


April is "Arab American Heritage Month", a month dedicated to celebrating the history, culture, diversity, and significant contributions made by Arab Americans in the United States.

The initiative for official national designation of Arab American Heritage Month was launched in 2017 by the nonprofit organization Arab American Foundation and its sister organization Arab America. It began with support from only a few states, and has gained more support with each passing year

On April 19, 2021, President Biden published a White House letter recognizing the month and detailing the importance for appreciating and celebrating the Arab American community and culture. This was the first time a US president publicly validated and commemorated National Arab American Heritage Month. It now has support from the U.S. Department of State and 37 state governors.






"This month, we recognize National Arab American Heritage Month and honor the contributions of this diverse community to America. Immigrants with origins from the Arab world have been arriving to the United States since before our country's independence and have contributed to our nation's advancements in science, business, technology, foreign policy, and national security. The litany is long and includes Private Nathan Badeen, a Syrian immigrant who fought and gave his life during the American Revolution. At the State Department, we recognize tremendous diplomats such as Ambassador Philip Habib, former Under Secretary for Political Affairs, who played a prominent role in the Vietnam peace talks resulting in the 1973 Paris Peace Accords and later successfully pursued a ceasefire in Lebanon. We also recognize Ambassador Selwa "Lucky" Roosevelt, who served the President and Secretary of State as the Chief of Protocol of the United States from 1982-1989, nearly 7 years and longer than anyone else prior. The Department is fortunate to have had these and so many other talented Arab American colleagues, who strive every day to protect and promote the interests and values of the American people, while representing the United States to the world."

Recognizing National Arab American Heritage Month  
Press Statement, Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State  
April 1, 2022  
[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)





**"Arab Americans are a diverse community of immigrants and the descendants of immigrants 3.7 million strong, who have come from throughout the Arab world. We are Syrians, Lebanese, Egyptians, Palestinians, Iraqis, Jordanians, and Yemenis—from North Africa to Southwest Asia. Our ethnic community is diverse in faith, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability."**

**The story of Arab Americans is the story of America. Our history illustrates how the immigrant experience has shaped our country, and how, by engaging fully in civic life, we can bring about meaningful change towards the democratic ideals of equality, justice, and inclusion. "**

**Arab American Institute**  
**[www.aaiusa.org](http://www.aaiusa.org)**





63% of Arab Americans are Christian and 24% are Muslim.

Ramadan is considered one of the holiest months of the year for Muslims. In Ramadan, Muslims commemorate the revelation of the Qur'an, and fast from food and drink from pre-dawn to sunset, a fast of between 11-16 hours depending on the time of year for a period of 29-30 days.

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic calendar, which is based on a 12 month lunar year of approximately 354 days. Because the lunar year is 11 days shorter than the solar year, each lunar month moves 11 days earlier each year. The month traditionally begins and ends based on the sighting of the new moon.

Ramadan is a month of intense spiritual rejuvenation with a heightened focus on devotion, during which Muslims spend extra time reading the Qur'an and performing special prayers. Those unable to fast, such as pregnant or nursing women, the sick, or elderly people and children, are exempt from fasting.

The ultimate goal of fasting is gaining greater God-consciousness, in Arabic, taqwa, signifying a state of constant awareness of God. From this awareness a person should gain discipline, self-restraint and a greater incentive to do good and avoid wrong, including negative acts such as gossiping, backbiting, lying or arguing. Muslims welcome Ramadan as an opportunity for self-reflection, and spiritual improvement, and as a means to grow in moral excellence. Ramadan cultivates gratitude, and compassion for those less fortunate.

