



Arab Americans: Making a Difference

By Casey Kasem





There are about 3 million

Arab Americans, and as a community, we've been demonstrating loyalty, inventiveness, and courage on behalf of the United States for over 100 years. Here are just a few of the famous and accomplished ones -- people you may know!

Military Service

You talk about courage ... How about America's and the world's first jet ace? He was the Korean War hero, U.S. Air Force Col. **James Jabara**. In World War II, Army officers like Maj. Gen. **Fred Safay** fought alongside Gen. Patton, and Brig. Gen. **Elias Stevens** served on Gen. Eisenhower's staff.

And in 1944, one of our Navy's ships, the destroyer escort USS Naifeh, was named in honor of an Arab American hero, Navy Lt. **Alfred Naifeh** of Oklahoma. Retired Brigadier General **James J. David** served as Company Commander of the famous 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. More recently, West Point graduate and retired four-star Gen. **George Joulwan** was the NATO Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, where he commanded both European and U.S. troops. Brig. Gen. **William J. Jabour** is the Director of the Air Force Program Executive Office for Fighter and Bomber programs in charge of the F-22 System Program Office (SPO). General **John Abizaid** is head of U.S. Central Command in Iraq.

Political

Some of us work in our nation's capital, like veteran Congressmen **Nick Joe Rahall II** (West Virginia), **Ray LaHood** (Illinois), **Charles Boustany** (Louisiana), **Darrell Issa** (California), Senator **John E. Sununu** (New Hampshire) and former Congressman **John Baldacci** who is now the Governor of Maine.



Nick J. Rahall II
Dean of the Arab
American Congressional
Delegation



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor of Indiana

Two Arab Americans were appointed to President George W. Bush's first term Cabinet: former Director of the Office of Management and Budget **Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.**, who is now the Governor of Indiana and former U.S. Secretary of Energy **Spencer Abraham**. The first Arab American ever appointed to a Cabinet secretary post was **Donna Shalala**, the nation's longest serving Secretary of Health and Human Services, and now presi-





dent of the University of Miami. Former Governor of New Hampshire **John H. Sununu** became the White House Chief of Staff under Pres. George Bush, Sr., and later a political commentator on CNN.

America's longest-serving White House Chief of Protocol, serving seven-and-a-half years under President Reagan, was Ambassador **Selwa Roosevelt**. **Thomas Nassif** and **Edward Gabriel** both served as U.S. Ambassador to Morocco. Our Ambassador to Syria was **Theodore Kattouf**, and **Marcelle Wahba** was Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.



John H. Sununu
Former New Hampshire Governor & White House Chief of Staff



Donna Shalala
Former Secretary of Health & Human Services

The late ambassador **Philip C. Habib** served as Special Presidential Envoy to the Middle East and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Feisty **Helen Thomas**, who served for 57 years as a correspondent for United Press International and was dean of the White House press corps, is a Hearst newspaper syndicated columnist. In a class by himself, the late, warm-hearted **Robert George** portrayed Santa Claus year-round for nearly 50 years and was a Presidential Santa at the White House through seven administrations.



Helen Thomas
Former Dean of White House Press Corps



George Mitchell
Former Senate Majority Leader

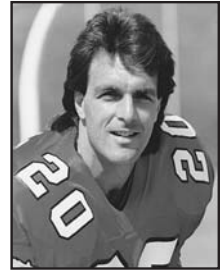
Others who have served in high elected office are: former U.S. Senate Majority Leader **George Mitchell**, who brokered a peace deal in Northern Ireland and led a peace commission to the Middle East; former U.S. Senators **James Abourezk** and **James Abdnor**, both of South Dakota; and former Congressional members **Pat Danner** of Missouri, **Mary Rose Oakar** of Ohio, the late **George Kasem** of California, who was the first Arab American elected to the U.S. Congress, **Abraham Kazen, Jr.** of Texas, **Toby Moffett** of Connecticut, and **Chris John** of Louisiana. **Victor Atiyeh** was the popular governor of Oregon. And in San Diego, city clerk **Charles Abdelnour** pioneered the legislation to create the "all-mail ballot" which set a national precedent and earned him an international reputation in election law.



Arab Americans are grocers and governors, physicians and farmers, Indy 500 champs and taxicab drivers, financiers and factory workers, bakers and bankers, salesmen and senators, TV stars and TV repairmen, teachers and preachers, Heisman Trophy-winning quarterbacks and neighborhood sandlot heroes. Name it, and an Arab American has probably done it.

