



August 2010

"Bridging the Gap" - Keeping up with the Middle Eastern Commission

Volume 1, Issue 1

### Special points of interest:

- Find out who represents your community in Maryland!
- Keep up with events across our State
- Stay informed on the Governor's recent press releases
- Learn about business opportunities in Maryland

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### Message from the Commission

Greetings!

The Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs held their bi-monthly meeting on July 22, 2010 at 6:00pm in Frederick County.

The meeting was held at the newly constructed C. Burr Artz library, located in the heart of the city of Frederick.

As the Commission continues to make progress at each meeting, we have focused our energy on organizing the second annual health conference. Building off of the success of last year, the Commission hopes to create an annual forum to address the health needs and concerns of Middle Eastern Americans.

At our July meeting, the Commission focused the agenda on our newly defined work plan which was outlined at our June

2010 Strategic Planning meeting. Our new work plan along with other resources is available on our website.

We hope to create a definitive roadmap for our 2010 agenda through our rejuvenated work plan. Priority initiatives include creating more awareness through educational programs about Middle Eastern American culture, maintaining and updating our website to provide the most important resources, and continuing to work on expanding state business opportunities to our community.

The Commission would like to extend their appreciation to our community, it is your continued support that helps us accomplish our rigorous initiatives.

Our next meeting is scheduled for September 30th from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The meeting will be held in Baltimore

County, our exact location will be announced in the upcoming days.

To keep up with the Commission, our meetings and other events in Maryland please visit our website:

[www.middleeastern.maryland.gov](http://www.middleeastern.maryland.gov)



Picture of the C. Burr Artz Public Library. Located on 100 South Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701. For more information, call: 301-600-1630.

### Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on Retention of State's AAA Bond Rating

Governor Martin O'Malley issued the following statement in July regarding the retention of Maryland's AAA bond rating by all three bond rating agencies:

"Today, all three credit rating agencies reaffirmed – once again – the fiscal strength of our State as a result of the tough choices and smart fiscal policies we've fought for as One Maryland in the midst of the worst global recession since the Great Depression.

"Together, even in tough economic times, we made the tough choices necessary to

create and save jobs, improve conditions for Maryland businesses, and fuel economic progress. Since January, we've added 38,000 jobs to Maryland payrolls, a growth rate twice that of the rest of the nation. And Maryland's unemployment rate remains about 25 percent below the national average.

"I want to thank Treasurer Kopp and Comptroller Franchot for their leadership and sound management of our State's finances, and the leaders of the General Assembly as they passed a budget for FY11 that

maintains our shared principles of fiscal responsibility."

Maryland remains one of only eight states to maintain the highest possible Triple A bond rating. In affirming the rating, Standard & Poor's noted Maryland's "well-defined financial management policies and a commitment to reserves despite budget challenges." Moody's referred to Maryland's "strong financial management" and Fitch noted that the state "continues to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining budgetary balance."

**“To help make promoting job opportunities easier, each county has a Maryland One-Stop Career Center to help jobseekers.”**

### Administrative Report

The Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs is proud to serve our community in Maryland. To make things easier for you, we are putting out a monthly newsletter to keep our community updated on what has been accomplished along with providing information about upcoming events which may be of interest to you.

Governor Martin O'Malley and Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown recognize that diversity is truly Maryland's greatest strength. As our community continues to grow and progress, we urge our community

to participate during our bi-monthly Commission meetings. Information about our meetings is always posted on our website.

It is an exciting time for us as we kick off our 2010 work plan. The Commission has focused their energy on prioritizing initiatives and creating more readily available resources for our community.

Most recently, the Commission has completed a "Resource Booklet Guide" which is aimed to help you better navigate the benefits you can receive from the State. Specifically, benefits

in healthcare, education and housing.

We cannot stress enough how important your support is to our Commission. In order to best serve our community the Commission urges to hear from you! If you have any questions, suggestions, concerns you can contact the Commission at:

MidEast@GOCl.state.md.us

You can also reach the Administrator directly at:

410-767-7925

We hope to hear from you!

### Contribute to Maryland's Healthy Business Climate

Public and private employers are invited to take advantage of a new resource to promote employee wellness.

The Healthiest Maryland Business initiative, a project of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, offers tools and programs to implement wellness programs, evaluate workplace environments and generally assess policies that foster

healthy workplace cultures.

