

ANNUAL WALL REPORT 2015-16



Arab American
National Museum

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

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.



Smithsonian Affiliate



International Coalition of
SITES of CONSCIENCE



FROM THE

AANM DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

When we began this journey together in May 2005, we envisioned a thriving cultural institution working to accurately portray Arab Americans' rich history and broad contributions to our nation. Further, we sought to empower the Arab American community to play a key role in documenting and sharing its diverse story. With the support of a dedicated National Advisory Board, passionate Museum staff and a network of generous donors, we have been able to propel this unique institution forward to great heights in a relatively short span of time.

As you review and reflect upon this annual report, we hope you will take pride in the numerous achievements of the past year. In 2016, we officially concluded our 10th anniversary celebration with a series of exciting programs and exhibitions. Through this work, we forged many new partnerships, expanded our family of supporters, extended our reach to new venues throughout our nation, and more firmly rooted Arab Americans' standing into our nation's vibrant history. Furthermore, we continued to solidify the Museum's position as a leading cultural institution within the museum field, as well as a trusted source for reliable information on Arab Americans for media, educators and many more.

Some highlights I am personally quite proud of include traveling our original exhibition, *Little Syria, NY: An Immigrant Community's Life & Legacy*, to the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration; becoming Michigan's premier member of the prestigious National Performance Network; expanding our work to new corners of the globe, including Algeria and Jerusalem; and furthering The Annex @ AANM as an innovative space for responsive, community-based programs.

As we continue to move into the Museum's second decade, we have set forth an ambitious agenda. This includes launching a landmark artist-in-residence program; updating our permanent exhibits to be more inclusive of our community's evolving demographics; and furthering our educational outreach at a time when it is needed most. None of this work is possible without your continued support. Our utmost gratitude for all that you do to help enable this powerful work!

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Devon Akmon".

Devon Akmon

Dear Friends,

This is my final communication to you in my role as National Advisory Board (NAB) Chair for the Arab American National Museum. While I remain deeply committed to our Museum and its mission – which is more vital than ever before – it is time to pass the baton to Dr. Fawwaz Ulaby who will guide us for the next few years. It comforts me that the Museum will be under his great leadership moving forward, for his membership on the Museum board was a source of guidance and great support to me as Chair.

Only smiles and satisfaction come in the afterglow of my board membership of 12 years with the one and only Arab American National Museum. This has been a banner year for AANM, building on the momentum generated by the Museum's 10th Anniversary in 2015. We have expanded our national impact with events and exhibitions including the triumphant presentation of *Little Syria, NY: An Immigrant Community's Life & Legacy* at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration in New York City. Here in southeast Michigan, Museum programs have drawn increasingly large and diverse audiences and created new partnerships between presenting organizations. We surpassed our programmatic and outreach goals many times over and significantly increased the awareness of our mission globally.

Given the recent elections, AANM's mission to document, preserve and present the history, culture and contributions of Arab Americans takes on an entirely new level of urgency and potential impact. Art and culture overall give a powerful voice to our national psyche and it is imperative today, at this critical time in our country's history, that Arab Americans be seen and heard from. That is exactly what the Museum is designed to facilitate; we will meet this mandate for freedom of speech by doing our utmost to let our community be heard.

I heartily congratulate Dr. Fawwaz Ulaby, the new NAB Chair and know that I leave the Museum in gracious hands of confidence, leadership and wisdom. Please take great pride in the achievements chronicled in these pages, and know that you helped make them possible. Every gift you make is a reaffirmation of your belief in the vital importance of our work and a statement of confidence in our future – a future that memorializes our heritage and ensures our legacies.

I remain deeply grateful to you,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Manal Boukzam Saab".

