



Council News

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Arab American and Chaldean Council

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Celebrating 30 years of success

DETROIT — The Renaissance Center in Detroit was the site of the Arab American and Chaldean Council's (ACC) Annual Civic and Humanitarian Awards Gala on Sat., Oct. 17, as the organization celebrated 30 years of service and accomplishments.



(Left to right) Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun, Ambassador Houda Nonoo, Mrs. Nora Moroun, and Dr. Haifa Fakhouri.

What began as a grassroots venture under Jordanian immigrant and current president Haifa Fakhouri and friends has now evolved into one of the most invaluable community service organizations in both Detroit and the Arab American community.

The ACC provides services like health clinics, workforce and English-as second language training, and scholarship awards among others and currently maintains a state-of-the-art four-building "oasis" along a stretch of Seven Mile Rd. between John R. and Woodward in Detroit that continues to breathe life and culture into what some believed was a dying area.

WDIV-Local 4 TV personality and weatherman Chuck Gaidica emceed the weekend event as several prominent community leaders took home awards.



Chuck Gaidica congratulates U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow.

Fakhouri was among those honored as she received the group's newly-created Visionary Award for helping make the ACC's successes possible, an award that caught her off guard and led to some emotional moments.

Earlier in the evening, Fakhouri introduced Honored Guest Houda Nonoo, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States and head of that country's Human Rights Watch.

"I am happy to be here in Detroit to celebrate three fruitful decades for the ACC," Nonoo said. "The ACC provides important services to us in (Washington) D.C.," she added, citing their important role in the immigration field.

ACC is currently readying itself for an additional 12,000 immigrants, mostly Iraqis, who are expected to enter Michigan before the end of the year.

"Many Iraqis are fleeing for their lives and looking to establish new homes in America," Fakhouri said. "Many of them are from professional backgrounds but need help; with your help and the help of others

2009 State Leadership Awardees Lt. Governor John Cherry (left) and Attorney General Mike Cox (right).



we will be able to give more."

Also honored on the night were U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, who received the Leadership Award; Michigan Lieutenant Governor John D. Cherry and Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox, who each received State Leadership Awards; Detroit Mayor Dave Bing, who received the City Leadership Award; Ambassador Bridge owner and transportation industry mogul Manuel "Matty" Moroun, who won the Entrepreneur of the Year Award; and Walid Khalife, owner of the Gold Corp, Inc. jewelry business, who was named the ACC's Board Member of the Year.



Mayor Dave Bing receives ACC's 2009 City Leadership Award.

Moroun, a Lebanese American, bought the bridge in 1979 and said it is now the busiest crossing in North America.

Bing spoke about the importance of the ACC's work in Detroit.

"We are thankful for the leadership of ACC and I'm truly honored to be here tonight," Bing said. "For 30 years your health care and job training has meant very much to us."

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By Nick Meyer

To view more Gala picture visit ACC's Event Gallery at www.MYACC.org.

E-Bus on Seven Mile

In collaboration with the ACC, Fifth Third Bank made their E-Bus available to ACC clients and the community at large on Seven Mile Rd.

The E-Bus is a full-size commercial bus that is retrofitted as a self-contained mobile community resource center that travels directly to people where they work and live to increase access to information, resources and services.



On Thursday August 27, over 100 clients and community residents gathered in the ACC Artisan Center to listen and participate in the presentations made by Fifth Third Bank, State Department of Human Services, Community Legal Services, and City of Detroit DHS. Topics of discussion included family budgeting, credit repair, how to access city and state resources, first time homebuyers, jobs on-line and interviewing skills, bankruptcies, and a variety of legal issues.

Following the presentations, participants were invited to board the E-bus where bank staff was available for one-on-one discussions with clients who needed further follow-up. Food and refreshments were also provided for all participants.

Based on client feedback, this was a very well received program. ACC would like to thank Fifth Third Bank for this initiative and will attempt to make this an annual event.



ACC hosts Back Pack Program

The Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC) and Wayne County teamed up to provide school bags to over 100 kids on September 17.

Coinciding with the start of the 2009-10 school year, Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano and ACC's President and CEO Dr. Haifa Fakhouri handed the bags to the Metro Detroit area's underprivileged children as part of the Wayne County Back-to-School Program.

"Not only does this program provide essential tools for education, but it helps elevate self-esteem for those children in need," said Ficano.



ACC President and CEO Haifa Fakhouri with Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano passing out book bags to community children in need.

Annual Holiday Giving

Turkey Giveaways are a tradition at ACC. Each year we distribute turkeys to low income families through our many community outreach offices located in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties.

This year ACC was fortunate enough to be able to provide close to 200 turkeys to families in need.



On Friday, October 21 through Tuesday, October 24 ACC staff distributed more than 200 turkeys to families in Southeastern Michigan.

