

Arab American Institute



VOTE 2004

Arab Americans
and the
2004 Elections





A

t the close of this important and historic election season, we thank our members and volunteers for making this year a memorable one for Arab Americans.

We are proud of your involvement in every step of the electoral process, from the early days of the primary season to the final hours in phone banks to get out the Arab American vote. Regardless of which party or which candidates were supported, the energy and talent of our community made an indelible impact on the political landscape.

We will build on that impact in the months ahead to bring the best of our constituency to the service of our local communities, states and nation. We will work hard to have the views and expertise of Arab Americans help shape critical decisions on foreign and domestic policy. Our values and perspectives will continue to give meaning to America's democracy.

To all the candidates who won on November 2, our congratulations and best wishes for success. To those who did not make it, our admiration and encourage-

ment to stay engaged. To all the first-time voters and volunteers, we count on you to keep involved.

This year marks 20 years of the Arab American Institute's empowerment project. When we founded the Institute in 1985, we felt that it was important to bring Arab Americans and our issues into the political mainstream. Today, we realize some of the fruits of our collective labor, and we are well poised to face the challenges ahead.

The Institute's work was important then, and even more so now. We know that you will stay with us, now more than ever.

- **George R. Salem**, Chairman
 - **James J. Zogby**, President

◆ **500** Arab American volunteers worked as precinct captains, poll watchers, or on partisan campaigns

◆ **600** Arab American Institute "Yalla Vote" volunteers

◆ **13,650** AAI "Yalla Vote" materials distributed



◆ **36,500** AAI primary and general election presidential voter guides distributed

◆ **70** Arab American delegates to national party conventions

◆ **4** Arab American events held at the national Democratic and Republican party conventions, with **1,400** delegates and participants attending

◆ **9** presidential candidates and campaigns attending AAI's October 2003 National Leadership Conference, addressing over **400** Arab American leaders from around the country

◆ **300,000** incidents of direct Arab American get-out-the-vote contact, including:

- **94,500** targeted GOTV mailings
- **90,300** targeted GOTV calls
- **91,543** web visits in Oct. 2004
- other direct contact including door-to-door canvassing

◆ **1000s** of voters signed up through AAI registration drives, including **400** on AAI's website



◆ **11** states with organized Arab American GOTV efforts (MI, FL, OH, PA, VA, NJ, CA, IL, IA, MD, TX)

◆ **8** states with organized Arab American bipartisan leadership councils

◆ **24** AAI-sponsored candidates' nights, rallies and civic education workshops in nine states attended by more than **4,000** people

◆ **183** candidates participating in AAI candidates' nights

◆ **5** battleground state polls that defined the Arab American vote

◆ **20** "Mideast Policy Debate in the 2004 Election" addresses delivered by AAI President James Zogby across the country attended by approximately **5,000** and carried on public radio in California and Ohio



◆ **900** mainstream press articles, broadcast interviews and segments on the Arab American vote

◆ **12** broadcasts of ART's "Washington Insider," a weekly call-in program featuring AAI election news and Arab American political activists

◆ **4346** Action Alert messages sent by AAI's website visitors to the presidential campaigns

◆ **70** get-out-the-vote public service announcements run on ART

◆ **48** AAI GOTV ads placed in community newspapers and websites in the month before Election Day

A DYNAMIC BEGINNING

VOTE 2004

THE VOTE 2004 CAMPAIGN began at AAI's National Leadership Conference in October 2003. Eight of the Democratic presidential candidates and campaigns and the chairman of the Bush-Cheney campaign addressed more than 400 Arab American leaders from 23 states.

To build on the success of the conference, statewide Arab American Leadership Councils (ALCs) were created in Florida, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The bipartisan ALCs worked throughout the election year to register voters, help Arab Americans run as delegates to their party conventions, and connect Arab American volunteers with their preferred campaigns.



From top left: John Kerry, Richard Gephardt, Joseph Lieberman, John Edwards, Howard Dean, Bush-Cheney '04 Chair Marc Racicot, Dennis Kucinich, DNC Chair Terry McAuliffe, Carol Moseley Braun (with AAI President James Zogby), and Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham (with Mike Farah) addressed the Arab American community at AAI's National Leadership Conference.



"Mobilizing Arab Americans" By David Broder, The Washington Post October 22, 2003

DEARBORN, Mich. - What happened here last weekend when about 300 Arab Americans from all parts of the country gathered in this Detroit suburb was another chapter in one of the unnoticed glories of American life - the entry of yet another immigrant group into the mainstream of the nation's politics.

