



National Arab American Heritage Month *April 2021*

#ArabAmericanHeritageMonth



Mrs. Anderson's Sociology Class

The History of Arab American Heritage Month

There is no federal recognition of April as National Arab American Heritage Month. It has been brought before Congress twice and has not been passed. The last time it was introduced was in May of 2020 as a House Resolution (GovTrack, Tracking the US Congress Legislation). Despite the lack of federal leadership, many institutions have adopted April as the official month of recognition.

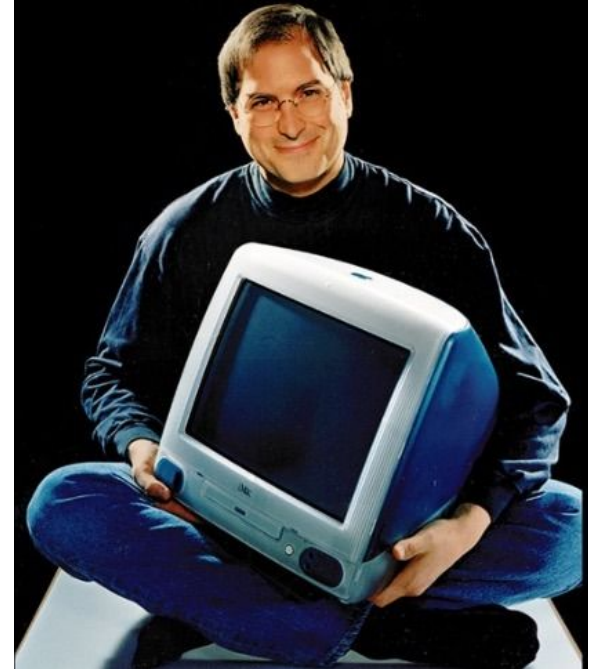
Officially, Arab Americans make up people from Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoro Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and Yemen. However some people from Iran and Turkey self-identify as Arab as well. Additionally, there are about 3.7 million Arab-Americans in the US, many who hold post-graduate degrees (Insight Into Diversity).

Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs was born on February 24th, 1955, to two University of Wisconsin graduates (Joanne Schieble and Abdulfattah Jandali, a Syrian immigrant). The couple decided not to keep the baby, and for the first few years of his life, Steve Jobs lived with an adoptive family. There, his adoptive father taught him about electronics and computer chips in their garage. In school, we was often so bored that the teacher had to bribe him to get work done. Regardless of that, the school supervisors believed Steve should start high school when he went into fourth grade, an idea which his parents refused.

In 1976, when Jobs was just 21, he and Steve Wozniak formed Apple Computer, a company that would shape the world we live in today. At first, the company sold circuit boards for computers, and some basic desktop computers. After briefly leaving the company and acquiring Pixar from George Lucas, Jobs returned as the new CEO, and revitalized the otherwise dying company. Apple released incredible products such as the iMac, the iPod, and eventually, the iPhone.

Jobs's influence can be seen around the world every day, as Apple is one of the biggest tech companies, and has changed the way the average consumer spends money.



Sources(slides by Anirudh Chari)

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DJ Khaled

Khaled Mohamed Khaled, better known as DJ Khaled is a famous music producer who has made music for many years. DJ Khaled was born on November 26, 1975 in New Orleans, Louisiana. His parents are both Palestinian and he has a brother named Alec LeDD. Him and his brother were raised Muslim. DJ Khaled never lived a luxurious life as his family commonly lived day to day and they made money by hustling and working 24/7. To get through the troubles of life DJ Khaled would listen to Arabic music from his parents and would later listen to rap, which his parents supported fully.



While at first DJ Khaled worked at a humble record shop in New Orleans, he slowly began to expand his horizons and became a radio DJ, and then eventually was able to start producing and publishing his own music. Afterwards he had many major accomplishments in the world of music. For example, in 2006, DJ Khaled's album called *Listennn...The Album*, reached number twelve on the Billboard Charts. Then in 2009 he became the president of Def Jam South along with releasing his own record label named "We the Best Music." And then, in 2010 he released the hit song "All I do is win" that went double platinum. Afterwards DJ Khaled was a renown hip hop artist who proceeded to release more and more songs talking about success, strife, and the struggles of fame, and he even wrote a book about his life and fame. DJ Khaled helped steer the ship for emotional storytelling and imagery in hip hop which led to the whole world of music being more eye-opening to people than ever before.

