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The Arab American National Museum Celebrates 20 Years of Arab American Stories, Culture & Community

DEARBORN, MI — On May 5, 2025, the Arab American National Museum (AANM) marks 20 years as the only museum of its kind in the United States—a place that has preserved, presented and elevated Arab American history, culture and contributions since its founding in 2005.

To commemorate this historic milestone, AANM is launching a year of celebration titled “AlBayt Baytak”—Arabic for “this home is your home.” It’s a fitting tribute to a museum that has long offered Arab Americans and allies a sense of belonging, pride and connection.

This anniversary is more than a milestone—it’s a celebration of the people, stories and cultural legacies that have shaped Arab American life for generations. As a national home for Arab American history and culture, AANM has grown into a space where visitors, artists, students and researchers from across the country come to feel seen, connected and inspired.

“Over the last 20 years, AANM has become more than a museum—it’s a living home for Arab American culture,” said Diana Abouali, AANM Director. “Whether it’s a family tracing their heritage or a national celebrity like Mo Amer dropping by on tour, we hear the same thing: *‘This place feels like home.’* There’s a sense of familiarity akin to your grandma’s stories. That’s the magic of AANM—it welcomes everyone in, and tells our stories with heart, rigor and pride.”

A National Home, Rooted in Dearborn, Connected to the Country

Located in Dearborn, Michigan, amid one of the largest concentrations of Arab Americans in the United States, AANM presents original exhibitions, cutting-edge art, film screenings, and performances in Michigan and in major cities across the U.S. It continually documents the history and experiences of Arab Americans through programming, research, and community engagement. Each year, the Museum welcomes tens of thousands of visitors from all fifty states and countries around the world.

AANM is also home to the most comprehensive collection of Arab American research and history, including a public library, digital archive, oral histories and rare archival materials that tell the evolving story of the Arab American experience.

Celebrating 20 Years of Culture, Creativity and Community

Throughout 2025, AANM is rolling out a series of **special events, exhibitions and initiatives** that invite the public to celebrate, connect and imagine the future together:

- **National Membership Drive** to bring together Arab Americans and allies from coast to coast.
 - Membership is a declaration of pride, a commitment to cultural preservation, and an investment in self-sufficiency. Member support sustains AANM's mission and helps ensure that Arab American stories remain accessible for generations to come.
 - Members enjoy:
 - 20% off at the [AANM Store](#) throughout the anniversary celebration
 - Access to over 1,000 cultural institutions nationwide through the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program
 - Exclusive invitations to events, previews and programs

Learn more and join at arabamericanmuseum.org/membership.

- AANM's annual **Arab Film Festival** (AFF) is coming soon, May 7-11—featuring the best of critically acclaimed and award-winning Arab American and Arab world films, AFF showcases Arab and Arab American films for fans of Arabic-language movies and adventurous art-film lovers seeking new perspectives and outside-the-box thinking.
- **DIWAN: A Forum for the Arts** Returns (September 19–20, 2025)—AANM's flagship gathering of Arab American artists, scholars and thought leaders returns this fall. This year's theme, inspired by Etel Adnan's phrase "The houses we build for ourselves," explores identity, imagination and belonging through poetry, film, visual art and conversation.
- AANM's annual **Benefit Dinner** unites leading business owners, professionals and Museum supporters from across the nation to raise much needed funds for AANM's educational and cultural programs.
- **Arab Americans in Massachusetts** (Launching November 2025): This groundbreaking traveling exhibit brings AANM's storytelling mission across the country, with a focus on communities in Massachusetts. The exhibit will travel to five locations—Boston, Quincy, Revere, Lawrence, and Worcester—and will feature narratives from both historic and current Arab American communities in each of these locations.
- **Public Programs, Performances and Community Spotlights** throughout 2025—from curated exhibitions and pop-ups to virtual events and school

programs, AANM will celebrate 20 years with ongoing opportunities to engage, learn and reflect.

Looking Ahead: A Home That Belongs to All of Us

For two decades, AANM has embodied the idea that “every visit is a return home.” It is a place where Arab American history is preserved, art is celebrated, and community thrives.

As the Museum steps into its next chapter, its commitment remains clear: to preserve Arab American history, foster cultural pride, and ensure that this home belongs to all of us—yesterday, today and tomorrow.