AAI's "COUNTDOWN"
Oct. 31, 2003 | 361 Days Til Election Day
AAI Makes the Debates: At a recent Democratic presidential debate in Detroit, moderator Huel Perkins stated, [to] Wesley Clark, "You have not only praised the president that you now want to defeat but, according to the Arab [American] Institute Voting Guide, in February of 2003..." And Sen. Joseph Lieberman responded to a question from Perkins by stating, "I was here in Detroit just a week ago to speak to the Arab American Institute to stress what unites us. As I said, the hyphen between Arab-American and other ethnic Americans is in some places in the world a divider. Here it's a uniter."

Get political news each week, all year: subscribe to "Countdown" at www.aaiusa.org

"Iowa Arab Americans Plan Caucus Push" By Lynn Okamoto, Des Moines Register December 16, 2003

Arab-Americans have taken extra steps this year to get involved in the campaign leading up to Iowa's Jan. 19 first-in-the-nation caucuses.

"We're making special efforts this cycle because our issues are everyone's issues now," said Valerie Smith of Cedar Rapids, Iowa organizer for the Arab American Institute. "We want to share the extra knowledge and perspective that the Arab American community may have on these things to help the U.S. do the right thing"...

Priorities for Arab-Americans have traditionally included the Middle East, civil liberties and immigration. But this campaign season, interest in those issues has been heightened by the war on terrorism and enactment of the Patriot Act...

Turnout by Arab-Americans at Iowa's Jan. 19 caucuses is expected to be high. According to the Arab American Institute, people of Arab descent vote in greater percentages and are more politically active than average Americans. A 2000 Zogby International poll showed that 88.5 percent of Arab-Americans are registered to vote.



The Des Moines Register



The State News, Michigan, Feb. 6, 2004

AAI SPONSORED CAUCUS TRAINING sessions in Iowa and Michigan in December 2003. The four sessions included mock caucuses for both the Democratic and Republican parties and training on submitting resolutions for adoption into party platforms.

"The first step to empowerment is education. These workshops gave our community the tools and resources we needed to be an influential force in this election," said Fay Beydoun, Executive Director of AAI Michigan.

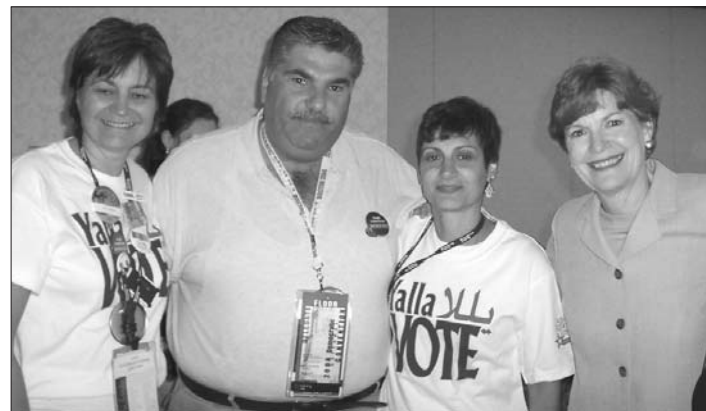
"Iowa Arab Americans were visible at events across the state and because of that we were sought after by the campaigns. If they see you at every stop, they know they can count on you come Election Day. This presence has contributed to the arrival of Arab Americans as a valued constituency in American politics," said AAI President James Zogby.

Later in the election year, AAI hosted Candidates' Nights, together with state Arab American Leadership Councils, in Michigan, Florida, Virginia, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Thousands of community members had the opportunity to meet congressional, state and local candidates as a result and over 180 candidates participated nationwide, including representatives from the Bush and Kerry campaigns.

THE CONVENTIONS

VOTE 2004

Summer 2004: the eyes of the nation turn to the national Democratic and Republican Party conventions. AAI organized the strong Arab American presence at the conventions, with issues panels and support for community members serving as delegates. And, as has been a tradition since 1988, AAI and the AAI Foundation hosted cultural tribute events at both conventions.



FORTY-THREE ARAB AMERICAN DELEGATES from 25 states were in Boston to represent their home states and the Arab American community at the Democratic Convention. Above, delegates Caryl Mansour, Neal Abed, and Janan Smither with national Kerry campaign chair Jeanne Shaheen. Right, delegates Fay Beydoun, Maya Berry, and Ali Dagher.