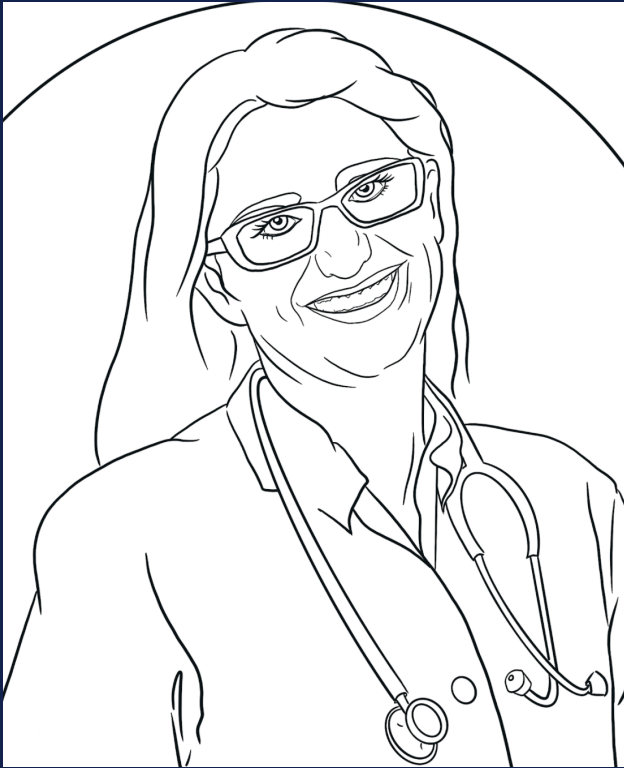
Ramadan is also a highly social time as Muslims invite each other to break their fast together and meet for prayers at the mosque.

<https://ing.org/ramadan-information-sheet/>





# Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha



- ◆ **Pediatrician, Scientist, Activist, Author, and Professor**
- ◆ **Founder and Director of the Michigan State University and Hurley Children's Hospital Pediatric Public Health Initiative**
- ◆ **Uncovered the Flint Water Crisis in Flint, MI, and Led the Recovery Efforts**

**“Challenging injustice means standing up for the weak, the vulnerable the abused, and the forgotten -- be it in health, employment, education, or the environment.”**



# Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha



Mona Hanna-Attisha, MD, MPH, FAAP, is founder and director of the Michigan State University and Hurley Children's Hospital Pediatric Public Health Initiative, an innovative and model public health program in Flint, Michigan.

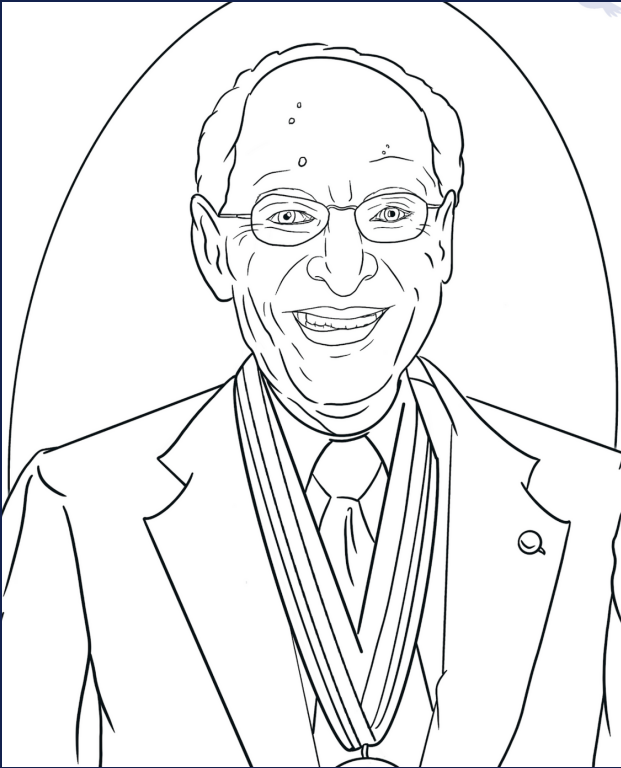
A pediatrician, scientist, activist and author, Dr. Hanna-Attisha has testified four times before the United States Congress and was awarded the Freedom of Expression Courage Award by PEN America. She was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World and recognized as one of USA Today's Women of the Century for her role in uncovering the Flint water crisis and leading recovery efforts, and most recently, received the 2020 CDC Foundation's Fries Prize for Improving Health.

A frequent contributor to national media outlets, including the New York Times and Washington Post, Dr. Hanna-Attisha has appeared on CNN, MSNBC, BBC and countless other outlets championing the cause of children in Flint and beyond. She is the founding donor of the Flint Child Health and Development Fund ([flintkids.org](http://flintkids.org)).

With concentrations in environmental health and health policy, Dr. Hanna-Attisha received her bachelor's degree and Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan. She completed her medical degree from Michigan State University College of Human Medicine and her residency at Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit, where she was chief resident. She is currently a Charles Stewart Mott Endowed Professor of Public Health and an associate professor of pediatrics and human development at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.

