



National Arab American Medical Association Houston Chapter

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Samir N. Tuma, M.D.

Dear Colleagues, Friends and Distinguished Community Members,

It is our pleasure to invite you to attend and support the National Arab American Medical Association – Houston Chapter, (NAAMA) Ben Qurrah Medical Gala on February 8, 2024 at the Omni Hotel in Houston. Since its inception in 1975, NAAMA has been an all-inclusive association that acts as the voice of all Arab American health care professionals. Through educational, philanthropic and service activities, NAAMA promotes the professional development and cultural identity of healthcare professionals with roots or affinity to the Arab World.

Named for the 8th Century Arab Physician renowned for his work to modernize mathematics and medicine, the AAMA recognizes prominent scientists of Arab origin who have made major contributions to science, medicine and health care.

This year we are honoring:



Dr. Mothaffar Rimawi, Dan L Duncan Professor, Associate Director for Clinical Affairs, Executive Medical Director of the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine and Baylor St Luke's Medical Center as the Houston honoree.

Dr. Rimawi's oncology career has focused on new treatment strategies for an aggressive form of breast cancer, HER2+. He worked on potent inhibition for the HER2 pathway with multiple drugs, a groundbreaking concept that provided the scientific rationale for a major improvement in the management of HER2+ breast cancer. He co-led the Breast Cancer Research Program at the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center from 2012-2024 and oversaw significant expansion in its translational research projects, leading this prestigious research program through two successful renewals of the NCI designation of the cancer center with the highest possible scores from reviewers. Dr. Rimawi holds prominent leadership positions in national oncology research groups, serving as co-chair of the HER2 working group of the Translational Breast Cancer Research Symposium since 2013 and vice chair of the Breast Committee of NRG Oncology since 2022.

Dr. Ghassan Abu Sittah, Plastic Surgeon, Lord Rector, University of Glasgow, Honorary Senior Lecturer, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Kings College, University of London Clinical Lead, World Health Organization-EMRO - Trauma Operational & Advisory Team as the National/International honoree.



Selected for his outstanding academic achievements, commitment to advancing medical knowledge, and dedication to serving Arab communities internationally we are honored to recognize Dr. Abu Sittah. His expertise spans plastic, aesthetic, and reconstructive surgery, with a particular focus on treating complex injuries resulting from conflict. He is an Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer at the Center for Blast Injury Studies at *Imperial College University of London* and Visiting Senior Lecturer at the Conflict & Health Research Group at *Kings College London University*. He is Clinical Lead for the Operational Trauma Initiative at the World Health Organization’s EMRO Office and serves on the board of directors of INARA, a charity dedicated to providing reconstructive surgery to war injured children in the Middle East, and Board of Trustees of the UK based Medical Aid for Palestinians. He serves on the UK’s National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) International Funding Committee. He has published extensively on the health consequences of prolonged conflict and on war injuries including a medical text book, “Reconstructing the War Injured Patient” and “Treating the War Injured Child.” He has worked as a war surgeon in Yemen, Iraq, Syria, South Lebanon and during the 4 wars in the Gaza Strip. He has worked in the Gaza Strip during this current war. His work was featured by numerous newspapers and media outlets notably *La Monde*, *The Independent*, *Telegraph*, *BBC* and *CNN*. He has received several prestigious awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the TAKREEM Foundation and the World Citizen of the Year Award from TRT Broadcasting Corporation.



Dr. Lilian Dindo, Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Section of Health Services Research, Baylor College of Medicine as the Rising Star Award honoree.

