Lebanese Families in the American South now consists of 47 videos collected since 2014, viewable by the public online via the AANM collections. Each participant also received a DVD of their conversation.
World-class traveling exhibitions produced by AANM continued to generate community pride while enlightening viewers across the nation. The immigration-themed What We Carried: Fragments & Memories from Iraq and Syria made stops in Houston, Atlanta, Jacksonville and San Diego. The Museum’s inaugural traveling exhibition, Patriots & Peacemakers: Arab Americans in Service to Our Country, made its farewell stops in Flint and Lansing, MI, prior to its decommissioning.

Little Syria, NY: An Immigrant Community’s Life & Legacy garnered an audience of more than 300,000 when it landed at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration in New York City Oct. 1, 2016 to Jan. 9, 2017. In this storied venue, the rich history of America’s earliest concentrated Arab immigrant community was brought to life. All three traveling exhibitions placed the Arab American experience firmly in context with the greater American immigrant narrative.

Fueled by a $45,000 planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, AANM staff and humanities scholars conducted research aimed at updating the Museum’s permanent exhibits. Leading scholars working in San Diego, Detroit, Houston and Washington, D.C. generated post-9/11 demographic and cultural data and collected personal stories from recent immigrant and refugee communities, particularly those from countries in North Africa, who are underrepresented in both the Museum and scholarly programs. The findings were synthesized to draw up an interpretive plan that details recommendations for integration into the AANM’s collections, public programs and exhibitions.

AANM has achieved one of its original goals: becoming the premier resource for news media, government and others. As a known, trusted, reliable and responsive institution, the Museum has become a font of accurate information for local, regional, national and international media. Museum exhibitions and programs are covered frequently, while journalists regularly consult AANM as they seek community sources. This fiscal year, Museum programs and activities were covered by more than 1,000 media outlets. The Associated Press distributed more than one dozen AANM stories; coverage was also provided by CNN, NBC News and its Meet the Press program, ABC News, Al Jazeera, National Public Radio and Detroit’s two daily newspapers, among others.

Because of AANM’s sterling reputation as a forward-thinking, community-based institution, Museum staff were invited to share their knowledge and experience at major conferences including the Smithsonian Affiliations national conference; REMAP: Detroit presented by Arts in a Changing America; the National Association of Latino Arts + Culture’s Michigan conference; DeVos Institute of Arts Management; National Council for Public History; and CityLab 4, presented by the Aspen Institute, Bloomberg Philanthropies and The Atlantic magazine.
Creative excellence at AANM has achieved a significant new height. The Museum’s largest-ever exhibition, a timely multimedia group show called Epicenter X, brought compelling contemporary art from Saudi Arabia to Dearborn. Presented in collaboration with the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture, it was the first such art exhibition in the Midwest. Nugamshi (pictured on the report cover) entranced a live audience with a demonstration of “calligraffiti.” Another Epicenter X artist, Ayman Yossri Daydban, became AANM’s Artists + Residents first resident artist, living and working at Artspace, across Michigan Avenue from the Museum.

The Artists + Residents program also joined forces with AANM’s Global Fridays series, resulting in several groundbreaking performances. Iraqi American playwright/actor Heather Raffo presented a staged reading of her play, Noura - a reworking of Ibsen’s A Doll’s House. Playwright Ismail Khalidi’s Dead Are My People was delivered by Noor Theatre in a staged reading, with musical accompaniment by Hadi Eldebek. Khalidi’s and Raffo’s time in Dearborn as resident artists —workshopping with community members and conducting research — was an important step in their creative process.

AANM’s most spectacular musical endeavor to date had its world premiere before an audience of over 1,000 at the Detroit Institute of Arts. The Museum commissioned the National Arab Orchestra to create an original score for a series of silent Egyptian films by the pioneering Egyptian director Mohamed Bayoumi. Co-commissioned by the National Performance Network and the City of Chicago, the score featured nine musicians playing both traditional Arabic and contemporary instruments. The combination of historical instrumentation and silent films never before seen in North America created an entirely new experience.

A completely sold-out Global Fridays Winter/Spring 2017 season exemplified curatorial excellence, with a spectacular lineup of performers from around the world dazzling local audiences. From the funk rock band Sinkane to Sudanese hip hop artist Oddisee, Global Fridays became metro Detroit’s go-to venue to catch trending performers, with many artists making their Detroit or Michigan premieres.
Some of the most riveting, impactful programs at AANM revolve around dialogue that examines and responds to contemporary issues through the lenses of history, art and culture. Respected historian and author Dr. Thomas Sugrue (The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit) was the keynote speaker and moderator at the 25th Concert of Colors Forum on Community, Culture and Race, which, like the annual music festival itself, focused in 2017 on the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Detroit Rebellion. Panelists included activist/poet Tawana “Honeycomb” Petty; University of Michigan professor Dr. Gloria House; Ahmed Abuznaid, director of the National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC) at ACCESS; and journalist Martina Guzman. The Annex @ AANM welcomed a capacity audience, with overflow accommodated in the Museum itself.