Sports

San Diego Chargers quarterback **Doug Flutie**, who threw the "miracle touchdown" pass for Boston College, won the Heisman Trophy in 1984. He previously played for several NFL teams and was a superstar in the Canadian Football League. There's also NFL player **Jeff George**, who quarterbacked several NFL teams, and former NFL coach **Rich Kotite**. Don't forget former Chicago Bears linebacker and NFL Hall of Famer **Bill George**, or former Cleveland Brown **Abe Gibran**. Another NFL player is **Drew Haddad** of the Indianapolis Colts. The former owner of the Miami Dolphins was **Joe Robbie**.



Doug Flutie
Heisman Trophy Winner



Joe and Gavin Maloof
Owners of the Sacramento Kings

UCLA's fiery coach **Jim Harrick** took his team to the NCAA playoffs eight years in a row, winning the national championship in 1995. The late **George Maloof, Sr.** owned the NBA's Houston Rockets; today his sons, **Joe and Gavin Maloof**, own the Sacramento Kings.

Major League baseball player **Joe Lahoud** played with the Boston Red Sox and **Sam Khalifa** played for the Pittsburgh Pirates. And **Fred Saigh** once owned baseball's St. Louis Cardinals.

In auto racing, **Bobby Rahal** won the Indy 500 in 1986, later becoming the all-time earnings champ among Indy car racers. The founder of the Professional Bowlers Association was the late **Eddie Elias**. In the ring, **Petey Sarron** won the world featherweight championship in 1936-1937. **Zuhair "Steve" Mansour** was weightlifting's Grandmaster of the World in 1990. And a four-time U.S. National Chess Champion and



Bobby Rahal
Race Car Champion



Grandmaster is Seattle's **Yasser Seirawan**. Women's International Chess Master **Jennifer Shahade** won the 2002 and 2004 U.S. Women's Chess Championships. The late **Dr. Elias Ghanem**, former chairman of the Nevada Athletic Commission and Las Vegas' own physician to the stars, once treated celebrities like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, Johnny Cash, Kenny Rogers, and Paul Anka. In track and field, the world record holder for the marathon is Arab American **Khalid Khannouchi**.

Activists

Among America's activists, can you think of two people who have saved more lives than America's foremost consumer advocate and Green party presidential candidate **Ralph Nader** and the founder of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) **Candy Lightner**. MADD is the largest crime victims' assistance organization in the world, with more than 3 million members and supporters.

Back in 1960, **Ralph Johns**, an active participant in the civil rights movement, encouraged the famous Woolworth "sit-in" at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Business

The founder of an international, billion-dollar engineering firm, Jacobs Engineering Group, is the late **Dr. Joseph Jacobs**. A former chemist with dozens of patents became Armand Hammer's successor as chairman of the board, president, and chief executive officer of Occidental Petroleum — **Dr. Ray Irani**.



Queen Noor

The late **Najeeb Halaby**, former head of the Federal Aviation Administration, was CEO of Pan-American Airlines. His daughter, Lisa, married King Hussein of Jordan and became the only Arab American to be queen of a foreign country, **Queen Noor**.

Jacques Nasser was formerly the president and CEO of Ford Motor Company. **Richard Caleal** created the "revolutionary" 1949 Ford car design, a design that some credit with saving the company. The chairman of the board of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company is **Samir G. Gibara**. The late **Stephen Yokich** served five terms as vice president of the International United Auto Workers union, then became its president. **Ned Mansour** was formerly the president of Mattel, Inc., maker of Barbie dolls and other toys. The founder and president of Thomas Nelson Publishers, the largest world-wide distributor of the Bible, is **Sam Moore**. Syrian immigrant **Ernest Hamwi** created the first ice-

cream cone at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and, a few years later, Lebanese immigrant **Albert George** founded Pennsylvania's Joy Cone Company, the country's largest ice-cream cone producer.

John Mack is Chairman of the Board and CEO of Morgan Stanley, one of America's largest investment banking firms. **Dr. Raymond Jallow** is an internationally respected economic advisor to governments and institutions, lecturing in financial capitals around the world. **Youssef A. Nasr** was the president and CEO of HSBC USA, a leading financial services organization and the third largest depository institution. **William Hanna** is the founding president and CEO of Cedars Bank, a wholly Arab American owned commercial bank headquartered in Los Angeles. The chairman of the board and CEO of Fresh Del Monte Produce, Inc. is **Mohammed Abu-Ghazaleh** and second generation Lebanese American **Andrew Thomas** is President and CEO of Heinekin USA.