# Dr. Farouk El Baz

◆ Egyptian American Space Scientist, Geologist, and Research Professor



◆ Key Scientist Who Helped NASA Identify the Landing Sites for the Appollo 11 Moon Landing

◆ Established the Center for Earth and Planetary Studies at the National Air and Space Museum

◆ Clear-Water Advocate, and Leading Expert in the Study of Deserts and How to Find and Sustain Water

Before Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, Dr. Farouk El Baz decided where he should land.

# Dr. Farouk El Baz



Hailing from a small Egyptian town in the Nile Delta, Farouk El-Baz credits his sense of curiosity and fascination with the physical world to his father's dedication to teach his wife and their nine children to read and write. El-Baz has paired his powerful imagination with a deep knowledge of the sciences, helping transport humankind to its furthest reaches and provide new access to such life-giving forces as water and education.

In his late 20s, El-Baz helped choose landing sites for the first manned mission to the moon, Apollo 11. In the early 1970s, he helped establish and direct the Center for Earth and Planetary Studies at the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian Institution - and later helped pioneer the use of IMAX movies.

Until his retirement this spring, El-Baz served as the director of Boston University's the Center for Remote Sensing, a NASA-recognized "Center of Excellence" that studies earth's environment, using technology created for space exploration - including in the search for groundwater sources in some of the world's driest places.

A geologist and clear-water advocate, El-Baz has advised leaders all around the globe and especially on the African continent on how they can work together to decrease their people's dependence on strained water sources while opening up new sources to relieve suffering populations (such as cooperating to raise water hidden underground in conflict-torn Darfur).

He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including: the Golden Door Award of the International Institute of Boston, the Pioneer Award of the Arab Thought Foundation, and many more.

His scientific and historic achievements have not escaped the notice of popular culture, including a portrayal of El-Baz training NASA astronauts in the Tom Hanks-produced HBO series From the Earth to the Moon, and a spaceship that bore his name in Star Trek: The Next Generation.

# Rashida Tlaib



- ◆ **American Politician and Lawyer, Currently Serving as Congresswoman for Michigan's 13th Congressional District**
- ◆ **First Palestinian-American Woman to be Elected to Congress, First Muslim Woman to Serve in the Michigan Legislature, and One of the First Two Muslim Women to Serve in U.S. Congress**

**“When I think of immigration, I want to think of families. I want to think of unity. I want to think of a safe place, you know, free of persecution, a place where we can welcome a child that is hungry.”**





# Rashida Tlaib



Rashida Tlaib is a well-known progressive warrior and, in her own words, “a mother working for justice for all.” Her two young sons are at the root of her unwavering passion to help change lives for the better. She is the oldest of 14 children, born and raised in Detroit, the proud daughter of Palestinian immigrant parents.

Rashida made history in 2008 by becoming the first Muslim woman to ever serve in the Michigan Legislature. She is beloved by residents for the transformative constituent services she provided, and for successfully fighting the billionaires and corporations that tried to pollute her district. When families get to know Rashida, they have no doubt that she will work tirelessly to knock down barriers for real change, and whether by policy or action, she will roll up her sleeves to make sure her residents are cared for, no matter how big the challenge.

When billionaire slumlord Matty Moroun refused to follow the law and get polluting semi-trucks off neighborhood streets, Rashida organized residents with the We Have A Right To Breathe campaign and forced Moroun to fulfill his obligations to protecting public health. When large piles of black dust started showing up on the Detroit riverfront and blowing into homes and parks, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality told residents everything was fine, Rashida collected samples and got the substance tested herself - exposing the cancer-causing “petroleum coke” as a threat, and getting it removed.

As an attorney at the Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice, Rashida took the movement to the courts, fighting racist emergency managers, abusive state agencies, and leading the fight for community benefits agreements that promote equitable development. Rashida knows that effective advocacy requires an all-out approach, fighting in the community, in the legislature, and in the courts every day against injustice and inequality, so that every single person in this country has a chance to thrive.

She is currently the Congresswoman for Michigan’s 13th Congressional District, which includes the city of Detroit and surrounding communities.

- [tlaib.house.gov](https://tlaib.house.gov)

# Linda Sarsour



- ◆ Author, Award-Winning Racial and Civil Rights Activist, Community Organizer, and Mother of Three
- ◆ Palestinian Muslim American
- ◆ Most Well-Known for Organizing the 2017 Women's March in Washington

“Alleviating suffering of the most marginalized communities must begin with assessing the needs of entire communities and allowing the most marginalized to lead the strategy. My belief is those closest to the pain are closest to the solution.”

