

LAYALINA PRODUCTIONS AWARDS GALA 2015



The Layalina Chronicle
Spring 2015

Layalina Chairman, Mrs. Shannon Fairbanks (Center), poses with the Master of Ceremonies, Secretary Ray LaHood (Left), and Honorees of the Awards Gala (L to R) Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, The Honorable Nick J. Rahall and Mr. Fadi Ghandour. Rodney Bailey Photography.

Layalina Productions celebrated its 13th anniversary by hosting an Awards Gala at Gallup in Washington, DC on Wednesday, March 18th. Mr. Jim Clifton, Chairman and CEO of Gallup, gave the opening remarks and Former Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood served as the Master of Ceremonies.

The year 2014 was Layalina's best to-date, with the quality and impact of our television diplomacy efforts being recognized by 13 industry awards. As a way to give back, the Layalina Awards Gala recognized the tireless efforts and substantial achievements of three distinguished individuals from the public, private and non-profit sectors. The Honorable Edward P. Djerejian received the Lifetime Achievement Award, Mr. Fadi Ghandour received the Entrepreneurship and Social Change Award, and The Honorable Nick J. Rahall received the Outstanding Public Service Award.

A number of distinguished guests attended the Gala, including His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Talal bin Abdulaziz of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Antoine Chedid, Ambassador of Lebanon to the U.S., Congressman Darrell Issa, as well as

“The programming of this young but distinguished organization epitomize the ideals of public diplomacy.”

- Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian
remarks on Layalina Productions during the
2015 Awards Gala.

Layalina Directors Ambassador Richard Solomon, Ambassador Tom Korologos, The Honorable John Chapoton, Mr. Woods Fairbanks and Dr. Raja Kamal. Other honored guests included Layalina Director Emeritus Ambassador Walter Cutler, and Ambassadors Wendy Chamberlin and Theodore Kattouf.

The star-studded evening raised \$234,650 and drew an eclectic mix of sponsors. All proceeds from the event will support our programming efforts, helping us to reach millions of viewers in the Arab world.

Chairman's Message

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to report the success of our memorable 2015 Awards Gala. We were honored to welcome supporters, both new and old, who traveled from around the world to help recognize our extraordinary honorees and to celebrate Layalina's success in television diplomacy over the past 13 years.

We were also pleased to recognize the particular achievements of The Honorable Edward P. Djerejian, Mr. Fadi Ghandour and The Honorable Nick Rahall for their significant contributions to promoting cross-cultural understanding which seek to foster a more peaceful and economically prosperous Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In particular, Fadi Ghandour was compelling in describing his successful efforts to tap the commercial potential of the Region and to give hope to budding young entrepreneurs throughout the Middle East. In the midst of the constant barrage of negative media messages, this successful "work on the ground" report was inspiring.

Looking forward, we are committed to redouble these efforts by expanding our media diplomacy through outreach events in the coming Fall and Winter across the country: upcoming events are planned for New York City, Miami, Houston and Los Angeles. Our message in each locale will be that a tax-deductible gift to Layalina is an investment in the expansion of effective media diplomacy initiatives which are designed to counter the atmosphere of turmoil and despair in which radical extremism thrives.

In New York our signature honoree will be His Royal Highness Prince Turki Al-Faisal of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who will receive the George H. W. Bush Global Leadership Award to thank him for his decades-long commitment to bridging the divide between the U.S. and Arab world. For this November 3rd event, and the others which we will announce on a rolling basis, we would be delighted to have you join us, and we would urge you to send us names of your contacts in each city who might be interested in meeting us and learning of our work. In the meantime, warm regards from all of us at Layalina Productions.

Kind regards,



Shannon Fairbanks
Chairman



Congressman Darrell Issa and Secretary Ray LaHood at the VIP Reception. Rodney Bailey Photography.



His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud at the Layalina Awards Gala. Rodney Bailey Photography.



His Excellency Ambassador Antoine Chedid of Lebanon, Ambassador Richard Solomon, Ms. Natasha Adka, Mrs. Anne Solomon and Mr. Leon Shahabian at the VIP Reception. Rodney Bailey Photography.



Layalina Director The Honorable John Chapoton and The Honorable Nick J. Rahall at the VIP Reception. Rodney Bailey Photography.

Honoree Spotlight

The Honorable Edward P. Djerejian: Lifetime Achievement Award

Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian served exemplary tours as Ambassador to Israel and Ambassador to Syria, as well as Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs and Deputy White House Spokesman. His book, *Danger and Opportunity: An American Ambassador's Journey Through the Middle East*, is required reading for anyone seeking to understand the Middle East beyond daily headlines. Since retiring from the Senior Foreign Service in 1994, Ambassador Djerejian has served as the founding director of the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University.

Ambassador Djerejian has consistently championed public diplomacy as a policy tool in the Middle East. In 2003, he chaired the bipartisan Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, speaking positively about the work of Layalina in his testimony on the Hill.



Mr. Fadi Ghandour: Entrepreneurship and Social Change Award

Mr. Fadi Ghandour founded Aramex, the first Arab world based company to be listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange. In 2012 he shifted his focus to encouraging entrepreneurship in the MENA region, especially in marginalized communities. If anyone can create a silicon valley-type ecosystem of innovation in the Arab Middle East, it is Mr. Ghandour. As Chairman of the social entrepreneurship organization Wamda, and Founder of MENA Venture Investments, Mr. Ghandour is leading the way toward a more peaceful and prosperous Middle East.

Mr. Ghandour has appeared in Layalina's multiple award-winning reality series *Generation Entrepreneur* as well as in Layalina's multiple award-winning feature documentary *Yemeniettes*. Fadi's actions speak louder than words and his infectious, can-do spirit is inspiring a whole generation of young Arabs to dream bigger and to create a better future for themselves and their communities.



The Honorable Nick J. Rahall: Outstanding Public Service Award

Mr. Rahall was recognized for his dedicated service and leadership in the U.S. Congress, where for thirty-eight years he consistently sought to improve relations with the Middle East. Mr. Rahall represented West Virginia's Third Congressional District, served as Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Chaired the House Natural Resources Committee from 2007 to 2011.

In 2009, then-Congressman Rahall appeared in the Washington, DC episode of the second season of Layalina's hit reality series, *On the Road in America*. *On the Road* features the experiences of Arab youth from Morocco to the Gulf who discover America, warts and all, over a cross-country road trip. The New York Times called the show "DeToquevilles from the Middle East," and the episode featuring Congressman Rahall reached 9 million Arab viewers in the Middle East.



Thank You to our Sponsors

Layalina's success is due in large part to the generosity of our donors. Thank you to the 2015 Layalina Awards Gala sponsors and contributors. We are delighted to have you as vital friends of Layalina.

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