

Arab American Communities and Disabilities Conference:



***Getting to Know You,
Getting to Know Us***

Saturday, December 10, 2011

8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

**Doubletree Hotel
200 Atrium Drive
Somerset, NJ**

Sponsors

The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities,
UMDNJ - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School,
Department of Pediatrics
Disability Rights New Jersey
The NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
The NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities

Co-Sponsors

Horizon NJ Health
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Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

Partners

Healthfirst NJ
NJ Division of Disability Services
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In Collaboration With

Arab American Family Support Center
Arab American Heritage Commission
Arab American Institute
Arab American Medical Association
The Islamic Council of Jersey City
Mental Health Association in Passaic County
Montclair State University
Modern Languages and Literatures/Arabic Program
Network of Arab American Professionals of NY
NJ Outreach Group
NJ Department of Law and Public Safety
Division on Civil Rights
NY Arab American Comedy Festival

Welcome

Workshop Information

Please see the workshop schedule and locations on the next page. You may attend any of the workshops.

Lunch

Lunch will be served as a buffet, which will include Middle Eastern vegetarian selections as well as Halal chicken, beef, and lamb. Volunteers will be available to help anyone who needs assistance with the buffet. If you have special dietary needs and asked for a different lunch, please see a volunteer.

Restrooms

There are 3 sets of restrooms available in this hotel – to the left as you exit the ballroom, to the left past the restaurant, and upstairs on the second floor.

Meditation and Prayer Rooms

Two rooms on the first floor have been reserved for Meditation and Prayer space. These rooms will be open throughout the day.

Relaxation Room

Need some peace and quiet? Need to get away from it all? Take a break and relax in the Library on the second floor.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency evacuation, please exit through the ballroom doors, then exit the hotel through the main entrance and wait in the parking lots. If you need assistance, please raise your hand to notify staff.

Courtesy

Out of respect for participants and our presenters, we ask that cell phones be turned off, or changed to a silent signal if necessary.

Photos

Pictures will be taken throughout the day. At the registration table, we have sign-up sheets for permission to use pictures. If you would like us to take your picture, please sign the photo release at the registration table. The pictures may be used in future conference displays or publications.

Evaluations

Please fill out your workshop evaluation forms and return them to the workshop volunteer at the end of each session. Please fill out the conference evaluation form, which will be on the table at the end of the day when you come back for dessert. Evaluations are an important part of our planning process.

Conference at a Glance

8:30 A.M.	Registration, Continental Breakfast, Exhibits, and Networking			
9:00 A.M.	<p>Welcome</p> <p><i>Bill Gaventa, MDiv, Director of Congregational and Community Supports, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, The Boggs Center</i> <i>Deborah M. Spitalnik, PhD, Executive Director, Professor of Pediatrics, The Boggs Center</i> <i>Eman Hamad, MD, Chairwoman, Arab American Heritage Commission</i> <i>Jennifer Velez, Esq., Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services</i></p>			
9:30 A.M.	<p>Keynote</p> <p>Understanding the Arab American Experience</p> <p><i>Helen Hatab Samhan, MA, Board Member and former Executive Director, Arab American Institute, Washington, DC</i></p>			
10:15 A.M.	<p>Panel of Arab American Individuals with Disabilities and Families</p> <p><i>Moderated by Raja Salloum, MSW, LCSW, Arab American Mental Health Clinician, Mental Health Association in Passaic County</i></p>			
11:00 A.M.	Break			
MORNING WORKSHOPS				
11:15 A.M.	Workshop 1	Workshop 4	Workshop 6	Workshop 8
	Bridgewater, 2nd Floor	Princeton, 2nd Floor	Hillsborough, 2nd Floor	Westfield, 2nd Floor
	Best Practices in Working with the Arab American Community	Early Childhood Resources for Children with Disabilities or Special Health Care Needs and Their Families	Resources and Services for Adults with Disabilities and Their Families	Protecting Your Children from Hostile Environment or Bullying in the Schools
12:30 P.M.	Lunch, Exhibits, and Networking			
AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS				
1:45 P.M.	Workshop 2	Workshop 3	Workshop 5	Workshop 7
	Westfield, 2nd Floor	Bridgewater, 2nd Floor	Princeton, 2nd Floor	Hillsborough, 2nd Floor
	Mental Health Barriers Broken in the Arab American Community	Arab Americans and Religious and Cultural Influences on the Perception of Disability	Educational and Assistive Technology Resources for School-aged Children with Disabilities and Their Families	Immigrant Rights to Disability Services and Language Access
3:15 P.M.	Musical Performance by Abdelfattah Shabana and Dessert			
4:00 P.M.	Adjourn			