# Linda Sarsour



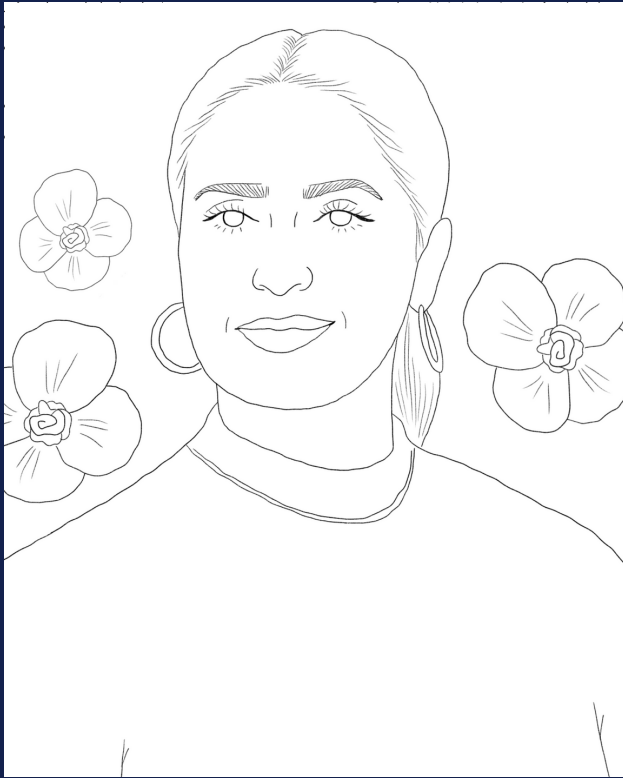
Born and raised in Brooklyn, Linda Sarsour grew up embracing the identity of her local community as well as that of her Palestinian ancestry. She recalls with fondness the memories of summers in her homeland with extended family, as well as the kinship and connectedness she felt with all of the “brown, Black and beige kids” in her neighborhood and school. She has grown up to be unapologetically an Arab American New Yorker, as well as unapologetically outspoken and tenacious, a protector and a fighter.

As a Muslim American living through and post 9/11, Linda witnessed firsthand how Muslims were unfairly branded and targeted by the government, by news outlets, and by their own neighbors. It was in this setting, just a few years after she graduated school that she began working for her father’s cousin, Basemah, at the Arab American Association of New York. Linda credits this woman with teaching her how to serve and love those in their community, while at the same time standing up to the injustices that were occurring. She has worked ever since to combat racism, bigotry, and xenophobia for all marginalized groups in the US.

Though Linda has been involved in many political movements, she may be most well-known for organizing the 2017 Women’s March in Washington, the largest single day protest ever recorded in the US. That year, she was recognized, along with her two co-chairs, as Time Magazine’s “100 Most Influential People”. The same organizers also led the “March2Justice”, a 250-mile walk to fight profiling and brutality by the police among other issues. Linda believes that rights are not just for “her people”, but that we all must show up for each other.

She served for several years as the Executive Director of the Arab American Association in NYC, where her work began. She has also since founded MPower Change which is a grassroots, Muslim-led, social justice organization and Until Freedom, a group of professionals committed to organizing and fighting injustice. She has served on several boards, won awards for her work, and had audiences with many of the highest decision makers including presidents, politicians, and religious leaders.

# Salma Hayek



- ◆ **Award Winning Film Actress and Producer, and Former Model**
- ◆ **Philanthropist and Humanitarian**
- ◆ **Women's Rights Activist**
- ◆ **Produced and Starred in Her Dream Role of Frida Kahlo, Which was Nominated for Six Academy Awards**

“What is important is to believe in something so strongly that you're never discouraged.”

# Salma Hayek



Salma Hayek was born on September 2, 1966 in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico. Her father is of Lebanese descent and her mother is of Mexican/Spanish ancestry. After having seen *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971) in a local movie theater, she decided she wanted to become an actress. At age 12, she was sent to the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans, Louisiana. She attending Mexico City's prestigious university Universidad Iberoamericana and studied International Relations and Drama. After she graduated, she felt ready to pursue acting seriously.

A daughter of Mexican and Lebanese parents, Salma Hayek grew up with a strong connection to her Arab roots. Though she was born in Veracruz Mexico, she says she “probably ate Kibbeh (a popular Lebanese dish) before tacos”.