Meet Us at the Bazaar

AAI and the AAI Foundation hosted two events at the Democratic Convention: "Meet Us at the Bazaar," a celebration of Arab American heritage and political involvement, and the panel discussion "Reclaiming America: Liberty and Global Responsibility" cosponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union.



Justin Nadeau, candidate for US Representative from New Hampshire, talks with U.S. Rep. Chris John at "Meet Us at the Bazaar."

If there's an Arab American family being rounded up without benefit of an attorney or due process, that threatens my civil liberties. It's that fundamental belief - I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper - that makes this country work."

U.S. Senator-Elect **Barack Obama** (D-IL) in his keynote address to the Democratic Convention



Gov. John H. Sununu, Sherine El Abd, and AAI Chairman George Salem

Sununu's 'Very Best of the Arab-American Community'

By David Schoetz, Union Leader
Sept. 2, 2004

New Hampshire Sen. John E. Sununu was among honored guests at a lavish party titled "An Arabian Night in New York" Tuesday night.

Hosted by the Arab American Institute Foundation, the event took place at the Dahesh Museum of Art on Madison Avenue, where guests were treated to Middle Eastern paintings, music and cuisine....

"Governor and Senator Sununu are two of the leading Arab-American political figures," said AAI Chairman George Salem, the host of the event. "They represent the very best of the Arab-American community" ...

"The Arab American Institute Foundation is a very strong bi-partisan organization helping to get people interested and increase Arab-American voter registration," Sununu said. "One of the most important things to do is begin with encouraging participation. It's the ultimate American ideal."



At top: U.S. Sen. John E. Sununu, George Salem, AAI Executive Director Helen Samhan, and U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa



Below: Grover Norquist (at podium), US Rep. Bob Barr (center) and David Aufhauser spoke at AAI's panel discussion on the Patriot Act, co-sponsored by the American Conservative Union.

An Arabian Night in New York



The AAI Foundation sponsored an Arab American cultural showcase at the Republican National Convention, "An Arabian Night in New York," held at the Dahesh Museum of Art in Manhattan.

GOP Courting Immigrants' Vote

By Nicola White, Herald News, Sept. 3, 2004

At this week's Republican National Convention, [Sherine El Abd] is appealing to Arab Americans to vote for Bush because of his positions on family values, support for small business owners and less government spending. "Most of the people in our community agree with his (Bush's) moral platform," said El Abd, an Egyptian-American from Edison who is chairwoman of New Jersey's Arab American Republican Caucus....

On Tuesday night, the Arab-American Institute, a non-partisan organization in Washington, D.C., hosted "An Arabian Night in New York," a post-convention party at the Dahesh Museum on Madison Avenue, for Arab-American Republicans.

Keynote speaker at the event was Spencer Abraham, a third-generation Lebanese American who is Bush's Secretary of Energy....

Arab Americans could be an important demographic in this November's election. In the swing states of Florida, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, Arab-Americans

represent a likely voter turnout of 510,000 voters....

"Are you guys registered?" [George] Selim asked two young Arab-American men from Oklahoma who came through the doors at the convention after-party. "Great. Are there people like us in Oklahoma? Yeah?" On a table at the event's entrance, a sign in English and Arabic read, "Our vote is our power: Let's use it November 2."



Virginia delegate George Selim



Through Arab American opinion polls, numerous media and speaking appearances, and continuous engagement with the candidates and the press on key issues, AAI led the way in defining the Arab American vote and ensuring that our community's voices were heard.



AAI CONDUCTED A SERIES OF FIVE TRACKING POLLS of Arab American voter preferences in the key swing states of Michigan, Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, starting in February 2004. Arab Americans in the four states represented a likely voter turnout of more than 510,000 voters (235,000 in Michigan, 120,000 in Florida, 85,000 in Ohio, and 75,000 in Pennsylvania). Zogby International conducted the polls.

A final poll of 500 Arab American voters in those four battleground states, conducted immediately after the election, revealed that 63% voted for Senator John F. Kerry, 28.5% voted for President George W. Bush, and 2.5% voted for Independent candidate Ralph Nader.

In the fifth and final pre-election tracking poll, conducted in late October, Arab Americans cited the following issues as very important in deciding their vote: economy (82%), terrorism/national security (79%), foreign policy (75%), Iraq (74%), and health care (72%).



Above left: AAI President James Zogby, left, and Zogby International President John Zogby announce results of one of the series of Arab American tracking polls at a press conference.

The polls were covered hundreds of times by major news media, including (from top) *The Wall Street Journal* and *Investors' Business Daily*.