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Casey Kasem



Casey Kasem was born on April 27, 1932 in Detroit, Michigan. Both of his parents were immigrants who came from Lebanon, who worked as grocers in Michigan. His father named him after Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, a famous Turkish leader, whom he greatly respected. The show called 'Make Believe Ballroom' heavily inspired Kasem to pursue a career in radio. He first started by providing voices for children in shows such as 'Challenge of the Yukon' and many more. This was just the beginning of his career that would later lead to many bigger opportunities for him in the future.

After finishing voicing his first couple of shows, Kasem moved to Los Angeles where he continued a career in radio. He joined the KRLA, where he met and was discovered by Dick Clark, who offered him a role in a TV musical called the 'Shebang'. From there, he got more and more offers to voice other characters in movies. The biggest role that he was offered was in the show 'Scooby-Doo, Where are you!' Kasem voiced Scooby-Doo's sidekick, Shaggy. Kasem also started his own radio program in 1970, it was called 'America Top 40'. His show was very successful, there came a time where it was broadcasted over 1000 channels internationally. Kasem was also presented with many awards, such as in 1981, when he was presented with a star on the 'Hollywood Walk of Fame'. In 1992, he was inducted into the National Radio Hall of Fame, where he was the youngest inductee ever. In 1996, the American Druze Society honored Kasem with the title 'Man of the Year'. In 1997, Kasem was awarded with the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' at the National Radio Hall of Fame. And in 2003, Kasem received the 'Radio Icon Award', which was presented to him at the Radio Music Awards. These accomplishments were important because many people remember him for being the voice of Shaggy in the 'Scooby-Doo' series as well as entertaining the world with his radio program 'America Top 40'. Kasem's accomplishments demonstrate a good example that hard work does pay off and that kids with similar ambitions can look up to him as a role model.

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SALMA HAYEK

Salma Hayek, or Salma Vargama Hayek Jimenez for full name, is a Mexican American actress, director, and producer who, during the end of the 20th century, made a breakthrough for being one of the first Latinas to land a successful acting career in the United States. Salma Hayek was born on September 2, 1966 in Coatzacoalcas, Veracruz, Mexico. Hayek grew up in Mexico, although she went to a catholic school in New Orleans before enrolling at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Her mother was Mexican and her father was Lebanese. In 1989, her onscreen debut occurred when she was cast in a telenovela by the name of *Teresa*. She moved to Los Angeles in 1991 to fully pursue her acting career.



She took a small-time in *Mi vida loca* in 1993, where she was noticed by director Robert Rodriguez. In 1995, she was cast in *Desperado*, alongside Antonio Banderas. *Desperado* launched Hayek into fame. In 1996, she starred in another film directed by Rodriguez, *From Dusk Till Dawn*; this was a horror, vampire themed movie that also starred George Clooney and Quentin Tarantino. In 2002, Hayek produced and starred in the movie *Frida*; this was a biographical film about the Mexican painter Frida Kahlo. Salma Hayek's success as an actress paved the way for all Latina actors and actresses to fill their own shoes in the entertainment business.

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Queen Noor of Jordan

Queen Noor of Jordan was born in Washington, D.C., on August 23, 1951 as Lisa Najeeb Halaby. Her father was a Texas-born Syrian who achieved much such as being a U.S. Navy pilot, lawyer, head of the Federal Aviation Administration under President John F. Kennedy, and CEO of Pan American World Airways. Her mother was Swedish, and studied political science. Lisa grew up in a very driven and prominent family, so she was able to attend the Elite National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C., the exclusive Chapin School in New York City, the Concord Academy in Boston, and later Princeton University. After graduating with an abundance of accomplishments, she also worked in urban design in multiple countries around the world, and first went to Jordan while working for Arab Air services. She was very educated and well rounded, which assisted in allowing her to be part of many important social events in Jordan, where she first met the monarch of Jordan, King Hussein.