Farouk Shamie is the CEO and founder of Farouk Systems USA, a premier hair and skin care company that introduced environmentally safe products for hairdressers. Lebanese-American **Richard E. Rainwater** built his reputation managing investments for Texas' wealthy Bass family and earned millions for himself as a result. He recently set up a \$120 million trust for Stanford and the University of South Carolina. Egyptian-born Texas billionaire **Fayez Sarofim** heads Fayez Sarofim Investments and manages the Houston Fine Arts Museum's \$300 million endowment.

George Shaheen is credited with founding Andersen Consulting, now called Accenture, and served as CEO and managing partner as part of a 30-year career at the world's biggest consulting firm. **Roger Farah** is president and chief operating officer of Polo Ralph Lauren and previously served as chairman of the board of Venator Group, Inc., the parent company of Footlocker. The "new economy" has its share of Arab American heroes as well: **Simon Assad** is the co-CEO of Heavy.com, a music site that was nominated for a Webby, the Internet's highest honor. One of America's preeminent pollsters, keeping tabs on public opinion and other statistics **John Zogby** of Zogby International.

Paul Orfalea founded the world's biggest international chain of copying service stores, Kinko's; while the late **Waleed Ali** and his brother **Malik** founded MPI, the world's largest home-



John Zogby
America's "Top Pollster"



video distributor of documentaries. The Palms, a Maloof Casino Resort in Las Vegas, is operated by **George Maloof, Jr.** Entrepreneur **Tony Ismail** founded the Alamo Flag Company in Dallas and built it into the largest retailer of flags and related items in the U.S. today.

Law

The Texas lawyer who won the biggest business settlement in U.S. history, on behalf of Pennzoil (\$10 billion dollars!), is one of this country's most successful attorneys, **Joseph D. Jamail**. In the famous "zoot suit" trial of the 1940s, **George Shibley** defended unjustly accused Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles. In the 1990s, the late **Edward Masry** and Erin Brockovich filed a direct action lawsuit against Pacific Gas and Electric for polluting the drinking water of Hinkley, CA. Their efforts secured the largest toxic tort injury settlement in U.S. history, \$333 million in damages, and was chronicled in the blockbuster film starring Julia Roberts and Albert Finney.

Entertainment

Canadian-born singer-songwriter **Paul Anka** became one of America's first pop teen idols. The late ukelele-plucking, falsetto-singing **Herbert Khaury** became famous as "Tiny Tim." And in the world of rock, there was the late, legendary **Frank Zappa**. On the West Coast, **Dick Dale** is the "King of the Surf Guitar." Singer-dancer-choreographer **Paula Abdul** has had two number-one albums, six number-one singles, a Grammy award,



Paul Anka
Singer and Songwriter



Shakira
Award-Winning Singer

and worldwide album sales exceeding 30 million records. And the first teenage singer ever to have her first two singles both hit number one is **Tiffany**, born Renee Darwish. Pop star **Shakira**, of Colombian and Lebanese descent, has scored on the U.S. charts and is a multiple Grammy winner.

Speaking of music, three of America's landmark music shows on radio were created by Arab Americans, **Don Bustany** and me — "American Top 40," "American Top 20," and "American Country Countdown." On Broadway, playwright **Fred Saidy** wrote two classics, "Finian's Rainbow" and "Bloomer Girl." Opera prima donna **Rosalind Elias** hit the high notes at the Met. And for avant-garde "Dancer of the Year" in 1992, the New York Times picked a 20-year Broadway veteran with the Paul Taylor Company — **Elie**



Chaib. David Yazbek wrote the lyrics and score for "The Full Monty."

Among TV directors, two Arab Americans have each helmed over 300 episodes for the networks. **Asaad Kelada** has done numerous series like "Family Ties" and episodes of "The Facts of Life," "Dharma & Greg," "Everybody Loves Raymond," etc. After directing Broadway hits like "Sweet Charity," "Mame," and "The Unsinkable Molly Brown," **John Bowab** switched to TV and has directed episodes of the classic hit "The Cosby Show" as well as "My Wife & Kids" and "Life with Bonnie."

Did you know...

that the highest-rated episode in television history was the last episode of "M*A*S*H"? And who played the role of not-so-crazy Corporal Klinger for its entire 11-year run? A talented Arab American from Toledo, Ohio, **Jamie Farr**.



Jamie Farr
Corporal Klinger on
"M*A*S*H"

On NBC, "Saturday Night Live's" band-leader for many years was guitarist **G.E. Smith**. (His family's Lebanese name, Haddad,

means blacksmith).