Maya Berry (above left) and Hala Kotb (right), along with AAI President James Zogby and Director Jean AbiNader, hosted "Washington Insider," a weekly call-in program featuring AAI election news and Arab American political activists that began airing on ART several months before the election.

LOU DOBBS TONIGHT

CNN, October 22, 2004

LOU DOBBS: My next guests are leaders in the Arab-American community. Together, they co-founded the Arab-American Institute nearly two decades ago. Today, though, they have very different views about who would make the best president. Joining me tonight from Washington, D.C. is James Zogby. He's president of the Arab-American Institute. And he has endorsed Senator John Kerry for president. George Salem is the chairman of the Arab-American Institute, and he supports President George W. Bush.

JAMES ZOGBY: I've never seen a situation for America in the world like the one we have today, and therefore, to me the choice was in fact very easy one. I think that John Kerry provides a very different kind of leadership, a smart leadership that can create alliances and bring people together. And I believe he'll end the civil liberties nightmare that we are seeing at home here as well....

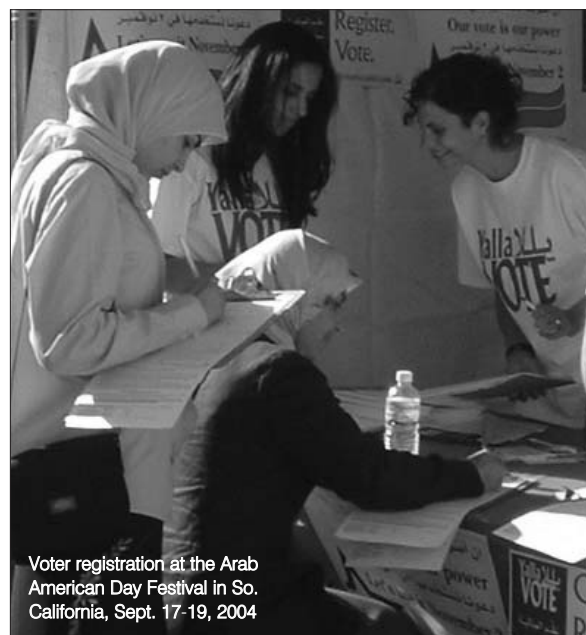
GEORGE SALEM: This president is the first president in the history of the United States to call for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. And more progress is made in second-term administrations on Middle East peace issues than at any other time.... He has more Arab-Americans in his administration than any other president in the history of the United States. And we have a community that, although divided on a lot of issues, I think likes the tax cuts, likes the economic progress we're making, and is not monolithic.

"We have a community that...is not monolithic."

2004 ARAB AMERICAN CANDIDATES

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| <p>CALIFORNIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Wafaa Aborashed for San Leandro City Council ♦ Luis Acle, Jr.* for San Diego School Board ♦ U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa* (R-49) for reelection ♦ Ferial Masry (D-37) for State Assembly ♦ Arkan Somo for El Cajon City Council <p>CONNECTICUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State Sen. David J. Cappiello* (R-24) for reelection ♦ State Rep. William Hamzy* (R-78) for reelection <p>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Ralph Nader (Independent) for US President ♦ Mai Abdul Rahman for School Board Committee <p>FLORIDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Former Jacksonville Mayor Tommy Hazouri* for Duvall County School Board <p>ILLINOIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood* (R-18) for reelection <p>INDIANA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Mitch Daniels* (R) for Governor <p>LOUISIANA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Charles Boustany (R-7) for US Representative ♦ U.S. Rep. Chris John (D-7) for U.S. Senate <p>MICHIGAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ David Allen* for 3rd Circuit Court Judge ♦ Hussein Berry for Dearborn School Board ♦ Oakland County Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard* (R) for reelection ♦ State Rep. David Farhat* (R-91) for reelection ♦ State Rep. Barbara A. Farrah* (D-13) for reelection ♦ Nicola Hawatmeh (R-5) for County Commissioner ♦ Fatmeh Saad for Dearborn School Board ♦ Macomb Co. Treasurer Ted Wahby* (D) for reelection ♦ Jacklin Zeidan for Dearborn School Board | <p>NEW HAMPSHIRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State Rep. Ben Baroody* (D-13) for reelection ♦ Susie Fortier (13) for State Representative ♦ Justin Nadeau (D-1) for US Representative <p>NEW JERSEY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ George Ajjan (R-8) for US Representative ♦ Jo Ann Hajjar Byrnes for Morris County Freeholder ♦ City Councilman Mohamed T. Khairullah* for reelection ♦ Hosam Mansour (I) for Mayor of Jersey City <p>OHIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Barbara Ferris (I-10) for US Representative ♦ Lucas County Sheriff Jim Telb* for reelection ♦ Jack Zouhary for Judge of the Court of Common Pleas <p>PENNSYLVANIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State Rep. Camille George* (D-74) for reelection ♦ Joe Peters (R) for Auditor General <p>RHODE ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Former Town Solicitor Milan Azar (I - Johnston) for Mayor ♦ Former State Rep. John Barr (I-59) for his former seat ♦ State Sen. Hanna Gallo* (D-12) for reelection ♦ State Sen. Daniel J. Issa* (D-16) for reelection <p>SOUTH CAROLINA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State Sen. Vincent A. Sheheen* (D-27) for reelection <p>TENNESSEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State Rep. James Naifeh* (D-81) for reelection <p>TEXAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ District Judge Alvin Khoury* (12) for reelection ♦ Mark Strama* (D-50) for State Representative <p>WEST VIRGINIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall* (D-3) for reelection |
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*elected