Queen Noor ended up having a romantic relationship with the king of Jordan, and they ended up getting married on June 15, 1978, with her being his fourth wife. This is not what makes her significant, for once she accepted the throne, she immediately committed herself to improving the livelihoods and philanthropic duties of the Jordanian people. She put a large focus on the Jordanian education system, doing things such as establishing the Jubilee School for gifted students, the National Music Conservatory, and the Royal Endowment for Culture and Education. She also worked to celebrate the cultural heritage of Jordan, establishing the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts, and forming the Arab Children's Congress, which was an annual event for all Arab children to preserve their cultural heritage. Another focus of her royal duties were women rights, where she pushed for increased educational and employment opportunities for women, but was still accepting of traditional wants of women to stay home for religious reasons. When King Hussein died in 1999, she founded the King Hussein Foundation International which works toward peace in the world.

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RedOne

RedOne, also known as Nadir Khayat, was born and raised in Tetouan, Morocco. RedOne was the youngest out of his nine siblings, and growing up, he has always connected with music. He grew up listening to various genres, from jazz and pop to African and Middle Eastern music. He enjoyed creating music so much; he moved to Sweden in his teens to continue his passion. He started his career performing music but later switched to music production.

RedOne began working with massive stars like Lady Gaga! He produced the iconic "Poker Face" and "Bad Romance ."Not only did he work with one of the highest profiled artists in Pop, but he's also worked with Jennifer Lopez, Shakira, Mariah Carey, One Direction, and Michael Jackson. "RedOne quickly established his name and is now one of the most relevant record producers, singers, and songwriters in the industry. He has been nominated for 10 Grammys and has won 3 in total! RedOne has changed the game in music production, and without him, our society would not have nearly as many well-known songs as there are now.



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Hoda Kotb was born on August 9, 1964, in Norman, Oklahoma. She was born into an Egyptian family; her parents originally immigrated from Cairo, Egypt, to study at the University of Oklahoma. Her parents taught her and her two other siblings (Adel and Hala) to be patriotic citizens of the United States, and English was spoken in the home. Kotb was raised in both West Virginia and Virginia, but often vacationed to Egypt to see family, and studied abroad in Nigeria. She faced setbacks and criticisms in school due to her race, and never opened up about it (not even to her parents) until later in her life, in an interview (see: *Chicago Tribune*). After graduating from Fort Hunt High School, Kotb attended Virginia Tech, where she earned a B.A. in Broadcast Journalism and was involved with the school's radio station. She graduated in 1986.

Hoda Kotb began her career in 1986, but it certainly wasn't easy. She faced constant rejections from varying companies - twenty-seven to be exact. In an interview later in her life, she stated that she knew that she was a different race, but it wasn't the defining factor in her rejections; she believed the reason why she was rejected was because of the fact that her audition tape had not been good (see: *Chicago Tribune*). After devastatingly driving home one night, she discovered a small T.V. station in a rural town in Mississippi. She struggled to make ends meet, but she had success in the end. She continued her work experience with smaller T.V. companies, in various states such as Illinois and Florida. From 1992-1998, she became an anchor for WWL-TV - a "CBS affiliate" (Chicago Tribune) - in New Orleans. Perhaps Kotb's most notable profession has been her work with NBC, in various roles. She originally began as a correspondent for *Dateline NBC*, where she covered important topics such as Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 Southeast Asian tsunami. She then began to anchor the 10 A.M. segment of the *Today Show*, alongside Kathie Lee Gifford; this contributed to the *Today Show*'s Emmy win in 2010. She still anchors this program today. When Matt Lauer was fired in late 2017, Kotb took his place as an interim anchor, but when ratings soared, Kotb was formally hired as the co-host of the 7 A.M. and 8 A.M. segments. She was (and still is) co-anchor with Savannah Guthrie, the first time that two women were paired as co-hosts of the 7 A.M. and 8 A.M. show. Jenna Bush-Hager joined the cast in 2019, after Gifford left the show, and the three continue to host, oftentimes together.