Well known for being an actress, producer, and philanthropist, she’s also been an advocate for change toward a more understanding and accepting world. She has made a significant contribution to a wider acceptance not only of ethnic diversity on screen, but of women in roles traditionally held by men in the industry.

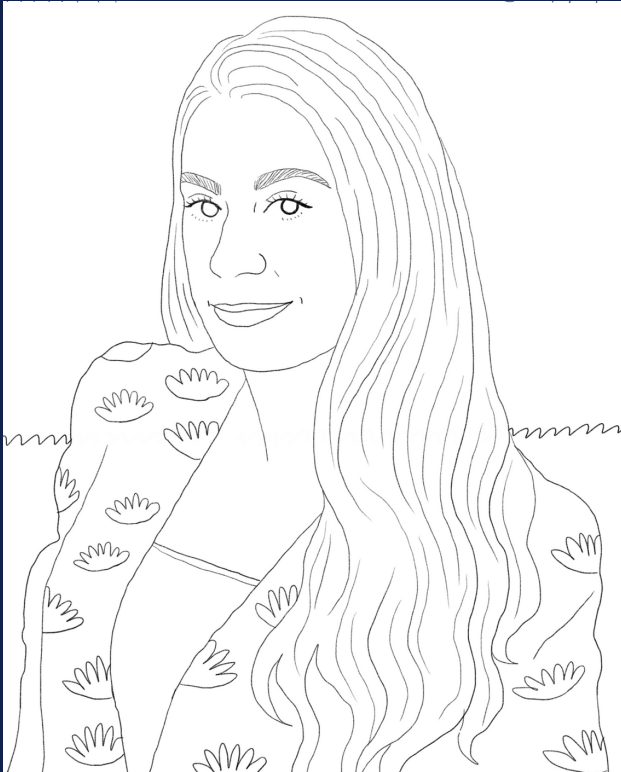
Hayek started fighting for women's rights at the age of 25 and in 2005, she testified before the U.S. Senate in support of reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act. She has donated to many anti-domestic violence groups and shelters.

In 2013, Hayek co-founded Chime for Change, which aims to spread female empowerment. The goal was to target global issues of education, health, and justice for girls and women— because every girl has a right to education, health, and justice.

Hayek has traveled and partnered with UNICEF, doing work in Sierra Leone, and has been a longtime supporter of Pro Mujer, which offers microfinancing to women in Latin America



# Maysoon Zayid



- ◆ **Acclaimed Comedian and Actress, Writer, Author of "Find Another Dream"**
- ◆ **One of America's First Muslim Women Comedians**
- ◆ **Co-Founder/Co-Executive Producer of the New York Arab American Comedy Festival and The Muslim Funny Fest**
- ◆ **Disability Advocate**

"Hollywood needs positive images of people with disabilities played by people with disabilities."

# Maysoon Zayid



Renowned comedian, actress, writer, and disability advocate Maysoon Zayid jokes that if there were a competition called the Oppression Olympics, she would win gold. "I'm Palestinian, Muslim, I'm a woman of color, I'm disabled," Zayid tells audiences, "and I live in New Jersey." Hilarious, disarming, and with a message that matters, Zayid's comedy and commentary resonate with audiences worldwide. She is the co-founder/co-executive producer of the New York Arab American Comedy Festival and The Muslim Funny Fest, and her famed TED Talk, "I got 99 problems... palsy is just one" has over 10 million views. As Zayid states in the talk's intro: "I have cerebral palsy, which means I shake all the time. Look. It's exhausting. I'm like Shakira meets Muhammad Ali."

Hailed in Glamour as "the most fearless comic alive," Zayid has performed around the world, and headlined both the Arabs Gone Wild Comedy Tour and The Muslims Are Coming Tour, in which comedians toured the U.S. in an effort to counter Islamophobia. Zayid is also a disability advocate who fights to mainstream disabled students worldwide and for disability rights. Her bestselling memoir Find Another Dream chronicles her life story in finding her voice and own path to stardom.

She is a graduate of and a Guest Comedian in Residence at Arizona State University. She was a full-time On Air Contributor to Countdown with Keith Olbermann and a columnist for The Daily Beast. She has most recently appeared on Oprah Winfrey Networks In Deep Shift, 60 Minutes, and ABC News. Maysoon had the most viewed TED Talk of 2014 and was named 1 of 100 Women of 2015 by BBC.