Manal Boukzam Saab

FROM THE

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR



COMMUNITY

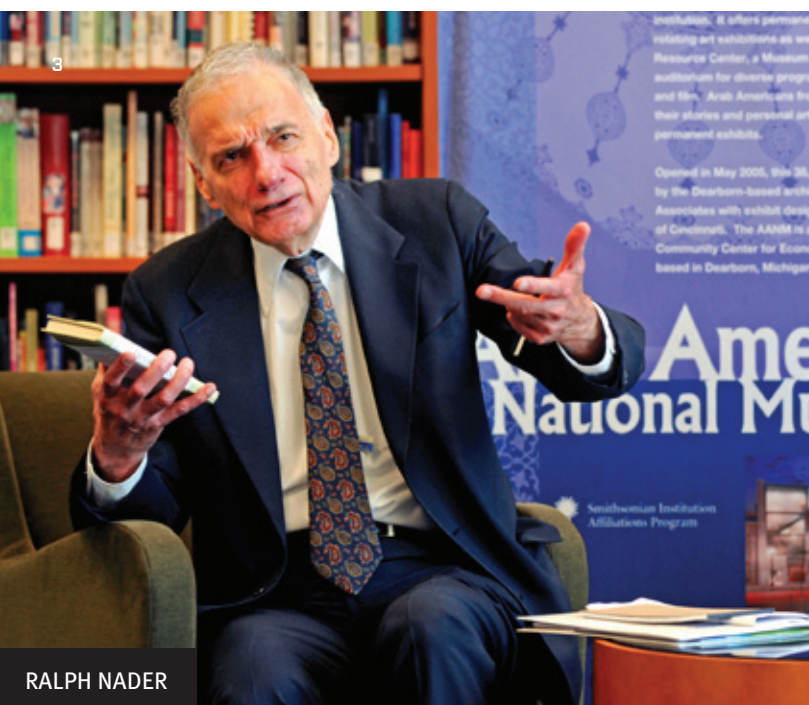
Building community through the arts and being responsive and relevant to the community are AANM hallmarks. This year saw the Museum highlight its community achievements locally and nationally, while continuing to forge mutually beneficial relationships with leaders, business owners and important Arab American organizations.

New York City's Arab American community rallied around an NYC tour for *Little Syria, NY: An Immigrant Community's Life & Legacy*, including a stop at the National Park Service's Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration that drew 300,000 visitors. During opening weekend, walking tours were held in the former Little Syria enclave and in Brooklyn, a current hub for the city's Arab American community. The City of New York Archives Visitor Center also hosted the exhibition from May through September 2016.

A standing-room-only audience greeted longtime AANM friend and supporter Ralph Nader – the legendary author, consumer advocate and former presidential candidate – when he visited AANM's Russell J. Ebeid Library & Resource Center July 22, 2016, to speak about his book, *The 17 Traditions: Lessons from an American Childhood*.

Yalla Eat! culinary walking tours continue to sell out, generating understanding of Arab American culture through food and supporting local Arab American-owned businesses by introducing new patrons to their stores. A Michigan Avenue tour was added in 2016, joining Dearborn's Warren Avenue as a Yalla Eat! tour destination. Overall interest in the program is so strong that private groups, including a group of international chefs, have asked for specialized versions of these tours.

AANM's relationship with the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs (SFSLAC) grew stronger in 2016, as Museum staff continued the Family History Project, launched in 2014, at the organization's 2016 convention in Dallas. Three dozen oral histories have been collected in partnership with SFSLAC since 2014.



RALPH NADER

YALLA EAT!

LITTLE SYRIA, NY AT ELLIS ISLAND

KNOWLEDGE

In fulfilling its mission to document, preserve and present the history, culture and contributions of Arab Americans, AANM's reputation as a source of accurate information has only continued to grow. The Museum not only responds to myriad media inquiries from around the world, it also actively generates and promotes new resources to aid researchers, students and anyone interested in the true story of the community.

In August 2016, the Arab American National Museum received a grant of \$45,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to research the changing demographics of the Arab American community. The research will ultimately result in updates to AANM's permanent exhibits to include populations not currently represented. Given that the last few years have been a major turning point in the history of Arab immigrants and refugees to the U.S. — both because of push factors in the Arab World and shifting U.S. domestic policies — this project provides much-needed background and context for these important issues.

AANM — a proud Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. — collaborated with the Smithsonian to digitize the fragile analog tape-recorded stories of first- and second-generation Arab Americans in the Faris and Yamna Naff Arab American Collection, created by Dr. Alixa Naff and housed in the Archives Center at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. Some 53 stories recorded in 1962 are now available

online via www.arabamericanmuseum.org, making them widely accessible. This collaboration was the first of its kind between the Smithsonian and one of its Affiliates.