Kotb has recently started a happy family. After divorcing Burzis Kanga in 2007, she eventually began to date Joel Schiffman (who would eventually become her fiancé) in 2013. Due to her cancer, she is unable to have children naturally. As a response, in 2017, she adopted her first child named Haley Joy. Then, in 2019, she adopted another child, named Hope Catherine.

Hoda Kotb has greatly influenced the lives of many. Having been diagnosed with cancer in 2007, Kotb told her story to the public in a segment of the *Today Show* to celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She also details her life in her three novels that she wrote, helping people understand how to overcome adversities. She is also decorated with many awards, including four Gracie Awards, the Edward R. Murrow Award, and the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award. In addition, she hosts her own radio show on Sirius XM, and has been doing so since 2015. With her smiling face, infectious laugh, passion for her job, and relatability to others watching the show, Kotb graces the screens of America every morning, sending many off to work or school on a positive note.



HODA KOTB

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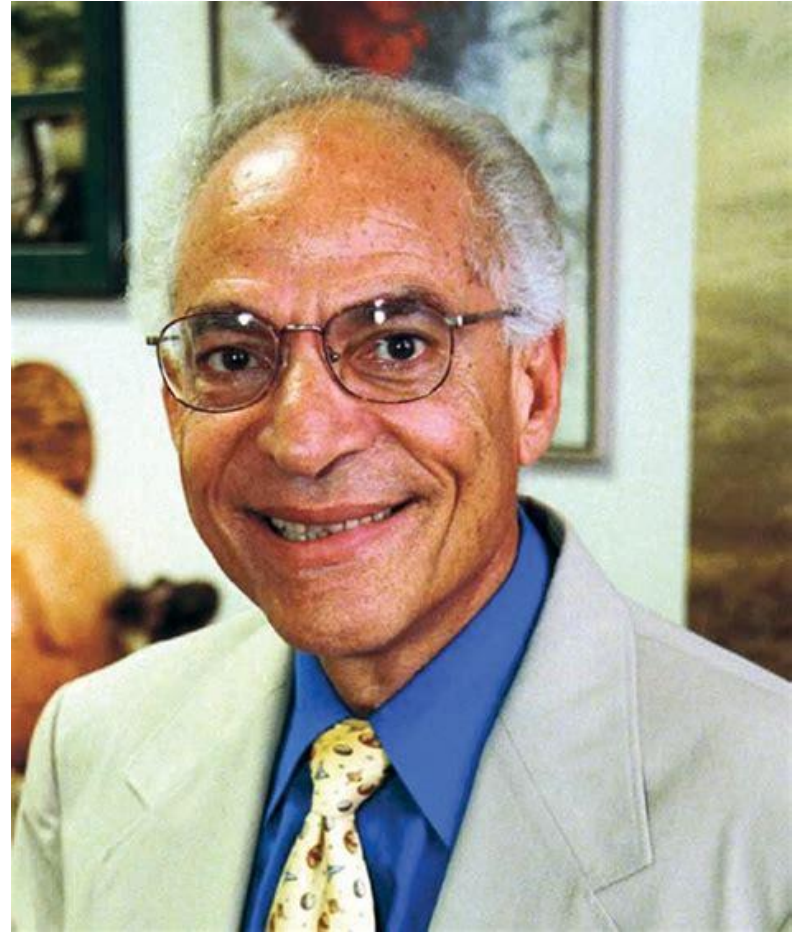
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Dr. Farouk El-Baz

Dr. Farouk was born in 1938 in the beautiful named town of Zagazig. In Egypt he graduated from Ain Shams University with a bachelors in chemistry and geology. After studying in Egypt he moved to America to continue his education earning a PHD in geology from the missouri institute of science and technology.

During the 60s Dr. Farouk acquired a job at NASA using his specialty in geology to help select the landing sites for the apollo program as well as training future astronauts of witch he was so good that one astronaut said that after his training it felt like they had already done the mission by the time training was done. After Dr. Farouk's expedition in America he returned to his native Egypt to map and study the deserts, become the scientific adviser for one of Egypts presidents, as well as becoming a political activist himself.



