

PATRIOTS & PEACE MAKERS

Arab Americans in
Service to Our Country



Arab American
National Museum

U.S. ARMED FORCES

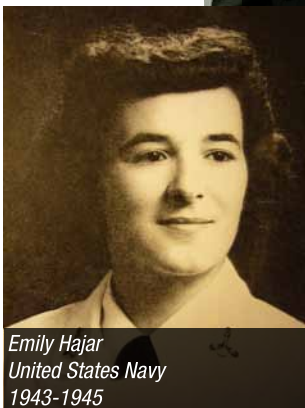
Arab Americans, both Muslim and Christian, are veterans of wars from the American Revolution and the Civil War to the present. For some, enlistment was a bridge to citizenship or a way to express gratitude for their adopted homeland. In draft years, Arab Americans served in record numbers. The Arab American National Museum (AANM) documented stories of privates and generals, veterans and active-duty service members. Most survived war, some did not. Many found it painful to tell their stories of combat, 20, 40, or even 60 years later. Others chose to remain silent.

A 1924 study by Princeton professor **Philip Hitti** found that 13,965 Arab Americans served in World War I. Most of these soldiers were from what was then called Greater Syria. Hitti claims that a higher percentage of Syrians

served in WWI than any other ethnic community in the U.S. Many scholars claim about 15,000 Arab Americans served in World War II. According to the Association for Patriotic Arab Americans in the Military, there are around 3,500 Arab Americans in the military today.



George Joulwan
United States Army
1966-1997



Emily Hajar
United States Navy
1943-1945

Firm statistics about Arab American service are difficult to substantiate. Many of these statistics are determined by historians who researched local and national military records, relying mostly on last names as a determining factor in a person's ethnicity. Arab Americans are also not recognized as a distinct racial category by the U.S. Census or military data, and are typically identified as "white" or "other."

The AANM has been able to collect personal and family histories of Arab Americans who have served for the protection and defense of the United States, its Constitution and its citizens. Arab Americans have served diligently, whether enlisted or drafted, even when they, like the majority of Americans, didn't support certain wars.

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, some Arab American soldiers have found their loyalties called into question or have come under special scrutiny. The **Association of Patriotic Arab Americans in the Military (APAAM)** developed as one response. It was founded as the first formal organization for active and veteran Arab American service members.



Faye Glenn Abdellah

United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps
Deputy Surgeon General
1949-1989

Faye Glenn Abdellah, of Algerian and Scottish descent, joined the USPHS in 1949, becoming the first nurse officer in any service to achieve the rank of two-star rear admiral. Her theories revolutionized nursing care from disease-centered to patient-centered. As the first nurse and first woman to serve as deputy surgeon general, she promoted education on AIDS, hospice care and drug addiction. Abdellah also founded a graduate research school for nurses.

Pictured on Front (from top to bottom): Julie Eadeh - Source: Julie Eadeh; James Jabara - Source: U.S. Air Force; May Assaff Ede - Source: Emily Hajar; Ahmed Naguib - Source: Ahmed Naguib.

PEACE CORPS

The Peace Corps is a volunteer organization established in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy to promote world peace and international public service. It is a form of people-to-people diplomacy, helping communities around the world understand U.S. culture, and helping Americans understand other cultures.

Arab Americans started serving in the Peace Corps shortly after it was established. **Donna Shalala** went to Iran in 1962; **Bill Aossey** and **Janet Ghattas** both served in Senegal the following year. Each was inspired by President Kennedy's call to join this international organization and serve for peace. Aossey, Ghattas and Shalala, like other Peace Corps volunteers, worked with local governments, schools and non-profit organizations, on social and economic development projects.

Though Arab Americans have served in many

countries, they have often been placed in an

Arabic-speaking country, mainly Jordan and Morocco. **Rob Mosrie** served in Jordan and came to appreciate the Peace Corps' role in promoting peace through mutual understanding. **Ahmed Naguib** served as a health care volunteer from 2009-2011 in the

first Peace Corps group to enter Rwanda since the 1994 genocide. His family was unhappy about him being gone so long, but they now have a great sense of pride.

Serving internationally helps volunteers develop valuable leadership and civic engagement skills and an appreciation for people whose culture is very different from their own. Peace Corps volunteers often continue to work in public service when they return to the United States. **Ruth Ann Skaff** served in Morocco as a teacher and health care director in the 1970s. She has continued to serve in and support non-profit institutions such as St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and other Arab American organizations.

There has been no formal survey of Arab Americans who have served in the Peace Corps. The AANM has collected the stories of just 35 of the estimated 100+ Arab Americans who gave their time to this relatively young organization.