AANM is now a leading national and international resource for media, government and others, as evidenced by extensive inquiries for information and partnerships with government entities. The Museum is a “go-to” for media across the nation and around the world. Among those who have consulted AANM or covered its activities are The Associated Press, CNN, NBC News and its *Meet the Press* program, ABC News, Al Jazeera, Detroit's two daily newspapers and dozens of others.

In June 2016, Vannessa Velez — a Mellon Mays Fellow at City College of New York — became the third recipient of the Evelyn Abdalah Menconi Travel Grant. Velez spent a week at AANM's Russell J. Ebeid Library & Resource Center exploring how communities across the U.S., including Arab Americans, reacted to 1967's Six-Day War.

In partnership with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and local educators, AANM's Education & Public Programming department created eight new lesson plans with a civil-rights focus aligned with State of Michigan K-12 curriculum standards. MDE will help distribute these to K-12 teachers throughout Michigan; workshops will assist teachers in utilizing the plans.



ALIXA NAFF WITH STUDENTS, 1980

SCHOOLCHILDREN ON A DOCENT-GUIDED TOUR AT AANM

ARAB WORLD MAP AT AANM

CREATIVITY

On stage, on film, on the printed page and via exhibitions and public programs, AANM continues to offer the highest-quality presentations that excite and engage audiences while elevating the work of Arab American artists and those whose creative output addresses issues central to the community.

AANM was one of just 12 national museums selected to participate in Reel Stories, a film empowerment program for young women in high school in metro Detroit and East Jerusalem. Over 20 weeks the program educated and inspired dialogue, culture and friendship through filmmaking. The short films produced in this international program of the U.S. Department of State and the American Alliance of Museums will be showcased in exhibits at AANM, at the Palestinian Heritage Museum in Jerusalem and at a number of film festivals.

What We Carried: Fragments from the Cradle of Civilization (June 4 - Nov. 13, 2016) occupied both the Main Floor and Lower Galleries. Renowned freelance photographer Jim Lommasson's photo/bilingual interview exhibition spotlighted over 85 items carried by Iraqi refugees to the U.S. since 2003, to document their life-changing journeys and shed light on the trials and tribulations refugees experience in their search for stability, documenting what it means to leave everything behind. Lommasson added stories of local Iraqis for this AANM presentation and AANM is now assisting in keeping this timely and compelling exhibition on tour.

The Map is Not the Territory (Jan. 23 - May 15, 2016) examined relationships and commonalities in Palestinian, Native American, and Irish experiences of invasion, occupation and colonization – not as novelty or polemic, but as history and current events. Thirty-nine contemporary artists confronted history, investigated personal and political dialogue, and presented vibrant and penetrating narratives. This exhibition was conceived by Jennifer Heath and co-curated by Dagmar Painter.

The Arab American Book Awards celebrated its 9th anniversary with an October 2015 ceremony in The Annex @ AANM. This unique national literary competition for books by and about Arab Americans highlights the community's achievements and contributions. Winning titles: Fiction (two winners) – *An Unnecessary Woman* by Rabih Alameddine and *The Moor's Account* by Laila Lalami; The Evelyn Shakir Non-Fiction Award – *Old Islam in Detroit* by Sally Howell; The George Ellenbogen Poetry Award – *Tahrir Suite: Poems* by Matthew Shenoda; and Children/Young Adult – *The Turtle of Oman* by Naomi Shihab Nye.



REEL STORIES



ARAB AMERICAN BOOK AWARDS



MAYSOON ZAYID

AANM's Arab Film Festival marked its 11th year in 2016, as well as its second year of collaboration with the regional Cinetopia International Film Festival. This partnership allowed Museum-curated films to be screened not only at AANM but also at other Cinetopia venues throughout south-east Michigan, increasing audience exposure to the best of Arab World cinema.

Among other creative highlights, An Evening with Maysoon Zayid offered a pair of comedy shows on May 7, 2016, by the award-winning writer, actor, performer and advocate for the disabled.