As the nation and the state implement sweeping health reforms to increase access to health care for more Maryland families and their businesses, the Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council recognized that improving health and containing rising health care costs demands that maximizing prevention is a top priority. The

Healthiest Maryland movement aims to engage leaders to commit to maximizing Marylanders' well-being by implementing a comprehensive, coordinated strategy to promote health where Marylanders work, live, and learn.

For more information, visit: [www.dhmf.state.md.us/healthiest](http://www.dhmf.state.md.us/healthiest).

### Helping Marylanders Find Jobs

Maryland is taking great strides in promoting, creating and retaining jobs throughout the state. To help make promoting job opportunities easier, each county has a Maryland One-Stop Career Center to help jobseekers.

According to the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's website, the One-Stop Career Centers will "help you

find the job or the employee you want. Maryland One-Stop Career Centers are located in each of Maryland's counties and Baltimore City. Job seekers and businesses will find the Maryland One-Stop Career Centers leaders in using state-of-the-art technologies to match people with jobs and jobs with people."

For more information on these

centers in Maryland, visit: [www.dlir.maryland.gov/county](http://www.dlir.maryland.gov/county).

The Maryland Department of Budget and Management is another clearing house of state job opportunities.

For more information on these opportunities please visit: [dbm.maryland.gov/jobseekers](http://dbm.maryland.gov/jobseekers)

**SPOTLIGHT: Meet your Middle Eastern American Commission Chairman!**

Established in October of 2007, the Governor’s Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs began serving the community at the highest executive level.

The Governor’s Office was selective in their appointment process to ensure demographic, gender, and country of origin diversity. The Commission represents nine different Middle Eastern countries. Specifically there are Commissioners from Palestine, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Egypt and Jordan.

Appointed Chair by Governor Martin O’Malley and leading the 21-member Commission is Mr. Anwer Hasan.

Mr. Hasan is resident of Howard County. He is highly active in the Maryland Muslim community; previously serving as the President of the Maryland Muslim Council and currently as a board member of the Howard County Muslim Council. In his role as President, Mr. Hasan held a Muslim Advocacy Day in Annapolis and multiple annual dinners which were attended by the Governor and his executive cabinet.

Along with participating on the Governor’s Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, Mr. Hasan was appointed as a member of the Higher Education Commission, and the Chairman for the Requirement Committee for Base Realignment and Closure Task Forces for Howard County and Baltimore City.

As Chair of the Governor’s Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, Mr. Hasan provides the Commission with a strong leader to maintain momentum on accomplishing our respective initiatives.

Under Mr. Hasan’s leadership, the Commission has been able to aid in the formation of the first Maryland Middle Eastern Chamber of Commerce, begin the process of the first Middle Eastern Sister State relationship with Bagh-

dad, Iraq, and also working towards the inclusion of Middle Eastern Americans to be a part of the Minority Business Enterprise Program.

Mr. Hasan is a community leader. He has received several awards from various organizations including Martin Luther King Howard County Commission and Maryland State Department of Education Award for community service and minority achievement award respectively.



Chair Anwer Hasan with Governor O’Malley and Lt. Governor Brown



Members of the Governor’s Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs

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## Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern Americans

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**"Serving the Middle Eastern American community throughout the State at the highest executive level."**



On October 11, 2007, Governor Martin O'Malley signed the Executive Order to create the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs. The Commission was created to address the need for State agencies to respond effectively to the needs and concerns of Maryland citizens with ancestral heritage in Middle Eastern countries.

The Commission was appointed by the Governor and his administration in order to address the issues facing the Middle Eastern American community at the highest level of the Executive Branch of Maryland State Government.

We're on the web!  
[www.middleeastern.maryland.gov](http://www.middleeastern.maryland.gov)

## Upcoming Events in Maryland

Stay updated on various activities around our great State and Metro area!

August 4:  
Middle East Institute Presents: A Discussion and Book Signing  
Featuring Geoffrey Kemp  
For more information, visit:  
[www.mei.edu](http://www.mei.edu)

August 7 - 8:  
Baltimore International Festival Poly/Western High School  
For more information, visit:  
[www.baltimorecity.gov](http://www.baltimorecity.gov)  
Or call:  
410-396-3141

August 7 - 14:  
Howard County Fair  
Howard County Fairgrounds

For more information, call:  
410-442-1022

August 13-21:  
Montgomery County Agricultural Fair  
16 Chestnut St., Gaithersburg

August 14 -15:  
FestAfrica 2010  
Patterson Park, Baltimore  
For more information, call:  
410-608-0420

August 27-September 6:  
Maryland State Fair  
Timonium Fairgrounds  
For more information, call:  
410-252-0200