Voter registration at the Arab American Day Festival in So. California, Sept. 17-19, 2004

AAI'S GET-OUT-THE-VOTE EFFORTS

were concentrated in swing states with large Arab American populations like Michigan, Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Over 600 volunteers powered the nationwide effort to mobilize Arab American voters manning phone banks, registering voters, and canvassing neighborhoods.

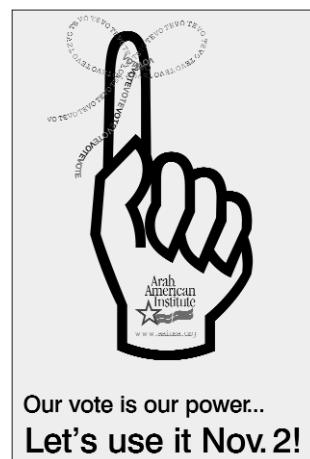
Yalla VOTE

AAI sent over 36,000 voter guides detailing the candidates' positions on important issues to Arab American households and registered hundreds of new voters.

Hundreds of community members signed up as "Yalla Vote Captains," pledging to call family and friends to remind them to vote.



The Times-Union, FL, Oct. 18, 2004



AAI GOTV flier



AAI VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS turned the Arab neighborhoods of Dearborn, Michigan into Yalla Vote central. Banners, fliers, T-shirts and signs in English and Arabic covered the city urging Arab Americans to vote. Arab American businesses displayed signs and banners and grocery store and restaurant owners urged their customers to exercise their civic duty on Election Day.



"The 2004 presidential election was a victory for Arab American civic empowerment. Activists throughout the country worked with AAI to define the Arab American vote and participate in the presidential campaigns. The result was increased numbers of Arab Americans voters, candidates, and volunteers. As we head into 2005's important municipal elections we are well placed to reach even greater heights."

- Marwan Kreidie, executive director of the Arab American Community Development Corporation in Pennsylvania

"Building a national political base begins at the local level. We are taking our positions on civil liberties and Middle East peace to the city councils and county governments where our activism garners more attention. If your representatives inside Washington see you winning support in the home district they will get the message."

- Abed Awad, member of the New Jersey Electoral College



"KNOW YOUR VOTER RIGHTS!"

AAI joined "Election Protection," a nonpartisan initiative of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, to help ensure that Arab Americans and other minorities are able to register and vote without incident. An Election Day toll-free hotline provided voters with immediate legal assistance.



Above: AAI President James Zogby introduces General Wesley Clark, who spoke at the Michigan Candidates' Night on behalf of the Kerry campaign.

"We really are part of the process now and no one can take that away from us. Years of hard work have paid off and the benefit is an Arab American political constituency that stands for a shared set of values, whether we are Republican or Democrat."

- Farmington Hills City Councilman John Akouri



Now more than ever.

In 2005, AAI celebrates its 20th year of working for Arab American civic and political empowerment.



Twenty years ago, candidates rejected Arab American contributions and endorsements. Now, as you see in the report you're holding, we have found a prominent place in our nation's political arena.

It would never have been possible without the support of each and every one of you who have joined AAI, sent donations, attended our events, volunteered, and gotten involved in so many ways.

We've come so far, and have so much still ahead of us. Thank you for being part of our success. Please join us for the next phase of our work. Visit our website to join or make a contribution.

www.aaiusa.org