The best-known Lebanese in America was also the founder of St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital — the late, great comedian and actor **Danny Thomas**. His son is a television and film producer and multi-Emmy winner for "The Golden Girls" and other TV shows — **Tony Thomas**.



Danny Thomas
Comedian, Actor, and
Humanitarian

Danny's daughter, Emmy Award-winning **Marlo Thomas**, was the first actress ever to play a single, independent young woman in the TV series, "That Girl." She currently appears on TV's "Friends" as Rachel's mother and published a book, "The Right Words at the Right Time."



Marlo Thomas
Award-Winning Actress

The leading man who starred in the movies "Flashdance" and "Finding Forrester" was **Michael Nouri**, who also starred in TV's "Love and War" sitcom. The box-office hits "Swingers", "The Lost World: Jurassic Park", and "The Wedding Crashers" starred **Vince Vaughn**, who has a Lebanese grandparent.



Wendie Malick whose father is from Egypt, played Nina Van Horn on NBC's hit show "Just Shoot Me." and **Tony Shalhoub**, now starring in USA Network's series "Monk," and **Amy Yasbeck** appeared in the hit sitcom "Wings" — the first time two Arab Americans have been featured in the same TV series. Amy has also starred



Wendie Malick
Nina Van Horn on
"Just Shoot Me"

in films including Mel Brooks' "Robin Hood: Men in Tights." Tony has moved to the big screen as well, in both "Men in Black" films, "The Siege," "A Civil Action," and "Thirteen Ghosts" (with fellow Arab Americans F. Murray Abraham and Shannon Elizabeth).



Tony Shalhoub
Emmy Award Winning Actor

Crusty but soft-hearted Mel in TV's "Alice" was portrayed by the late **Vic Tayback**. One of the co-stars of the series "Empty Nest" was **Kristy McNichol**. A star of TV's "Head of the Class" was once picked by People Magazine as one of the "50 most beautiful people in the U.S." — **Khrystyne Haje**.

Two other fine movie and television actors who also starred in popular TV dramas are **James Stacy**, who played the main role in "Laramie," and **Michael Ansara**, who played Cochise in "Broken Arrow."



Vic Tayback
Mel on "Alice"

An award-winning comic actress from San Diego, **Kathy Najimy**, played a fun-loving nun in the "Sister Act" films. She co-starred as Olive, a Lebanese-American, in NBC-TV's "Veronica's Closet" with Kirstie Alley. Kathy is the voice of Peggy Hill on Fox-TV's animated hit "King of the Hill." **Shannon Elizabeth** of "American Pie," "Scary Movie," and "Tomcats" is of Lebanese and Syrian ancestry.



Kathy Najimy
Award-Winning Actress-Comedian ("Sister Act" and "Veronica's Closet")

The former head of Carolco Pictures, handling the "Rocky," "Rambo," and "Terminator" films, was "billion-dollar producer" **Mario Kassar**. The producer of the epic "The Message: The Story of Islam" (a biography of the Prophet Mohammed) and "Lion of the Desert," not to mention all the blockbuster



Salma Hayek
Actress

"Halloween" chillers, is the late **Moustapha Akkad**.

Lovely **Salma Hayek**, who is of Lebanese and Mexican descent, is another actress who has lit up the small screen (in cable TV's movie "The Hunchback," as the gypsy Esmeralda) and the big screen (Oscar-winning "Traffic," "Desperado," "Wild Wild West," and "Frida," about Mexican artist Frida Kahlo). The director of Jim Carrey's

loony comedy hits "Ace Ventura: Pet Detective" and "Liar, Liar," Eddie Murphy's "The Nutty Professor," and Robin Williams' "Patch Adams" is **Tom Shadyac**. Together, these films have grossed more than \$1 billion worldwide.

The Pulitzer Prize for biography ("Jackson Pollack: An American Saga") was shared by the author of three other national bestsellers: writer-publisher **Steven Naifeh** of South Carolina. The book was later adapted into an Academy award-winning film (best supporting actress).

Elie Samaha is chairman and owner of Franchise Pictures, which produced such films as "The Heist," "Angel Eyes," "The Whole Nine Yards," and "Battlefield Earth." Academy Award-winning film producer **Ronald Schwary** is best known for his work with "Tootsie," "Meet Joe Black," and "Scent of a Woman." **Jehane Noujaim** co-directed and co-produced "Startup.com" and in 2004 directed "Control Room".

