

領袖的風采 忘我的精神

文：浦瑛



Pierre Bejjani 先生，腳馬上就要動手術，手臂還挂着吊針，臉上心上洋溢着喜悅，這是領袖的精神。

7月10日我第一次參加在 Middleburg Heights 室外娛樂中心，由克利夫蘭美國中東協會舉辦的野餐活動，我很受啟發。那天我是受我認識很久的來自中東黎巴嫩，出生在貝魯特的 Pierre Bejjani 先生的邀請前往的，我們是同行，他也擁有報紙，不過他還有更多的社區頭銜，那天我認識了許多中東朋友，這個民族熱情快樂，我也學吃了他們的菜肴。更讓我感慨的是 Pierre Bejjani 先生有激情，是願意付出的人，他帶領着他的族裔人們一起關心美國的政治經濟並弘揚他們國家的文化。美國就是多種族、多族群讓它在短短 200 年有着豐富燦爛的經濟文化。



美國除土著印第安人以外，其餘都是“新航陸”開闢後，從世界各地遷移來的移民。現在，美國有大小族群 1500 多個，其族裔成分之

衆多、種族分布之複雜，在世界各國中是絕無僅有的。而克利夫蘭是美國擁有多數民族的城市，他們在這裡學習工作，過着平靜簡單的生活。這也許是我狹隘的想法：來自世界各國的人，帶着尋求平等的價值觀在此生存、交流與發展，各族裔生活在開放的社會中，根據自己的競爭能力來適應美國社會的經濟文化和習俗，選擇自己要的舒適平安簡單的生活。

在美國生活了 25 年的我，能體會到美國政府關心人民，提供更好的生活條件服務於百姓，舉例最小的事情，修一條馬路也要百姓通過，最大的事情競選總統也要公民投票。另外來自各個族裔社團的領導人，他們花時間金錢為弘揚他們自己的文化作出貢獻。當日來自克利夫蘭周邊的法官，教育部人員和市長市議員都來參加野餐活動。



C.A.M.E.O.'s Annual Picnic

With summer in full swing and activities galore going on throughout the area, many elected officials and candidates took the time to interact with our community at the Annual Picnic for C.A.M.E.O. This was the 26th year for this annual event and it always brings us a better understanding in a casual and fun environment to spend unique quality time learning about our prospective political leaders. Candidates and elected officials were given the opportunity to speak and introduce themselves to the crowd and highlight their goals and accomplishments.

Candidates Nights will be the next meeting for CAMEO on Wednesday, August 10th - 6:30 p.m. at the Independence Holiday Inn. This is one of the most important evenings for the public to learn about candidates. If you are a candidate and interested in seeking CAMEO's endorsement, please contact CAMEOCLEVELAND@yahoo.com as soon as possible. An application is required to be considered for this forum.



Where Are You From?

I am a native of Lebanon and I was born in a suburb of Beirut.

What was it like growing up?

I attended private catholic schools in Lebanon. I have many wonderful memories of growing up, until the war broke out in Lebanon in 1975. After graduating high school and trying to pursue my college education. My family decided to send me abroad to the U.S. to pursue my education in Civil Engineering.

What were your first thoughts about coming to America?

I was excited, but sad as I left my entire family behind. I kept my suitcases packed for many weeks thinking the war would soon end and I could return to Lebanon. As I became accustomed to the educational system and made friends from many diverse backgrounds, I eventually unpacked my bags and have been here for over 30 years.

What challenges did you face as an immigrant transitioning here?

Though I learned English in Lebanon, I was not fluent, so learning the language was an initial obstacle. Being alone without my family structure close by was an adjustment. One of the only ways to communicate at that time was via telephone. It was \$6.00 a minute to speak with my parents, not very economical for a college student. Most immigrants today are fortunate to have various social media methods to communicate many time a day if they wish!

What is your occupation?

Publisher and executive editor for Profile News

Ohio: the largest Arabic-English newspaper in Ohio. I am also President of C.A.M.E.O. Cleveland American Middle East Organization and Chairman of the Board for the American Lebanese Community Council.

How have other Clevelanders made you feel welcomed?

There is a strong Lebanese community in Cleveland. I met my wife Mary during my first quarter at college. She was born and raised in the Cleveland area. She has a wonderful family that has been an irreplaceable support to me for over 3 decades. I am very active in several organizations. I find staying active in the community gives me the opportunity to meet many great Clevelanders from different backgrounds.

What traditions and customs do you continue to practice?

My church, Saint Maron's is located right in the heart of downtown. We are fortunate to have a strong and close Lebanese community including St. Maron's Church, St. George Orthodox, and Saint Elias Melkite Church. We interact through various social events and festi-

vals among the churches.

What do you Love about Cleveland?

Cleveland became the home where I raised my daughter. I love the four seasons and driving through the great National and Metro Parks. Cleveland is a large but not overwhelming city.

You can find everything you need here; reasonable housing, great hospitals, and the ethnic diversity that blends and interacts together on a daily basis. We are fortunate to have great organizations like Global Cleveland and many other ethnic organizations that take pride in their ethnicity and are

very willing to share their traditions and cultures.

What is your favorite thing to do in Cleveland?

There are so many things to do, I cannot name just one. I enjoy our sports teams, great restaurants, the Museum of Art and entire Museum district in University Circle. We have a jewel in our Library Systems in the Cleveland Public Library and Cuyahoga County Library systems.

CELEBRATE IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH 06-2016

Pierre Bejjani, Lebanon

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Currently, the Lebanese community has launched plans to add a Lebanese Garden to the Cultural Gardens and I am involved with completing the Lebanese Garden. I enjoy being involved with the diverse organizations and promoting understanding of my culture at various events and meetings.

Why is Global Cleveland a great resource? Global Cleveland brings various connections through all the different communities and networking for various technical jobs. Through understanding of each other's successes and obstacles, we can build a stronger society.

Why is it so important to welcome immigrants and refugees?

To build a strong road to our future, you must construct a path that requires many elements to fortify the road. It takes bricks and mortar, labor and expertise, engineering and various other resources. If those elements are not orchestrated properly, your road will collapse. Immigrants and refugees for generations have helped in constructing this great country. Cleveland was built on the backs of immigrants and refugees. What makes us think we should do nothing, but continue to grow and prosper together for generations to come?

What suggestions do you have to make Cleveland a more welcoming community?

When we think of “culture shock” it occurs not only for the immigrant, but it also occurs to the general public. Understanding comes through continually educating and providing community outreach from the various communities to the general public.