Dr. Dindo will be the second recipient of the NAAMA Rising Star award. She is at the top of her field in mental health research, with a career focused on developing innovative and readily-implemented psychotherapeutic treatments to help patients suffering from co-morbid psychiatric and medical conditions. She has been described as “a shining star with brilliant intellect, optimistic energy and purpose, and creative spirit” She is renowned for having identified novel treatment delivery methods that increase both treatment adherence and access to care for patients, as well as developing new strategies for identifying and treating underreported, and thus undertreated, mental health symptoms in patients with chronic medical illness. Dr. Dindo has contributed in an extraordinarily comprehensive and effective manner to training the next generation of clinical and academic psychologists and psychiatrists, as well as care providers in other medical specialties, using evidence-based mental health practice and research, most keenly focused on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Her extraordinarily high achievement, tenacity, and generosity are widely recognized as inspirational to her colleagues, students, and other trainees. Dr. Dindo is advancing the field in a way that will improve the lives of patients, and collaborations with her and her laboratory are highly coveted in the field. In terms of Relative Ranking, she is clearly in the top 1% of everyone in her field at this stage in her career, and is highly sought after for her talents. She currently serves as Houston Site Leader of the South Center Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center Veterans Health Administration. She also received the 2018 Association for Veterans Affairs Psychology Leaders Special Contributions Award, which is presented to a psychologist who has assumed extra duties and worked on projects uniquely tailored to improving the mental health of Veterans. Throughout her career, she has been consistently well-funded from a variety of sources, as detailed in her CV, including the NIH, VA, National Center for Research Resources, NIMH, NCCIH, the John A. Hartford Foundation, the Office of Rural Health, and the National Institute of Nursing Research. She serves as an associate editor for two prestigious peer-reviewed journals.



Since its inception, winners of this award included leaders in their medical or literary fields. Winners of past years were:

Year	National /International Honoree	Houston Honoree	Lifetime Achievement Award
1998	Dr. Dawood Hanania		Dr. Najeeb Mahfouz
2000	Dr. Mohamad Ghoniem	Dr. Wadi Suki	
2002	Ramzi Cotran		



2004	Dr. Amin Arnaout	Dr. Hazem Safi	
2006	Sir Magdi Yacoub	Dr. Huda Zoghbi	Dr. Michael DeBakey
2008	Dr. Elias Zerhouni	Dr. Issam Raad	
2010	Dr. Francois Abboud	Dr. Hagop Kantarjian	
2012	Dr. Wafaa El Sadr	Dr. Michel Mawad	
2014	Dr. Mohamed H. Sayegh	Dr. Raymond Sawaya	
2016	Huda Akil, Ph.D.	Dr. Hashem B. El-Serag	Dr. Samir Tuma
2018	Dr. Fadlo Khuri	Dr. William Zoghbi	
2020		Dr. Nizar Tannir	
2023	Dr. Elias Jabbour	Dr. Hana El Shaly	

The NAAMA is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, tax ID number 76-0413463. Our mission is three-fold: humanitarianism, education, and cultural enrichment.

Over the past few years, the Houston Chapter has donated thousands of dollars to charities that benefit Arabs. NAAMA's donations have supported multiple humanitarian missions including relief efforts during recent hurricanes. On the education level, scholarships were awarded to applicants of Arab origin working or training in the medical field in Houston. These are meant to help further their efforts for higher medical education. NAAMA has hosted numerous presentations featuring recognized experts in health sciences during our lecture meetings. In addition, NAAMA has provided a forum for the congregation of Arab doctors and their families in Houston to meet and celebrate their common heritage and philosophies.

The Gala, our key fund-raising event of the year will host professionals from various fields of medicine with an anticipated attendance of approximately 350 including over 200 physicians and health professionals.

We seek your support for this event as an underwriter. Underwriter tables of 10 seats are available at the Gold level (\$10,000), Silver (\$5,000) and Bronze (\$3,000). Individual tickets are available for \$250. Sponsor a trainee ticket for \$150. Exhibit tables are available in the amount of \$2,500. At the Gold level, a complementary full-page color insertion of your advertisement in the 2025 Ben Qurrah Award Gala Program booklet is offered. At the silver level, a full-size black and white advertisement, half a page black and white one at the bronze level, are also complementarily offered.

We ask that your tax-exempt donation be made to "The Arab American Medical Association – Houston Chapter." There is no condition of purchase, use or recommendation of specific products associated with this request. There will be prominent acknowledgement of company support displayed in the booklet distributed to all attendees the evening of the event and display space will be provided depending on levels of support.

Thank you in advance for your support, which will enable the NAAMA to expand professional relationships, medical knowledge and charity across America, Arab countries and the world.

Sincerely,

Nidal Moukaddam, MD, PhD
NAAMA Houston President
Professor, Menninger Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Baylor College of Medicine
Harris Health Psychiatry Outpatient Services Director
Medical Director, Stabilization, Treatment & Rehabilitation (STAR) Program for Psychosis
President-Elect, National Arab American Medical Association