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Heroes Among Us

By [Raad Alawan](#) • Dec 5th, 2008 • Category: [Features](#), [Story](#)



Nawal Hamadeh (this page) and Edward Deeb (opposite page) are names that may not be familiar to some, but their stories are remarkable. They have fought for children, for peace, for business and for education. And they've done it with the simple desire to help others. A woman and a man who do what is right in a world that, frankly, often does not reward doing the right thing.

The Arab American Women's Business Council, founded by Jumana Judeh, presented its inaugural Arab American Woman of The Year Award to Hamadeh. She manages three area charter schools. All along, she has believed that every child deserves a future beyond high school. And Hamadeh has delivered at an unprecedented rate. Her high school graduates have a 100 percent college acceptance rate.

The secret to her many years of success she says lies in "dedication, hard work and perseverance."

What does Deeb believe? He believes it is his responsibility to get up every day and fight for his dream – a world where everyone has a voice. That's why the American Arab Chamber of Commerce awarded him its Local Businessman of The Year Award at its November banquet. Deeb grew up in the Detroit area, and saw something terrible happen in the 1960s, when rioters targeted grocers. Deeb's dedication for resolution resulted in more patrols in troubled areas.

During the last decade, the son of Syrian parents went to work to calm relations between Arab and black communities after scuffles between stores owners and residents. Deeb, long-time head of the Michigan Food & Beverage Association, has also founded several groups and activities for young people, including Metro Detroit Youth Day, now in its 26th year.

Deeb and Hamadeh are proof that you don't need superpowers – or millions of dollars – to change the world. Congratulations to both award recipients. *

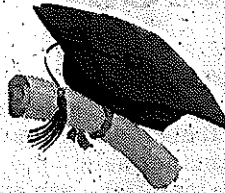


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Women scientists, technicians from the Middle East to connect with local researchers

Sixteen Arab women with advanced degrees in science and technology will spend eight weeks working in southeastern Michigan research laboratories through a project organized by the University of Michigan-Dearborn's College of Engineering and Computer Science.

The program is being supported by a \$350,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State's Office of Citizen Exchanges, as part of UM-Dearborn's Henry W. Patton Center for Engineering Education and Practice.

"The main objective of this program is to provide young Arab women in the professional fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with a fellowship that will not only enhance their

technical training but also familiarize them with the research environment in the U.S," according to John Cristiano, director of the UM-Dearborn center.

"The long-term goal is to establish a sustainable network of relationships not only with their American mentors but also among participants.

"The mission of HP-CEEP is to be a leader in incorporating engineering practice, at all levels of engineering education, by integrating the teaching environment with the world of practice. This program provides a unique opportunity to leverage our talented and diverse faculty to extend the mission of the center internationally by combining the professional development of participants with the building of long-term, collaborative relationships."

The program will recruit participants from countries in the Middle East and North Africa, including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, West Bank / Gaza and Yemen.

The women selected for the program will spend two months working with researchers at UM-Dearborn and in local high technology companies.

"During their stay the women will split their time between enhancing their technical education

through university courses and working on research projects in their area of expertise at their host company," said Barbara Peitsch, the project manager for UM-Dearborn.

"The goal is to establish a relationship for each participant with a faculty member or industry mentor."

After the women complete the fellowships, they will be engaged in follow-up programs in their home countries, including continuing engagement with their American mentors.

"The final phase is to sustain the relationships built during their fellowships both between the participants and with their community, industry, and university mentors," Peitsch said.

UM-Dearborn is partnering with the Arab American Women's Business Council (AAWBC) and the Detroit Regional Chamber to implement this project.

"Our local partners are key to the success of the program," according to Peitsch. "Working with the AAWBC and the Detroit Regional Chamber will ensure that these women have strong job placements and that they are comfortable culturally and socially."

For further information about the project, contact Cristiano at cristiano@umich.edu or phone (313) 593-0941 or Peitsch at bpeitsch@umich.edu or phone (313) 593-5086.