Antoinette Byda Peters Day
United States Army, 1966-1970
Peace Corps, Bulgaria, 2007-2009

Antoinette Day joined the Peace Corps at age 65, after earning a master's degree, serving in the Army and building a business career. "I thought I was one smart chick, but it still surprises me how much I didn't know. Two years working with the Peace Corps provided me with a frame of reference that will forever cause me to pause before passing judgment."



Ruth Ann Skaff
Peace Corps
Morocco, 1971-1977

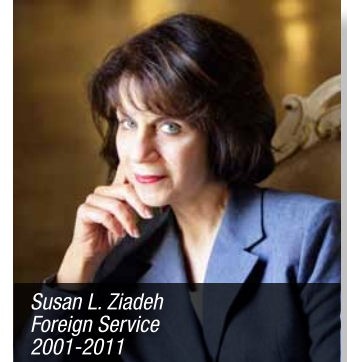


Mohamad A. Chakaki
Peace Corps
Cameroon, 2001-2002

DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Diplomatic service is an important component of the U.S. Department of State. It is comprised of a group of individuals dedicated to representing their home country in foreign nations.

Many Arab Americans have served in diplomatic positions in countries around the globe since World War II and in greater numbers over the last three decades. They work in the Foreign Service and other branches of the State Department. Arab American diplomats work as ambassadors, consular officials and cultural attachés, and as representatives of trade, agriculture, arts and education. They work to resolve conflicts, foster understanding and cooperation between the U.S. and their host country, and negotiate international agreements.



*Susan L. Ziadeh
Foreign Service
2001-2011*

Diplomatic service also includes representing the U.S. at political gatherings and public events as well as social gatherings and ceremonies. Arab American diplomats, with their unique cultural heritage and dedication, offer people in other countries a glimpse of our nation's diversity and tenacity.



*Maha Angelina Armush
Foreign Service
2006-Present*

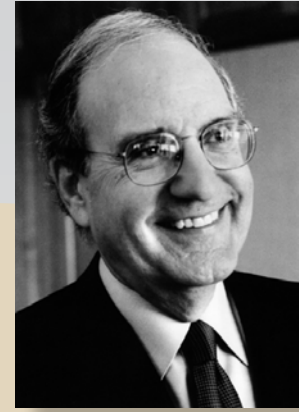


Edward Gabriel
*U.S. Ambassador to Morocco
1997-2001*

Edward Gabriel has extensive experience in international affairs, having convened multilateral policy forums involving national security, environmental, trade and energy issues. Gabriel has been involved in matters of Russian and European nuclear non-proliferation and safety, and he has been an advisor on Mideast policy. As U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, he launched a new strategic relationship strengthening political, military and economic ties between the U.S. and Morocco.

Arab American diplomats have played important roles in negotiating international agreements. **George Mitchell** is renowned for his role in negotiating peace in Ireland in the 1990s. **Isa Khalil Sabbagh** was a key advisor on policies in the Middle East. Other diplomats have had significant impact in Europe, Asia and Latin America. **Maha Angelina Armush** was posted in Brazil, working on human rights issues.

Some Arab Americans have claimed top diplomatic positions as ambassadors. **Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba** served as the U.S. Embassy spokesperson in Cairo and was the first female American ambassador to a Gulf state. **Edward Gabriel** served as ambassador to Morocco from 1997-2001; **Yousif Ghafari** was appointed ambassador to Slovenia in 2008; and **Susan Ziadeh** began serving as ambassador to Qatar in 2011.



“Are you a politician asking what your country can do for you or a zealous one asking what you can do for your country?”

— Gibran Kahlil Gibran

The *Patriots & Peacemakers* exhibition was created to honor Arab Americans who have served our country in the U.S. Armed Forces, the Peace Corps and the diplomatic corps, and reflects their contributions and perspectives. The exhibition is the fruit of four years of research, discussion and labor; hundreds of interviews were conducted across the country. The men and women whose stories are told are representative of the thousands of Arab Americans who have served our nation with dignity, loyalty and sacrifice. The exhibition was also designed to invite viewers to consider for a moment those in their lives who have served the U.S. in any capacity, and to inspire individuals to volunteer their time or get involved in any form of community service.

The Arab American National Museum houses a vast collection of books, recorded stories, photographs, and artifacts that document the long and diverse history of Arab American service. Please visit www.arabamericanmuseum.org to browse this and other collections.

Prictured (from left to right): Dib Abdallah; Leila Bendeck.; George Mitchell.



Patriots & Peacemakers: Arab Americans in Service to Our Country

November 11, 2011-June 10, 2012

Curated by the Arab American National Museum

For further information about this exhibition or Arab Americans in public service, call 313.624.0234

The Arab American National Museum documents, preserves and presents the history, culture and contributions of Arab Americans.



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