



PRESS RELEASE

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NAANA'S ANGEL OF MERCY VIRTUAL EVENT ON OCTOBER 21; DR. ABDUL EL-SAYED IS KEYNOTE SPEAKER; HENRY FORD HEALTH IS LEAD SPONSOR

Detroit, MI, August 15, 2021 – The National American Arab Nurses Association (NAANA) announces that its 10th Annual Angel of Mercy Banquet will be held as a virtual event via Zoom on Thursday, October 21st, at 6 p.m., honoring the 2021 Angel of Mercy Award winner and awarding nursing scholarships.

NAANA president Renée Ahee said, "The contributions of nurses often go without public acknowledgement, but not these last couple years! We have seen the superhuman contributions of our Arab American nurses and all nurses on the front lines everyday caring for their patients with and in spite of the coronavirus, our greatest health crisis in generations! Due to continuing health concerns, NAANA's board voted to hold our annual event virtually."

This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, physician, epidemiologist, former city health commissioner, and progressive activist. He is a commentator at CNN and his newsletter, The Incision, cuts into the trends shaping our moment. He has written two books and co-authored a third. He is a Senior Fellow at the FXB Center for Health & Human Rights at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health and a Scholar-in-Residence at Wayne State University and American University, where he teaches at the intersection between public health, public policy, and politics.

Dr. El-Sayed holds a doctorate in Public Health from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, as well as a medical degree from Columbia University, where he was a Medical Scientist Training Program Fellow and a Soros New Americans Fellow. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa with Highest Distinction from the University of Michigan.

In this anxious time in our country, Dr. El-Sayed will discuss issues of vaccine compliance and vaccine resistance; getting to herd immunity; the newest resurgence in COVID cases; the United States' readiness to address strains of COVID and how we



forestall further spread; and fatigue and mental health of nurses, physicians and other healthcare workers and how to address this dilemma.

NAANA has recognized 18 Angels of Mercy since the award was conceived in 2012, nurses who positively impact the health and well-being of the Arab American community daily, whether they are Arab American themselves or unselfishly serve the community's needs for care. The board of NAANA believes that we can accomplish the dual purpose of elevating these nurses as well as showcasing nursing as a viable career choice for Arab Americans.

NAANA named this special recognition of Arab American nurses the Angel of Mercy Award because the Arabic phrase for nurse translates to "angel of mercy." NAANA also provides scholarships to Arab American nursing students who show strong academic achievement, leadership and community involvement. The shortage of nurses in our hospitals and clinics has propelled the board to give *more* than the usual four scholarships this year.

Henry Ford Health System is the name sponsor of NAANA's 10th Annual Angel of Mercy Award Event and three nursing scholarships will be awarded in HFHS' name. Ahee said, "We thank Henry Ford Health System for supporting NAANA's important mission."

HFHS Chief Nursing Officer Gwen Gnam said, "We have seen the strength and commitment of nurses around the country and around the world during this pandemic. Henry Ford Health System is delighted to support NAANA's recognition and advocacy of Arab American nurses who are critically important members of our profession."

Individual tickets for the Angel of Mercy Banquet are \$50 and can be purchased at <http://www.n-aana.org> or by [clicking here](#). Sponsorships are available by contacting Renée Ahee at 586-484-2390 or events@n-aana.org or by visiting <http://www.n-aana.org>.

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About NAANA

NAANA was established in 2003 as a voice, a network and a resource for men and women in their pursuit of employment and advancement within the nursing profession. NAANA focuses primarily on the Arab American nurse but it is an inclusive nursing organization fostering knowledge of cultural diversity and sensitivity between members and the community in the area of transcultural health care.