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Rashida Tlaib

Rashida Tlaib was born on July 24, 1976, in Detroit. She is the oldest of 14 children, and often acted as the third parent helping take care of her siblings. Both her parents emigrated to the U.S her father from Jerusalem and her mother from Palestine. Rashida Tlaib became the first one in her family to graduate high school and college, later going to law school. After she graduated, she worked for the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS). Working for this organization and helping Arab causes meant a lot to her because of her family and religion.



Rashida Tlaib became the first Palestinian-American woman and one of the two first Muslim women serving in Congress. During her campaign, she raised over three million dollars, got the endorsement from Speaker Nanci Pelosi, opened community offices, held more town hall meetings than most people in congress. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez posted a photo of Rashida Tlaib, Ayanna Pressley, and Ilhan Omar, captioning the picture "Squad." They are a group of Democratic women of color who push for progressive ideals, who were all elected into office in 2018. She is a member of the Democratic Socialists of America and has pushed for progressive ideas such as a \$15 minimum wage, debt-free college, calling to abolish ICE, and Medicare-for-all. She has also shown support for the Justice Democrat campaign to make the democratic party more progressive. Rashida Tlaib has pushed for all these progressive ideals since her swearing-in in 2019 and will continue to work for her community.

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James Jabara

James Jabara was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma on October 10, 1923. He is of Lebanese descent and both of his parents were from Marjayoun, Lebanon. As a child, he read many novels about air combat and by the time he was in sixth grade, he wanted to become a fighter pilot. After graduating from Wichita North High School and working at his family's grocery store for a time, Jabara enlisted in an aviation cadet program.

A year later, in 1943, he earned his pilot's wings and was commissioned as second lieutenant in the United States Air Force at Moore Field, Texas. Jabara served in WWII where he flew over a hundred European missions. He is credited with one and a half German planes during the war. After the war, he transitioned into piloting jets. Years later, the Korean War would begin, and on December 13, 1950, Jabara would arrive on the Korean Peninsula. During the next few months, he would end up downing many planes. On May 20th, 1951 he would score his fifth kill, making him the first jet ace and was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He would return to the United States before reentering action in 1952. In total, he flew 163 missions in Korea. Jabara's bravery, expertise, and skill should not go unnoticed. He tragically died after an automobile accident in 1966 as he was preparing to serve in Vietnam, but his accomplishments were great, and his bravery and persistence should serve as inspiration to all.



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Candy Lightner

Born May 30, 1946, Candy Lightner grew up in Pasadena, California. There, she finished high school and attended American River College. Candy later married Steve Lightner and had three children, the main sources of her lifelong crusade against injustice. A drunken driver rear-ended Candy's car when her daughter Serena was eighteen months old, injuring Serena. Six years later, another impaired driver ran over her son Travis, putting him in a coma and leaving him with permanent brain damage. Finally, a drunken driver hit and killed Candy's 13-year-old daughter Cari while she was walking to a carnival.



Four days later, on May 7, 1980, Candy founded Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), after finding out the driver who killed Cari would likely not spend any time in jail, despite this being his fifth DWI offense in four years. MADD aimed to raise awareness about the prevalence and seriousness of DWI, and support strong legislation against it. Candy spoke to Congress, appeared on major TV shows, and address business groups to help America recognize the major problem DWI crimes are for the nation and how they can be prevented. DWI had long been the only acceptable form of homicide, a proposition that Candy could not abide, and set out to change. Her efforts were met with success; Candy's work led to President Reagan appointing a Commission on Drunk and Drugged Driving and over 400 drunk driving laws being passed all over America. The minimum drinking age was raised to 21 in 1982, representing a major victory for Candy and for MADD. Candy has received many awards and recognitions for her work, including being awarded the President's Volunteer Action Award by President Reagan and being named one of "America's 25 Most Influential Women in 1985". As a role model and lifelong activist, Candy Lightner is a shining example of what it's like to believe in a cause and spend one's life doing something about it; through her story, America has become a better, safer place.