AANM’s annual 9/11 Anniversary Town Hall carried the theme Executive Orders: Japanese Internment & the Muslim Ban and was presented in conjunction with a Global Fridays performance by the Grateful Crane Ensemble, a Japanese American theater troupe based in California. Last year saw both the enactment of the Muslim travel ban and the 75th anniversary of the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. In this town hall, leaders from the Japanese, Arab and Muslim American communities – including former WWII intern Mary Kamidoi – reflected on the disturbing parallels and implications for our future. This at-capacity event was staged with support from a number of community partners including Wayne State University’s Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights and its Detroit Equity Action Lab.

AANM played host to a taping of BuzzFeed’s highly acclaimed See Something Say Something, a podcast where guests gather to drink chai and talk about being Muslim in America via stories and conversations about politics and pop culture. A live audience watched as host Ahmed Ali Akbar interviewed Saladin Ahmed – the Hugo-nominated author of Throne of the Crescent Moon and writer for Marvel’s Black Bolt series – and moderated a panel with racial justice activist Asha Noor; University of Michigan professor Evelyn Alsultany; and Namira Islam of the Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative.

Arab American storytellers shared personal tales centered on emotionally charged topics including identity, culture and politics during the launch of AANM’s Hikayat series. Presented in partnership with Palestinians Podcast, these emotional personal narratives gave audiences a sense of how today’s pressing issues are affecting individuals on a daily basis, promoting greater understanding. Free storytelling workshops provided tools and encouragement to community members seeking to share their own experiences with others.
With roots in the 22 nations of the Arab World, Arab Americans are culturally diverse. But much like America, Arab Americans’ social categorizations – how they self-identify when it comes to race, class, gender, age, faith or other identifiers – also cover a wide range. AANM offers both a platform for expression and a safe place to explore related issues, promoting empowerment through inclusion.

Forty teens – 20 from Dearborn and 20 from Palestine – came together in a cultural exchange around cameras in Reel Stories: Empowering Young Women Through the Art of Filmmaking. The American Alliance of Museums helped fund AANM’s participation in Museums Connect, an initiative of the U.S. Department of State. In partnership with the Palestinian Heritage Museum in Jerusalem, AANM created Reel Stories to empower young women by improving their confidence, adding to their accomplishments and encouraged them to use their new creative skills to document and share stories of marginalized girls and women. Students traveled between Dearborn and Jerusalem and their films are now being presented at community film festivals.

The thoughts and perspectives of young Arab Americans are now being shared with “America’s museum,” Washington, D.C.’s Smithsonian Institution, via AANM. As an Affiliate of the Smithsonian, AANM staff were charged with identifying candidates to join the Smithsonian Youth Advisory Council. Two Dearborn high school students who are best friends – Malak Wazne and Fatiha Abu-Omarah – emerged from the Reel Stories filmmaking program to join the Council as two of just 25 high school students who will advise on topics such as technology in museums and how museums can address societal conflicts.

AANM was the only institution in Michigan to participate in The Seventh Art Stand, a nationwide act of cinematic solidarity against Islamophobia. AANM offered a free screening of the 2016 film The Stray, written and directed by award-winning filmmaker Musa Syeed, the story of a Somali refugee who wanders the streets of Minneapolis with a canine sidekick. Taking place during the entire month of May 2017, The Seventh Art Stand involved a coalition of movie theaters, community centers and museums in 25 states that screened films focused on nations impacted by the executive orders that barred travelers from Muslim-majority countries from entering the U.S.

AANM teamed up with illMuslims for the first Be Social: Detroit, an evening for millennial Muslims to connect with peers, develop a sense of community and enjoy the latest creative output of Muslim American artists and retailers. illMuslims is a social and creative platform for millennial Muslims that hosts quarterly social events in major U.S. cities. Food, fellowship, music and art, along with the illMuslims brand, attracted a new audience to AANM.
Partnerships and collaborations are essential to the ongoing success of AANM. We salute the many individuals and organizations listed here, whose major contributions amplified the impact of AANM’s work in its hometown, state and in major metropolitan areas nationwide with substantial Arab American communities. Alif shukran (1,000 thanks)!