Keynote Presentations

Understanding the Arab American Experience

Helen Hatab Samhan, MA
Board Member and former Executive Director
Arab American Institute, Washington, DC

This presentation offers an overview of Arab American immigrant experiences and ethnic integration in the U.S. A profile of national and statewide demographics will be provided as well as highlights of civic and cultural expressions, with special attention to the needs of the foreign-born population. The religious and national origin diversity of Arab Americans will be explored as well as the impact of racial profiling and post-9/11 prejudice on attitudes and behaviors in this population.



Helen Hatab Samhan

Helen Hatab Samhan has over 30 years of experience in non-profit advocacy, research and cultural outreach work about Arab Americans. In 2010, Samhan retired as executive director of the Arab American Institute in Washington, D.C. where for 25 years she led operational management, program development, governance, and leadership affiliations. Samhan established at AAI an outreach and research program with the U.S. Census Bureau to present and analyze demographic data on Americans of Arab ancestry. She publishes and lectures extensively in the field of Arab American ethnic studies and currently serves as Senior Outreach Advisor to the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. Born in Brooklyn, NY and raised in Bergen County, NJ, Samhan is the granddaughter of immigrants from present-day Syria and Lebanon. She received her BA from Marymount College and graduated from the American University of Beirut with a Masters degree in Middle East Studies.

Panel of Arab American Individuals with Disabilities and Families

Moderator: Raja Salloum, MSW, LCSW
Arab American Mental Health Clinician
Mental Health Association in Passaic County

Panelists: Laila Atshan; Nybil Ghanem; Amani Shahin; Alia Suqi; Othman Suqi;
Maysoon Zayid

A panel of Arab American individuals with disabilities and family members will share some of their experience with disability within their own culture and as community members and residents of New Jersey.

Musical Entertainment

Abdelfattah Shabana

Abdelfattah Shabana is a singer, actor, song writer, and composer. He will perform the oud, a traditional Middle Eastern string instrument.



Workshops

1 Best Practices in Working with the Arab American Community

Lena Alhusseini, MSc, MPA, Executive Director, Arab American Family Support Center of New York

This workshop will provide an overview of over 18 years in providing social services to individuals and families in the Arab American Community in New York. Successes and challenges faced by a leading nonprofit in the field will be shared, along with recommendations and best practices in providing social services in the community.

2 Mental Health Barriers Broken in the Arab American Community

Joanne Green, MSW, LSW, Executive Director, Mental Health Association in Passaic County;

Raja Salloum, MSW, LCSW, Arab American Mental Health Clinician, Mental Health Association in Passaic County

The Mental Health Association in Passaic partnered with leaders in the community to overcome stigma and dispel myths around mental health issues. This workshop will discuss a case study of The Arab American Community Service Partnership. Recommendations will be shared for other organizations to create similar partnerships in other areas of human services.

3 Arab Americans and Religious and Cultural Influences on the Perception of Disability

Nadia Ansary, PhD, Assistant Professor, Rider University;

Chrystina Dolyniuk, PhD, Associate Professor, Rider University

The Arab American community is diverse, but common to most families is a fear of sharing personal information as it relates to developmental disabilities. The objective of this workshop is to highlight cultural and religious influences on the perception of disability as well as to suggest practical strategies for work with this population.