One of show business' legendary talent managers was the late **George "Bullets" Durgom**, who, through the years, managed Jackie Gleason, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Marilyn Monroe, to mention a few. Two of today's top recording stars' husband-managers are of Arab descent: **Rene Angelil**, discoverer and manager of wife Celine Dion, and Cuban-born **Emilio Estefan**, manager and producer of wife Gloria Estefan.

Emmy Award-winning cinematographer-director **George S. Dibie** is president of the International Photographers Guild. **Fouad Said** was the cinematographer who designed Cinemobile, the first customized van for filming on location, while working on the TV series "I Spy." For this achievement, he received a Technical Academy Award in 1970.

Other Arab American Oscar winners include **F. Murray Abraham**, who won Best Actor for the movie "Amadeus." Screenwriter and novelist **William Peter Blatty** won an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for "The Exorcist," a huge box office hit based on his novel of the same name. Recipient of an Oscar for Best Original



Screenplay for "Thelma and Louise" and director of the "Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood" is **Callie Khourie**. The late composer **Paul Jabara** won an Oscar award for Best Song, Donna Summer's "Last Dance" from the movie "Thank God, It's Friday." Set decorator **Emile Kuri** won two Oscars for his splendid work on "The Heiress" and "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." He received a total of eight Academy Award nominations and later designed many exhibits at Disneyland.

Media

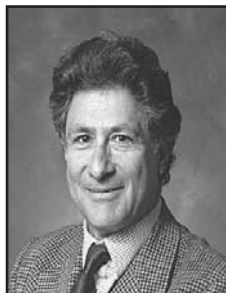
Diane Rehm is host and executive producer of "The Diane Rehm Show" on National Public Radio (NPR). **George Noory's** talk show "Coast to Coast AM" can be heard on over 500 stations nationwide. The man who pioneered the concept of a radio programming consultant in 1958 is **Mike Joseph**, who's helped organizations like ABC, CBS, and NBC, among others.

Turning to television, **Lucie Salhany** became the first woman to head a television network, as chair of Fox Broadcasting Co., then of United Paramount Network. **Tammy Haddad**, the creator of "Larry King Live," is Executive Producer of "Buchanan & Press." CNN senior editor and anchor **Octavia E. Nasr** has been named CNN's first senior editor for Arab affairs. **Hoda Kotbe** is a correspondent for NBC's "Dateline" and **Jim Avila**, who is of Lebanese and Mexican descent, is a national correspondent for NBC News.

On the print side, the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting went to Washington Post correspondent **Anthony Shadid** while the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting went to the Toledo Blade's **Michael Sallah**.

Education

The late **Edward Said** was a Columbia professor and well-known literary and social critic, as well as a respected music reviewer, and wrote a column appearing in "The Nation." Professor Said authored more than a dozen volumes on everything from the Middle East to English literature. **Jack Shaheen**, emeritus professor of mass communications at Southern Illinois University and author of books like "The TV Arab" and "Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People," has also been CBS News' consultant for the Middle East. **David Adamany** was the



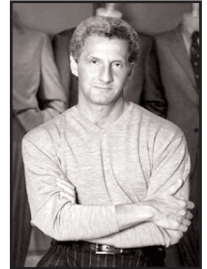
Edward Said
Literature and Music
Critic and Author

longest-serving president of Wayne State University in Detroit and currently serves as Temple University's president.

For an inspiring success story, try that of writer-lecturer on business and success, **Nido Qubein**. When he came to the United States as a teenager, he could barely speak English. He went on to become president of the National Speakers' Association and the youngest member inducted into the International Speakers' Hall of Fame.

Fashion

The prestigious CFDA Menswear Designer of the Year Award for 1989 and 1990 went to Arab American **Joseph Abboud** of New York. He's the only designer to win the award two years in a row. Supermodel **Yamila Diaz-Rahi**, who is of Lebanese and Spanish descent, landed the coveted Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue cover in 2002. She has also graced the covers of "Marie Claire," "Elle," "GQ," and "Shape."



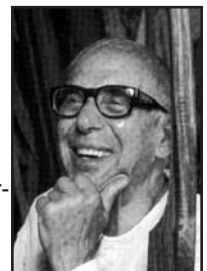
Joseph Abboud
Award-Winning
Menswear Designer

One of America's most sought-after hairstylists, **Frederic Fekkai**, boasts clients such as Claudia Schiffer, Kim Basinger, and Renee Zellweger.