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

ACCESS, Dearborn
ACCESS of Western New York, Lackawanna, New York
ALIF Institute, Atlanta
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Mich.
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Detroit
American Indian Health & Family Services, Detroit
Ann Arbor Palestine Film Festival
Ann Arbor (Mich.) Public Schools
Arab-American Cultural and Community Center, Houston
Arab American Studies Association
Arab Student Association, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
Arts In A Changing America
Baldwin Wallace University, Berea, Ohio
Building Museum, New York
CJAM-FM, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
Center for Arab American Studies at University of Michigan – Dearborn
Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit
Chelsea District Library, Chelsea, Mich.
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Mich.
Complex Movements, Detroit
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Mich.
Culturrunners, London
Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET)
Detroit Equity Action Lab
Detroit Free Press
Dearborn Historical Museum/Dearborn Historical Society
Dearborn Public Library
Detroit Historical Museum
Detroit Institute of Arts
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Digital Diaspora Family Reunion
Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration, New York
Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, Dearborn
Grateful Crane Ensemble, Sierra Madre, Cal.
Henry Ford Centennial Library, Dearborn
Henry Ford College, Dearborn
Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn
Holbrook Elementary School, Hamtramck, Mich.
HYPE Athletics, Dearborn
Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), Washington, D.C.
Islamic Center of Detroit
Jacksonville Public Library, Jacksonville, Fla.
Japanese American Citizens League, San Francisco
Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles
Kids Against Hunger, Mich.
Kresge Arts in Detroit
Lansing Community College, Lansing, Mich.
Latin Americans for Social & Economic Development (LA SED), Detroit
Livingston (Mich.) Diversity Council
Metroville College of New York
Michigan.com, Detroit
Michigan Science Center, Detroit
Michigan Theater, Ann Arbor
Mocha Café, Dearborn
National Performance Network, New Orleans
Noor Theatre, New York
The Monitor, Hazel Park, Mich.
Museum of American Finance, New York
Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative, Detroit
New Americans Museum, San Diego
New Africa, Inc.
Northville (Mich.) Public Schools
Oakland University, Rochester, Mich.
Palestinians Podcast
Rackham Program in Public Scholarship at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
The Scarab Club, Detroit
Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Mich.
The Seventh Art Stand
Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, Neb.
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs, New Orleans, La.
Southwest Solutions, Detroit
The Detroit News
Third Man Records Cass Corridor, Detroit
University of Detroit Mercy
University of Michigan – Detroit Center
University of Michigan – Flint
University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center, Minneapolis
WDIV-TV Local 4, Detroit
W. K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT), Battle Creek, Mich.
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AANM BY THE NUMBERS

SCHEDULE OF REVENUE & EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 (UNAUDITED)

CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS
Individuals, Memberships & Special Events Net $273,110
Corporations $377,553
Foundations $1,184,039
Government $101,290
Subtotal: Contributed Revenue $2,335,992

EARNED REVENUE
Program Fees, Gift Shop & Admissions $232,650
AANM Endowment Fund - Distribution $212,683
Subtotal: Earned Revenue $445,333

TOTAL REVENUE $2,781,325

OPERATIONAL EXPENSES
Salary & Benefits $1,442,196
Facility Operations $484,366
Exhibits, Education & Public Programming $854,723

TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES $2,781,285

AANM ENDOWMENT FUND
The AANM Endowment Fund consists of six funds, three are invested with McDonald Partners, LLC and three are maintained by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM). As of Sept. 30, 2017, the market value of the fund reported as an asset on the ACCESS balance sheet consists of the following:

Funds maintained at CFSEM $5,141,441
Funds invested at McDonald Partners, LLC $2,615,200
Total $3,756,641

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan has also accepted gifts from unrelated donors for the benefit of ACCESS. These assets are not reported on the balance sheet since CFSEM maintains variance power with respect to the assets contributed to them for our benefit. The total value of these assets as of Sept. 30, 2017, is $2,508,064.

ATTENDANCE & USAGE
On-site visitors (over 40% from outside Michigan) 56,817
Traveling exhibitions and off-site programs 700,625
Website users (all AANM sites) 154,560
Website page views (all AANM sites) 375,280
Facebook likes 1,830
Twitter followers 9,633
Instagram followers 1,229
Total annual weekly eNews outreach 230,177

(CWebsite data covers www.arabamericanmuseum.org; www.arabstereotypes.org; arabamericanstories.org and www.arts.theamericanmuseum.com)

CURATORIAL

Served 463,906 people through traveling exhibitions – far more than ever before
Served 301,887 visitors to Little Syria exhibition at Ellis Island, New York – best-attended show ever
Traveled to 10 venues – more venues than ever before

COLLECTIONS

30 new artifact/archival collections
17 new oral histories
6 new art pieces added to the collection
~12,000 pageviews on AANM Collections Online (CONTENTdm)
315 new items loaded to AANM Collections Online (2,035 total)

RUSSELL J. EBEID LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER

304 reference questions answered
15 researcher visits

AANM ENDOWMENT FUND

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17 new oral histories
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RUSSELL J. EBEID LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER

304 reference questions answered
15 researcher visits
WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

OCT. 1, 2016 - SEPT. 30, 2017

$100,000+
Russell J. Ebeid Trust

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Kresge Foundation
Macomb County Community Services Agency
New Economy Initiative
Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
Saudi Aramco
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

$50,000 - $99,999
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DTE Energy Foundation
Ford Foundation
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Meijer
U.S. Dept. of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

$25,000 - $49,999
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National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

$10,000 - $24,999
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Bank of America Merrill Lynch - Troy Market
King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra)
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OCT. 1, 2016 - SEPT. 30, 2017

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Lindsay Robillard, development generalist
Samer Hijazi, communication specialist II
Aya Krish, media designer
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