4 Early Childhood Resources for Children with Disabilities or Special Health Care Needs and Their Families

Desiree Bonner, Lead Family Support Coordinator, Helpful Hands, The Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative;

Malia Corde, Project Director, Medical Home, Program Coordinator, NJ Parent to Parent, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network;

Pauline Lisciotto, RN, MSN, Program Manager, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services

This workshop will focus on NJ Early Intervention Services, NJ's Title V Children with Special Health Care Needs program, and other early childhood resources for families. The Single Point of Entry into early intervention services for infants and toddlers ages birth to three with developmental disabilities, eligibility criteria, and how early intervention services are provided to children and families in New Jersey will be presented. The Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Family Health Services - NJ's Title V Children with Special Health Care Needs program - can help families to find health care, get insurance, and apply for state and federal programs and/or financial assistance with catastrophic medical debt. Community, state, and national resources that will address the unique needs of their child and family will also be shared.

Workshops

5 Educational and Assistive Technology Resources for School-aged Children with Disabilities and Their Families

Mary Ciccone, JD, Managing Attorney, Disability Rights New Jersey;
Curtis Edmonds, JD, Managing Attorney, Disability Rights New Jersey;
Carolyn Hayer, Director of Parent & Professional Development, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

This workshop will focus on education laws, advocacy strategies, and assistive technology resources for parents of school-aged children with special needs. Families will be provided with an introduction to their rights and responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and how the parent and student can advocate to ensure that they receive the services to which they are entitled. Assistive technology issues regarding transition from secondary school to higher education or the job market will also be presented, including funding issues and practical concerns about various AT devices and services.

6 Resources and Services for Adults with Disabilities and Their Families

Bret Li-Vaks, MBA, Training and Consultation Specialist, The Boggs Center (Moderator);
Carol Grant, Chief of Operations, NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services;
Liza Gundell, Deputy Director, The Family Resource Network
Heidi Smith, RN, MSN, Director, NJ FamilyCare Outreach

The transition from teenage years to adult life can be difficult and overwhelming. It can be a little easier if you have some of the basic information needed to make transition a successful one. Topics such as choosing employment as a life choice, a day program, living in a group home, self-directed services, post secondary education, and how to navigate other adult services such as Medicaid and Social Security benefits will be discussed.

7 Immigrant Rights to Disability Services and Language Access

Diana Autin, JD, Executive Co-Director, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network;
Mercedes Rosa, Director, Family to Family Health Information Center, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

New Jersey's immigrant and limited English proficient residents have the right to access information and services in their native language under federal and state civil rights law, regardless of their status. There are a range of education, health, and human services available for immigrants who have family members with disabilities. This workshop will summarize the language access rights and rights to disability and other government services for New Jersey's immigrant families, as well as resources to help immigrant families advocate for and secure those rights.

8 Protecting Your Children from a Hostile Environment or Bullying in the Schools

Esther Nevarez, Community Relations Coordinator, NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, Division on Civil Rights

In this workshop, the protected bases and the areas of protection covered in the Law against Discrimination and the NJ Anti-Bullying Law will be presented, along with hostile environment and the potential liabilities for the school. The discussion on harassment and bullying will help parents in the Arab American community understand what steps they can take to help their children.

Presenter Directory

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Special thanks to all of the panelists

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Alia Suqi

Othman Suqi

Maysoon Zayid

Exhibitor Directory

SPONSORS:

The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities

<http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/boggscenter>

732-235-9300

Disability Rights New Jersey

www.drnj.org

609-292-9742

NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities

www.njddc.org

609-292-3745

NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities

www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd

800-832-9173

CO-SPONSORS:

Horizon NJ Health

www.horizonnjhealth.com

609-718-9316

Rutgers Center for Middle Eastern Studies

<http://mideast.rutgers.edu>

848-445-8445

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

www.spannj.org

973-642-8100

PARTNERS:

Healthfirst NJ

www.healthfirst.org

212-497-4415

NJ Division of Disability Services

www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds

609-292-7800

Neighbours, Inc.

www.neighbours-inc.com

609-275-0606

ADDITIONAL EXHIBITORS:

Autism NJ

www.autismnj.org

609-588-8200

Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund

www.njcatastrophicfund.org

609-292-0600

Foundation of Autism Training and Education

www.thefate.org

201-541-9833

Plan NJ

www.plannj.org

908-285-4776

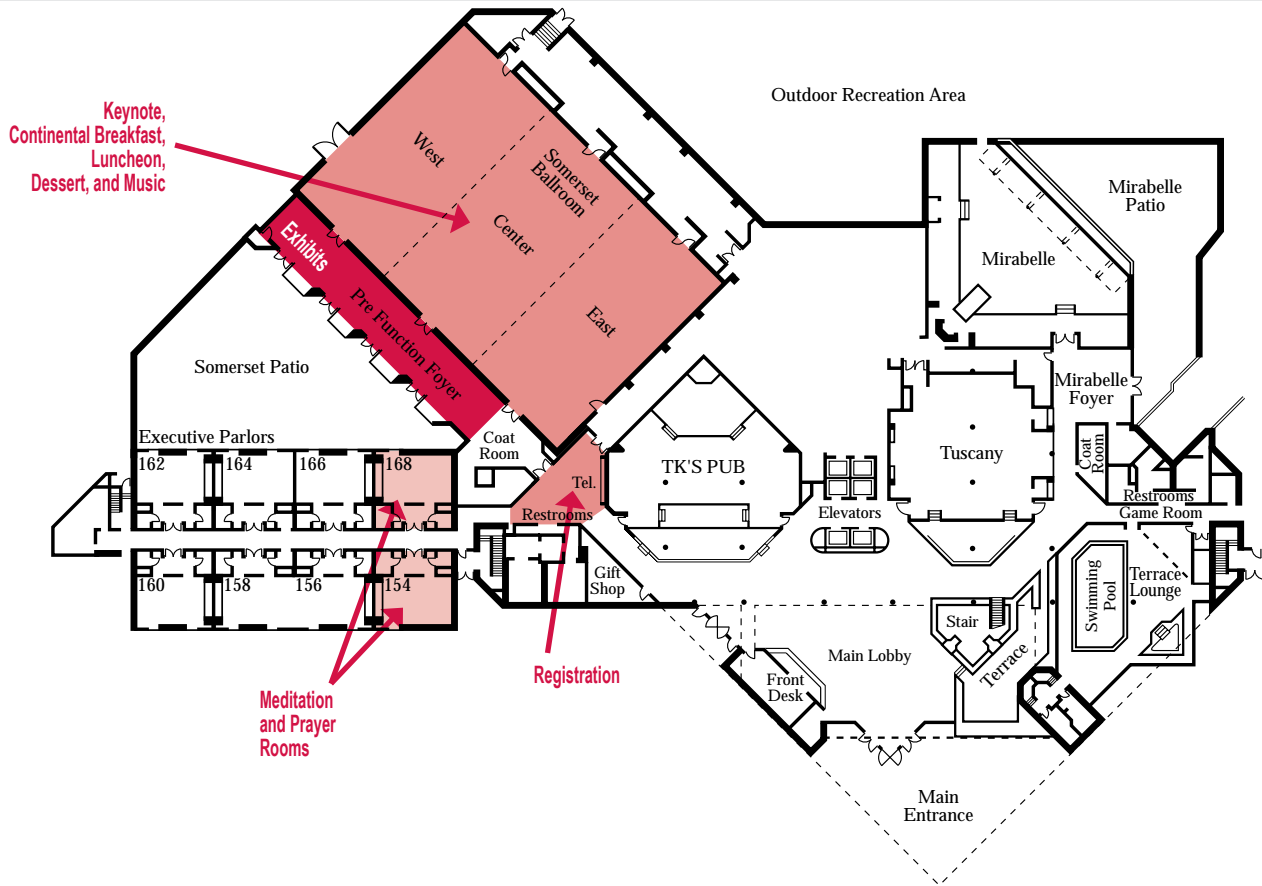
Wafa House

www.wafahouse.org

973-768-7051

Hotel Map

First Floor



Second Floor