Join us in *Making a Difference*

There is a great need for your support, this year more than ever, and we would like to invite you to be involved in this charitable effort by making a donation. **ACC offices will be collecting food, clothing, toys and other basic need items for those less fortunate during this holiday season.** Your generosity and support will make a real difference in the lives of the families we serve. **For more information please call ACC at (248) 559-1990.**

Forum focuses on prevention

On September 24 ACC, in collaboration with Beaumont Hospital and its Cancer Institute, conducted its 5th Annual Arab American and Chaldean Cancer Prevention, Early Detection and Treatment Forum. The overall aim of the annual cancer forum is to help reduce risks and morbidity in breast, cervical, prostate, colorectal and other cancers among the Arab & Chaldean community.

Held at the St. Mary's Church in Warren, there was not an empty seat in the room. Participants were given the opportunity to sign up for free screening and health services. This is the only event of its kind in the nation and has helped many high risk individuals obtain cancer screenings and follow up care.

Guest presenters included: Muhyi Al Sarraf, MD, FRCPC, FACP; Samer Ballouz, MD; and Samir Jamil, MD.



ACC celebrates clients' recoveries

DETROIT — Standing in the middle of poverty-stricken Detroit like an oasis in the desert, the Arab and Chaldean Council Clubhouse has established itself as a place of healing for Wayne County residents suffering with mental and substance abuse problems.

On Tuesday, Sept. 29, the clubhouse hosted a Recovery/Eid Party for those who have used the support offered to heal in the face of adversity. . .

The culturally sensitive clubhouse, opened in 2007, offers English and U.S. citizenship classes, transportation to jobs, and support for those who need help for mental health problems and substance abuse. Many attendees are also trained to work in the kitchen or on the cash register in the snack shop to give them a better sense of purpose and duty, and other events like women only dances and arts and crafts days allow them to gain a better sense of self. Patients must be referred by their therapist, and ACC takes care of the paperwork from there. . . Also on hand to celebrate was Iltefat Ilkhazan, who came to America from Iraq in 1996.



Joyce Johnson (left) helped give Youkhana Kako the support he needed through ACC's Clubhouse. Kako is currently studying with Johnson in order to pass the U.S. citizenship test. PHOTOS: Nick Meyer/TAAN

"The ACC has helped me so much, they changed my life," she said. "I wanted to die, but they changed everything. I feel like I have brothers and sisters here, like I have a family." The ACC helped straighten out things in court so she could keep custody of two of her sons and is now helping her get her GED so she can go into nursing. "At first I thought I couldn't make it when I was by myself, but now with my experience I know I can make it," she said.

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ACC Hamtramck Grand Opening

ACC celebrated the official opening of its relocated Hamtramck Office on Nov. 30th. at 9019 Jos Campau. Community leaders, funders and friends came together to celebrate the new facility. Joined by Mayor Karen Majewski of Hamtramck and other notable officials, ACC shared its goals of reaching out to the community through its many specialized programs and services. In addition, guests were given a tour of the facility and the programs available at this location.

ACC's Hamtramck office offers programs and services such as Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) Job Education and Training (JET) program, Women Infant and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, DHS services, youth and community programs, and referrals in addition to others.

ACC is committed to serving the diverse community of Hamtramck, especially during this difficult economic time. ACC has been providing services to the city of Hamtramck since 1980.



ACC addresses Capital Hill

On October 21, 2009, ACC hosted an educational reception on Capital Hill in Washington D.C to update and discuss with legislators the growing need to expand services in southeastern Michigan.

ACC Executive Director Dr. Radwan Khoury began his address by emphasizing the amount of high quality services ACC has provided to the community for the past 30 years. He addressed his remarks, to a standing room of state and federal officials, on the critical need for funding due to the astronomical unemployment rate and current economic conditions facing the population in Michigan.

Dr. Khoury concluded his remarks by stating, "As budgets are getting smaller and client lists are getting longer, ACC is seeking federal funding in order to expand its services and meet the demand. Funding is particularly needed for refugee programs in the areas of employment and training, public and mental health, and English as a second language."

U.S. Representatives Mike Rogers, Gary Peters, Thaddeus McCotter, Peter Hoekstra, Carolyn Kilpatrick, and Mark Schauer spoke about the impact ACC has on the lives of those it serves, and on how important it is to support human service organizations like the ACC.

While in D.C. ACC administrators also had the opportunity to meet with the Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services and the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.



ACC Executive Director Radwan Khoury as he greets Congressman Thaddeus McCotter.



Congressman Mike Rogers addresses the audience on behalf of ACC.

2009 Red Kettle Campaign



Volunteer: Volunteers truly are integral to The Salvation Army's effectiveness. To participate as a bell ringer go to RINGBELL.ORG or call 877-SAL-MICH.

Give: Stationed at more than 300 locations throughout Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, donations will be collected through Thursday, Dec. 24.

Contributions also can be made by calling 877-SAL-MICH or at salvationarmy.org until Jan. 31, 2009.



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