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Ahmed Zewail

Ahmed Zewail was an Egyptian-born chemist born in February 26, 1946 in Damanhur, Egypt. He was born in a family with three sisters and him being the only son. His father well-respected by the city community. His mother was a good-natured person who devoted her life to caring for children, especially Ahmed. As a kid, he went to a preparatory school in Disuq, Egypt. After receiving his, B.S in 1967 and M.S in 1969 at Alexandria University, he attended University of Pennsylvania where he got his doctorate in 1974. Two years later, he joined the faculty at California Institute of Technology and was elected the school's first Linus Pauling Professor in 1990.



For his contributions to science and for his public service, Zewail received honors from around the globe. Fifty honorary degrees in the sciences, arts, philosophy, law, medicine, and humane letters were conferred on him, including those from Oxford University, Cambridge University, etc. Zewail was given the Order of the Grand Collar of the Nile, which was the highest honor in Egypt. And he was also named to the Order of the Légion d'Honneur by the President of France, among other state honors. He was an elected member of academies and learned societies including the National Academy of Sciences, the Royal Society of London, etc. He earned more than 100 international prizes and awards, he was the recipient of the Albert Einstein World Award, the Benjamin Franklin Medal, the Leonardo da Vinci Award, the Robert A. Welch Award, etc. In 2011, he created the Zewail City of Science and Technology in Cairo, Egypt as the national project for scientific renaissance. In 2013, he was invited to join the U.N., which he did and served as Council of Advisors to the President. In 2016, Ahmed Zewail died in August 2 in Pasadena, California.

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Linda Sarsour



Linda Sarsour was born on 1980, in Brooklyn, New York, U.S. Linda had 6 other siblings she grew up with in Brooklyn. Linda got married at the age of 17 with Maher Judeh aka Maher Abo Tamer. The couple had 3 children together 2 girls and 1 boy. Linda attended Kingsborough Community College and Brooklyn College with the goal of becoming an English Teacher. Linda began her career volunteering at Arab American Association of New York, after that she had become a executive director of Arab American Association of New York. Linda became a co-founder of the first Muslim online organizing platform, MPower Change. a left-of-center advocacy project of NEO Philanthropy focusing on American Muslims. Linda was one of the national co-chairs of the largest single day protest in US history, the Women's March on Washington. She has been named amongst 500 of the most influential Muslims in the world. Linda Sarsour has had a big impact in muslims communities and criminal justice reform. She had been recognized by Fortune's 50 greatest leaders.

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Michael Debakey - Milen Patel

Michael Debakey was born on September 7th, 1908 in Lake Charles Louisiana. Being Lebanese Christians, his parents had fled the Ottoman empire and the oppression that they were subject to there. His father was a pharmacist, and due to assisting his father, and talking with local pharmacists, he set his eyes on a medical career early on. His parents told him to strive academically, and so he went on to receive his bachelor of science degree in 1930, then his medical degree in 1932, and from Tulane University, a master of science degree for research on peptic ulcers in 1935. He then continued to serve as a medical resident in Europe at Strasbourg and Heidelberg universities.



Dr. Debakey's most notable accomplishment was how he developed the "roller pump." This was an essential component for the heart-lung machine that allowed open heart surgery. Another accomplishment was how he made a system in which you could correct aortic aneurysms by freezing blood vessels. By 1953 he had developed a way to use plastic tubing rather than arterial homografts to replace diseased vessels. He performed the first successful coronary artery bypass in 1966. His work that classified him as one of the best possible surgeons in history was the creation of the artificial heart, after that he went on to receive a numerous number of rewards including: American Medical Association Distinguished service award, The Albert Lasker Award for clinical research, The Eleanor Roosevelt Humanities award, the Presidential National medal of science, and 50 honorary degrees from universities around the world. In 2007, after serving on numerous medical boards and societies, he received the Congressional Gold medal of honor. Dr. Debakey was a trailblazer for the Arab community, who not only could be considered the best surgeon in existence, but his invention still helped people to this date.

