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ARAB AMERICAN AND CHALDEAN COUNCIL LAUNCHES SKILLED TRADE WORKER PROGRAM WITH DTE ENERGY FOUNDATION GRANT

TROY, Mich. – March 2016 – The Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC), a premier nonprofit human service organization serving southeast Michigan, has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from DTE Energy Foundation for its Skilled Trade Worker Program, which is part of the organization’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) initiative. Funds will be received over a two-year period.

The program is geared towards the ACC’s recently arrived refugee clients to help prepare them for job opportunities in the energy industry and related fields such as plumbing, heating and cooling, carpentry and more. Based on the nonprofit’s intake applications, it was found that a large portion of these Arab and Chaldean individuals are highly skilled and technical laborers who are eager to gain experience and the proper qualifications to re-enter the workforce. The Skilled Trade Worker Program will seek to enhance their employability and language skills, which also will increase their self-sufficiency and prepare them for these technical and skilled trade careers and apprenticeships.

The initiative will be completed through the WIA, which responds to the needs of dislocated workers and other economically and educationally disadvantaged individuals, particularly those who are non-English speaking. Founded with the goal of eliminating the need for public assistance, the program provides the following services to clients in their native language: English as a Second Language (ESL), Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), career counseling, resume writing skills, interviewing skills and job search and placement assistance.

“A large percentage of metropolitan Detroit’s skilled trade workforce is looking to retire soon. This will be sure to leave numerous job openings for many,” added Dr. Haifa Fakhouri, Arab American and Chaldean Council President and CEO. “With the growing number of refugees arriving in Michigan looking for employment, we want to best prepare them for career opportunities that will allow them to live stable and secure lives in their new community.”

In addition, the program will assist clients in finding and enrolling in schools for trade skills, as well as create partnerships with locally owned Arab American and Chaldean businesses to provide apprenticeships in a culturally competent environment.

About the Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC)

The Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC) is the premier nonprofit human service organization providing services to the Middle Eastern and mainstream communities in Southeast Michigan. Founded in 1979, the ACC provides counseling, health care, social services, employment training, job placement, translation, interpretation and youth services to more than 70,000 clients in metro Detroit. The ACC operates 40 outreach offices in the tri-county area, staffed with bilingual and trilingual professionals to serve the Arab American and Chaldean American populations and offer assistance to the Middle East refugee population. For more information, visit www.myacc.org or call (248) 559-1990.

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