

**LAW DAY ★ 2022**

Collaborating toward greater diversity

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Over the past year, the Arab American Bar Association of Illinois has not shied away from advancing leadership to address challenging topics in our community.

AABAR started 2021 by launching a pioneering, biannual CLE series on Diversity & Inclusion by discussing Law Firm Hiring Practices. Representatives of big and small firms alike presented on the best practices that they employ to be inclusive and retain a diverse workforce. This presentation demonstrated the importance of diversity in the workplace and how inclusion of all makes for unique perspectives and an overall healthier workforce.

In May, AABAR co-presented in the Asian American Bar Association's forum "Breaking Down our Silos: Building Relationships, Community & Solidarity Across Bar Associations," along with seven other bar associations. Taking a joint leadership approach to address racism and hate will continue to be an integral part of AABAR's initiative moving forward.

AABAR held another CLE on "Diversity & Inclusion in Legal Education" in June, with several law schools in the Chicagoland area discussing initiatives being taken to bring greater diversity to its student bodies.

In July, AABAR hosted its second annual Unity Dinner with the Muslim Bar Association. In August, AABAR launched a physical and mental health initiative by hosting yoga in the park followed by an open discussion with a licensed mental health counselor about the importance of mental health counseling.

In conjunction with the Decalogue Society, AABAR held its Sixth Annual Building Bridges Awards ceremony in September, honoring Neda Shaheen and Jacqueline Carroll for their outstanding service in combating hate and discrimination.

In November, AABAR & Northwest Suburban Bar Association co-hosted a CLE on "Understanding Diversity & Inclusion through AABAR History." As a result of the work of several members of AABAR and AMVOTE, Middle Eastern/North African ("MENA") is now recognized as a minority-designated group under the Minority Business Enterprise Ordinance of the City of Chicago.

The Arab American Bar Association continues to be highly active and engaged in leadership during these difficult times. The relationships that we have built with the Arab American



The 2021-2023 installed officers also include President Nura Yanaki, Treasurer Jawad Shalabi, Recording Secretary Mona Naser and Corresponding Secretary Cory Cassis.

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