DIALOGUE

Promoting positive dialogue within the Arab American community and with the larger community is a key strategy AANM employs to both gather information about the community and respond to its expanding needs from a cultural perspective. The Museum's strong reputation for expertise in community-based arts programming is leading national organizations to turn to AANM as experts on this topic.

In partnership with the U.S. Embassy in Algiers and the Algerian Ministry of Culture, AANM Director Devon Akmon and several AANM staff brought a traveling exhibition and programming to A Week of American Culture in Constantine, Algeria (2015's Capital of Arab Culture as designated by the League of Arab States) in March 2016. Some 5,000 Algerians were introduced to the rich cultural traditions of Arab Americans.

AANM was one of just six museums nationwide to participate in the National Youth Summit: Japanese American Incarceration in World War II, an online outreach program organized by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and the Japanese American National Museum. Over 160 middle and high schools students from Michigan engaged with panelists on the history and legacy of the incarceration, the lessons it provides for a post-September 11 climate, and contemporary approaches to addressing national security and civil liberties.

AANM, the Dearborn Historical Society and Leaders Advancing and Helping Communities (LAHC) united for a series of programs and an exhibit capturing stories about Dearborn from both Arab Americans and non-Arabs. Despite pervasive media depictions, this project demonstrated to a local and national audience that non-Arab residents in Dearborn live peacefully with their Arab American neighbors. It also documents the invaluable contributions of the diverse and vibrant Arab American community, part of Dearborn for nearly a century.

The Annex @ AANM hosted a number of events presented by its parent organization ACCESS and its Take On Hate movement during campaign season (and continues to do so post-election). It's become a beehive of safe conversations about race, equity and democratic engagement. Strong attendance and thoughtful conversation have been plentiful during the town hall meetings, educational sessions and film screenings in The Annex.



YOUTH FORUM ON IDENTITY & BELONGING

AANM IN ALGERIA

NATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT: JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION IN WORLD WAR II

INCLUSION

The Arab American National Museum is ethno-specific but not ethno-centric. By collaborating with various populations, AANM responds to and elevates the community by highlighting common experiences, connections and the beauty of cultural expression from around the world.

Digital Detroit Stories – a major initiative of AANM’s Russell J. Ebeid Library & Resource Center – recorded stories from diverse Detroiters who, like many Arab Americans, have been affected by issues of race, ethnicity, religion, immigration, migration and displacement. The resulting dedicated WordPress blog and YouTube channel present these compelling personal stories to a broad audience.

The 24th Concert of Colors in July 2016 offered exciting free performances to thousands of area residents at major cultural venues in Midtown Detroit. With “the whole world in its bands,” the festival is a beloved annual event that sends a positive, increasingly relevant message about the value of diversity and respect through high-quality musical presentations. The festival’s Forum on Community, Culture & Race in The Annex @ AANM drew a capacity crowd who examined the Flint, Mich. water crisis through a cultural lens.

As Concert of Colors’ sister series, Global Fridays concerts at AANM displayed increasingly adventurous

curation and successful partnerships with Arab and non-Arab organizations, leading to successful presentations of artists including Noura Mint Seymali (West Africa), Egypt’s Ana Masry Band (Detroit-area premiere), The Murphy Beds (Irish), Sao Paulo Underground (Brazilian/African), Krar Collective (Ethiopia), and from Yemen, Aldulrahman Al Akhfash. Audiences particularly enjoyed hearing the stories behind the music, increasing their understanding and appreciation of the culture.

AANM was invited to join the prestigious National Performance Network, a relationship-based network of presenters that service and connect diverse cultural organizations, artists and communities. Award-winning Iraqi American playwright Heather Raffo became the first artist-in-residence under these auspices. In her *Noura: A Staged Reading*, Raffo re-imagined Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* with the story of an Iraqi refugee family in New York, highlighting an acutely relevant awakening of identity that tackles the notions of shame, violence, assimilation, exile and love.



