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# Arab-Americans must embrace success over victimhood

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[1]

## Arab-Americans must embrace success over victimhood

Commissars of Arab-American political correctness want the community powerless

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The soul of the Arab-American community is currently being pulled in two separate directions simultaneously.

One is optimistic and uplifting. It wants to assert its full rights as citizens, engage the system, and enthusiastically embrace what the United States has to offer.

The other is bitter and enraged. It celebrates and revels in Arab-American marginalization and self-marginalization. It lashes out at any Arab-American who successfully engages mainstream American society and consciously seeks to suppress the community's maturation and empowerment.

This oppressive political correctness that insists on sticking resolutely to the fringes is a deliberate tactic by vocal enforcers of communal orthodoxy. They clearly understand their own influence depends on Arab-Americans seeing themselves as powerless.

The commissars can then assume the authority of victimhood, and pretend to speak on behalf of a supposedly besieged and beleaguered people who have no other voice but their shrill cries of rage.

The depths to which the self-appointed Arab-American political thought police, and their minions, will sink was dramatically demonstrated recently on Twitter.

Asa Winstanley, an associate editor at Ali Abunimah's Electronic Intifada online news publication, angrily condemned the American Task Force on Palestine for honoring a successful Palestinian-American, Ghassan Salameh.

[Winstanley tweeted](#) [2], "*ATFP celebrates NSA spying w award 2 Booz*

*Alan CEO: contractor Snowden leaked frm.*"

This typical calumnious effort to smear ATFP and a prominent Palestinian-American is vicious and utterly misleading. Salameh was never CEO of Booz Allen Hamilton. He was a Senior Vice President until his retirement in 2011. He never had any form of security clearance and

was never involved in any kind of intelligence work. His work was devoted entirely to civilian clients in the transportation sector.

Moreover, the ATFP award to Salameh was in 2010. The suggestion Salameh or the award could, in any way at all, be linked to the Snowden affair is absurd. Winstanley certainly knew this, but didn't care. He saw a chance to trick gullible people into seeing ATFP as a nefarious organization.

Moreover, the man Winstanley was attacking for his success is a Palestinian refugee born in Lebanon into the most grinding poverty imaginable. After two tragic accidents, his father became blind in both eyes, and his mother eked out the most hardscrabble living possible as a seamstress.

Eventually, and through enormous grit, determination, and pluck, Salameh made it out of his refugee camp in Lebanon and achieved an American education, finally rising to the position of senior vice president at a major American corporation.

In his [acceptance speech](#) [3], Mr. Salameh spoke about how proud he

was to be an American and how he was sure that no other country in the world could afford "the son of Palestinian refugees growing up below the poverty line" to achieve such a success.

His success in itself must be derided, because it threatens both the anti-American narrative and the political clout of the extremists behind Winstanley. Worse, he was being honored by ATFP, an organization which, because of its dedication to celebrating Palestinian-American achievements and successes and to working within the American system, is seen as the ultimate threat.

Indeed, in 2010, Mr. Salameh thanked ATFP and its president, Dr. Ziad Asali, for giving him the courage to embrace his Palestinian identity and his American success story simultaneously.

"Six years ago, after 32 years in this country and only after I made Sr. Partner," he said, "I finally got the courage to publicly admit that I am

Palestinian-American. The fear of being labeled [or] of being stereotyped, the fear for my kids, and the fear for my job stopped me from coming out – and for years I was tormented by it."

"I want to thank Ziad and the work he and many of you are doing to give people like me the courage to be unafraid, to be proud to be Palestinian-American, to be able to openly speak about the suffering of Palestinians, and at the same time be a loyal US citizen who cares deeply about this great country," he continued.

The enforcers of Arab-American political correctness are consciously and systematically trying to reinforce that fear, not hesitating to savage a Palestinian refugee who achieved American success. They personally and viciously attack any Arab-American who is perceived as embracing the full scope of their US citizenship and successfully engaging with American society. They often do so anonymously, and dishonestly.

Time and again I have met young Arab-Americans who want to engage and succeed culturally and politically in the mainstream, but shrink back because of intimidation by such bullies. But there are growing signs that increasing numbers are fed up with self-imposed marginalization and defeatism.

There is a battle over the Arab-American soul between the hollow satisfaction of angry victimhood versus the real promise of hope and success.

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[3] <http://zipd.eu/exv/yt/?as=1&i=-WLVlPqL2iw>