Lebanese immigrant **J.M. Hagggar** started Hagggar Clothing Co. in 1926. It became one of the world's best-known brands in men's apparel. The company is now a multi-million dollar enterprise that is headed by **J.M. Hagggar III**, who serves as chairman and CEO. In addition, **Farah Brothers** manufactures men's and women's slacks, and **Malouf Brothers** manufactured Mod-O-Day women's dresses. **Norma Kamali**, who designs everything from clothing and cosmetics to eyeglasses, is of Arab ancestry. **Reem Acra** is one of the world's preeminent designers of bridal fashions and is known for her elaborate embroideries. Hair accessories and jewelry designer **Colette Malouf** began her rise to the top in 1987 with the "Malouf Poof." She is known for her innovative use of exotic materials and her celebrity clientele.

Art & Literature

Arab Americans also have made significant contributions to the art world. America's most honored woodworker, the late **Sam Maloof** was an award-winning artisan whose creations have appeared in the White House, the Smithsonian



Sam Maloof (1916-2009)
Award-Winning Artisan



Institution, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Vatican, and other renowned exhibit halls. Retired heart surgeon **Dr. Hussam A. Fadhli** is an award-winning sculptor whose work is displayed around the world, including the Bush Presidential Library. Prolific industrial designer **Karim Rashid** is among the major talents of 21st-century design with work in New York's Museum of Modern Art.

The first woman to design a major American art museum, Cincinnati's \$34 million Contemporary Art Center, is Iraqi-born **Zaha Hadid**. Artist **Ghada Amer's** hand embroidered paintings were selected for the Whitney Biennial 2000 and the Venice Biennale in 1999. **Naomi Shihab Nye** is an award-winning poet and author of children's literature.

Science and Medicine



Dr. Elias Zerhouni
Director, National Institutes of Health

One of America's most famous pioneers is Houston surgeon **Dr. Michael DeBakey**, who invented the heart pump. Today he's chancellor of Baylor University's College of Medicine. Algerian-American **Dr. Elias Zerhouni** is the director of the National Institutes of Health.

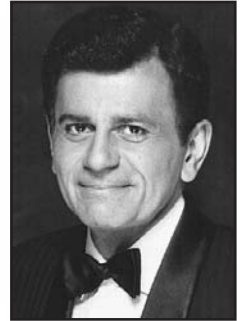
Two winners of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry are Arab American. **Dr. Ahmed H. Zewail**, a professor of physics at the California Institute of Technology (CIT), is the 1999 winner. The 1990 winner is Harvard's **Dr. Elias Corey**. Also at CIT is **Dr. Charles Elachi**, who was selected to head up the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. A pioneer in the field of electrical engineering, inventor **Hassan Kamel Al-Sabbah** worked for the General Electric Company (GE) in the 1920s and 30s. His research led to 52 patent applications, among them innovations in solar energy and television tubes.

Geologist **George A. Doumani's** explorations helped prove the theory of continental drift; he has a mountain peak named after him in Antarctica. Another American geologist, **Dr. Farouk el-Baz**, born in Egypt, helped plan all the Apollo moon landings and later pioneered the use of space photography to study the Earth.

Finally, the courageous astronauts who lost their lives aboard the space shuttle Challenger represented several racial and ethnic groups: African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, Anglo-American, Jewish-American — and Arab American: schoolteacher **Christa McAuliffe**.

We've all heard this quote before:

"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" — a famous quote by an Irish-American president, John F. Kennedy, that inspired an entire generation.



These words were first written by, among others, the Arab American author of "The Prophet," **Kahlil Gibran**. And that sentiment, so beautifully expressed by Gibran more than 70 years ago, has inspired Americans of all heritages.



We Arab Americans are proud of our heritage and proud to be Americans. It's this pride that keeps us all asking, "What can we do for our country?"— the good old U.S.A.

About the Arab American Institute Foundation

The AAIF sponsors and supports programs that promote awareness of Arab American contributions to life in the United States. AAIF priorities include research and education on Arab American demographics, cultural heritage, and leadership development.

Ongoing programs include the Kahlil Gibran "Spirit of Humanity" Awards program honoring individuals and organizations that promote ethnic and racial understanding and inclusion, and youth leadership awards for outstanding public and community service. AAIF also sponsors events for visiting dignitaries from the Arab world and other forms of U.S.-Arab professional exchange.

Incorporated in 1996 as a 501(c)(3) educational organization by the founders of the Arab American Institute, AAIF is based in Washington, DC.



1600 K Street NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 429-9210 • Fax (202) 429-9214
aaif@aaiusa.org • www.aaiusa.org