Sources-Milen Patel

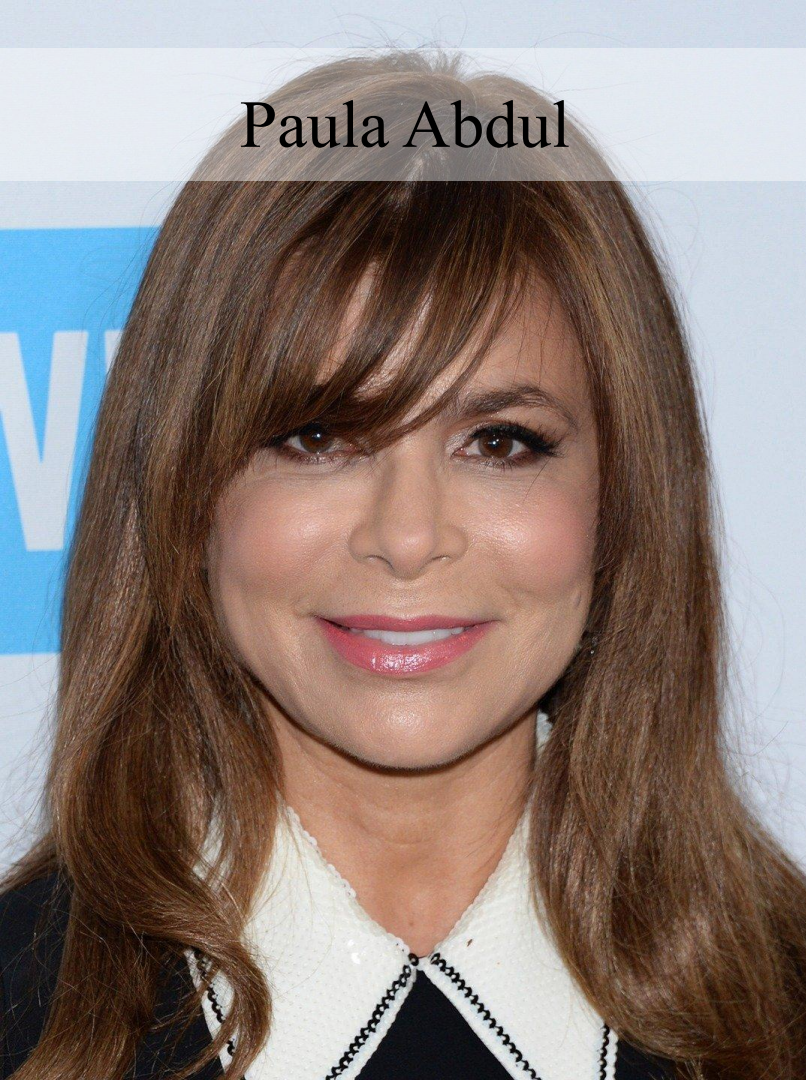
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Paula Abdul



Paula Abdul was born in San Fernando, California on June 19, 1962. Paula was born to a mother who was Canadian-Jewish and her father was Sepharic-Jewish from Syria. Paula grew up dancing, taking lessons since she was eight years old and listening to many types of music through her household. Later on, in high school she continued that with cheerleading. Then in college she majored in radio and TV, also becoming the head cheerleader and choreographer which she eventually dropped out of college to pursue that and dance full-time.

Paula Abdul has many major accomplishments in many areas. In choreography she was recruited by The Jacksons, which were a staple of the video music era. She has also choreographed many films including some classic ones from the late 1990s. Looking back at what she majored in college, radio; Abdul has a very impressive musical career. From setting a record for the most number-one singles from her debut album *Forever Your Girl* and being one of top ten female solo performers to have topped the *Billboard* Hot 100. Also looking at her other major, TV, you see she has had an impressive resume of appearing as a judge in many shows like *The X-Factor* and *So You Think You Can Dance*, most notable being one of the original judges on *American Idol*. She has and continues to change the world by being a major influence and presence in the forefront of what media, especially music looks like today. From music, to music videos, to musical shows, Paula Abdul has been a significant figure throughout it all.

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