YUNA PERFORMS AT CONCERT OF COLORS



ALDULRAHMAN AL AKHFASH PERFORMS AT GLOBAL FRIDAYS

HEATHER RAFFO’S *NOURA: A STAGED READING*

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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
ALSAC/St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Memphis, Tenn.
ALWAN for the Arts, New York
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 Heritage Council, Flint, Mich.
Arab American Studies Association
Arab Student Association, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
Ardan Academy of Irish Dance, Livonia, Mich.
Basilica of St. Mary, Livonia, Mich.
Build Institute, Detroit
CBS62/CW50-TV
CJAM-FM, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
Center for Arab American Studies at University of Michigan – Dearborn
Center for Arabic Culture, Boston
Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Mich.
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Mich.
Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET)
Detroit Equity Action Lab
Detroit Free Press
Dearborn (Mich.) Historical Museum
Dearborn (Mich.) Public Library
Detroit Historical Museum
Detroit Institute of Arts
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Digging Detroit
Downtown Monitor, Detroit
East Michigan Environmental Action Council in the Cass Corridor Commons, Detroit
Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, Dearborn
Gaelic League of Detroit
Great Lakes Aradhana Committee
Henry Ford College, Dearborn

Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn
Hindu American Foundation
HYPE Athletics, Dearborn
Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU)
Islamic Center of Detroit
Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles
Komal Rishab
Latin Americans for Social & Economic Development (LA SED), Detroit
Leaders Advancing and Helping Communities (LAHC), Dearborn
Livingston (Mich.) Diversity Council
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston
McGill University (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
Michigan.com
Michigan Department of Education
Michigan Science Center, Detroit
Michigan Theater, Ann Arbor
Middle Detroit
Mocha Bistro, Dearborn
Motown Museum, Detroit
New Detroit, Inc.
New York City Municipal Archives Visitor Center
Pelham Art Center, New York
Rackham Program in Public Scholarship at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
Scarab Club, Detroit
Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Mich.
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Southwest Solutions, Detroit
The Detroit News
Tibbets Opera House, Coldwater, Mich.
U.S. Embassy, Algeria and Ministry of Culture, Algeria
University of Detroit Mercy
University of Michigan – Detroit Center
University of Michigan – Flint
University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center
W. K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT)
Wild Swan Theater, Ann Arbor
Z Collective, Detroit

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SCHEDULE OF REVENUE & EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS

Individuals, Memberships & Special Events Net	\$619,309
Corporation	\$351,250
Foundations	\$634,114
Government	\$73,501
Subtotal: Contributed Revenue	\$1,678,174

EARNED REVENUE

Program Fees, Gift Shop & Admissions	\$267,531
AANM Endowment Fund - Distribution	\$168,466
Subtotal: Earned Revenue	\$435,997

TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,114,171
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OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

Salary & Benefits	\$678,369
Facility Operations	\$463,753
Exhibits, Education & Public Programming	\$972,239

TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$2,114,361
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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 September 30, 2016, the market value of the fund reported as an asset on the ACCESS balance sheet consists of the following:

Funds maintained at CFSEM	\$1,076,697
Funds invested at McDonald Partners, LLC	\$1,141,358
Total	\$2,218,055

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. Total value of these assets as of September 30, 2016 is \$2,365,974.

ATTENDANCE AND USAGE

On-site visitors	56,850
Traveling exhibitions and off-site programs	145,500
Website users (all AANM sites)	226,188
Website page views (all AANM sites)	387,211
Facebook likes	9,280
Instagram followers	1,163
Total annual weekly eNews outreach	305,049

(Website data covers www.arabamericanmuseum.org; www.arabstereotypes.org; arabamericanstories.org and www.artsofhearabworlduprisings.com)

CURATORIAL

Digital objects placed online via CONTENTdm software on AANM site: approx. 970

CONTENTdm total page views: 8,500

27 new art and artifact collections accessioned

10 new individuals added to permanent *Making an Impact* exhibit

100 new objects collected for New York presentation of *Little Syria, NY* exhibition

WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

Oct. 1, 2015 - Sept. 30, 2016

\$100,000+

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Mr. and Mrs. Russell J. Ebeid
Ford Foundation
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Saudi Aramco

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
Ford Motor Company Fund
Kresge Foundation
Meijer

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Anonymous (2)
Bank of America Merrill Lynch - Troy Market
Comerica Bank
DTE Energy Foundation
Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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\$2,500 - \$4,999

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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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\$500 - \$999

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Lebanese American University
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Super Greenland Market
Techborne, Inc.

\$100 - \$499

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