

## MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

### PROCLAMATION NO. 6

Proclaiming April 2025 as Arab American Heritage Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

#### **Multnomah County Finds:**

- A. Multnomah County, Oregon is deeply enriched by the diversity of its residents, including a thriving and vital Arab American community. We are proud of the significant contributions this community has made to our collective strength, prosperity, and cultural richness.
- B. Arab Americans come from over 20 countries ranging from North Africa to Western Asia. They come from a variety of faith traditions, including Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. As of 2021, more than 31,000 Arab Americans lived in Oregon. Of those, 10,000 were located in Multnomah County.
- C. For over a century, Arab Americans have made invaluable contributions to all aspects of American life, including science, medicine, law, business, education, technology, government, and culture. Their work continues to shape and define our communities and nation.
- D. Arab Americans have shared their rich culture and traditions with their neighbors. They embody the values of service, leadership, and commitment to the community. This is seen in the Arab American employees who contribute to Multnomah County's success and mission.
- E. Victor George Atiyeh, who served as the 32nd Governor of Oregon from 1979 to 1987, was the first Arab American elected Governor of a US state, highlighting the prominence of Arab Americans in political leadership and service to the public.
- F. Arab Americans, like all Americans, share the desire to be a part of a peaceful and diverse society, in which every individual is treated equally and feels safe to thrive in their community.
- G. Unfortunately, Arab Americans continue to face discrimination, bigotry, and hate. Anti-Arab hate - manifesting in hate speech, hate crimes, and racial stereotyping - remains a persistent issue. Anti-Arab hate, Islamophobia, and Orientalism continue to "other" Arab people and justify Western imperialism and colonialism.
- H. Arab Americans are impacted by complex international crises. At the same time we celebrate the achievements of Arab Americans, we want to acknowledge the toll and significant impact these crises have had upon the residents of the Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) region and members of our Arab American community in Multnomah County.
- I. On March 7th, 2024, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners unanimously called for an immediate de-escalation and ceasefire in Israel and Palestine. This included a formal call for the return of hostages, safe passage, and free access for humanitarian organizations to provide medical aid, supplies, and shelter to Gazan civilians.
- J. Multnomah County supports its Arab community and their right to safety, trust, and belonging. We continue to be inspired by the strength and resilience of those in the SWANA region who advocate for their right to live safely in their communities.

K. For generations, Arab Americans have survived and rebuilt their communities here in the U.S. and their home countries abroad. Over the decades, Arab immigrants have enriched the United States in countless ways, but they have never forgotten the history that brought so many of their ancestors to our shores.

L. In July 2021, Governor Brown signed HB 2914 into law, which declares April of each year as Arab American Heritage Month. Oregon is one of a handful of states that has permanently recognized The Arab American Heritage Month.

M. We honor the stories and the lives of the Arab Americans in our community. Their cultural heritage, strength, and resilience have helped build a more inclusive, prosperous society and we are grateful for the diverse perspectives they bring to our workplace and community.

**Multnomah County Proclaims:**


April 2025 is National Arab American Heritage Month in Multnomah County and encourages all residents to observe this month.

**SIGNED this 2nd day of April, 2025.**

Jessica Vega Pederson  
SC  
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Jalal Bader  
Mohammed Bader

REVIEWED:  
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

**SUBMITTED BY:** Commissioner Meghan Moyer, District 1, and Mohammed Bader, Director of County Human Services.