Maysoon is a Princeton University Arts Fellow for 2021-23 and will begin two years of teaching and community collaboration in September.

Zayid's candid, inspiring, and laugh-out-loud funny talks cover topics ranging from beating the odds, to fostering inclusivity and battling discrimination, to the challenges facing the disability community.

- [harrywalker.com/speakers/maysoon-zayid](http://harrywalker.com/speakers/maysoon-zayid)

# Dr. Fady Joudah



- ◆ **Palestinian American Physician, Poet, and Translator**
- ◆ **Volunteered in Zambia and Sudan with Doctors Without Borders**
- ◆ **2007 Winner of the Yale Series of Younger Poets Competition for His Debut Collection of Poetry "The Earth in the Attic"**

"As a young boy, I remember feeling I needed to become a doctor because the world or my immediate family needed compassion and support."



# Dr. Fady Joudah



Fady Joudah is a Palestinian American physician, poet, and translator. He was born in Austin, Texas, and grew up in Libya and Saudi Arabia. He was educated at the University of Georgia, the Medical College of Georgia, and the University of Texas Health Sciences in Houston. In 2002 and 2005 he worked with Doctors Without Borders in Zambia and Sudan, respectively.

Joudah's debut collection of poetry, *The Earth in the Attic* (2008), won the 2007 Yale Series of Younger Poets competition, chosen by Louise Glück. Joudah followed his second book of poetry, *Alight* (2013) with *Textu* (2014), a collection of poems written on a cell phone wherein each piece is exactly 160 characters long. His fourth collection is *Footnotes in the Order of Disappearance* (2018). In 2014, Joudah was a Guggenheim Fellow in poetry.

As critic Charles Bainbridge observed in a 2008 Guardian review of *The Earth in the Attic*, "Joudah's poetry thrives on dramatic shifts in perspective, on continually challenging received notions."

Joudah translated several collections of Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish's work in *The Butterfly's Burden* (2006), which won the Banipal prize from the UK and was a finalist for the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation; and in *If I Were Another*, which won a PEN USA award in 2010. His translation of Ghassan Zaqtan's *Like a Straw Bird It Follows Me* (2012) won the Griffin International Poetry Prize in 2013. His other translations include Amjad Nasser's *Petra: The Concealed Rose* and *A Map of Signs and Scents*.

Joudah lives with his family in Houston, where he works as a physician of internal medicine.



Arab American Heritage Month

**"Win a Book"**

**Drawing**





# Arab American Heritage Month Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who is a doctor and a poet?

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2. Who helped identify the landing sites on the Moon for the Appollo 11?

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3. Who uncovered the Flint Water Crisis in Flint, Michigan?

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4. Who is a comedian and a disability advocate, who said "Hollywood needs positive images of people with disabilities played by people with disabilities."?

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5. Who is best known for organizing the Women's March in Washington in 2017?

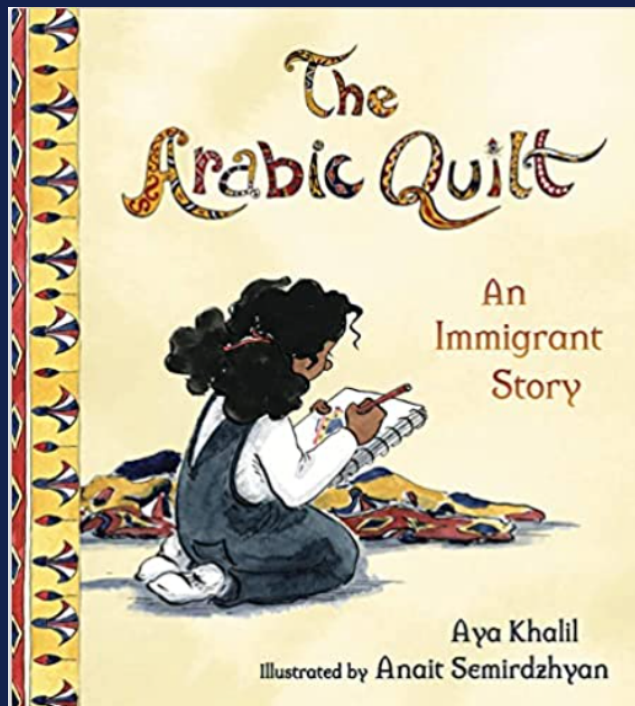
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6. Who was the first Palestinian-American woman to be elected to Congress?

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# Win a Book!

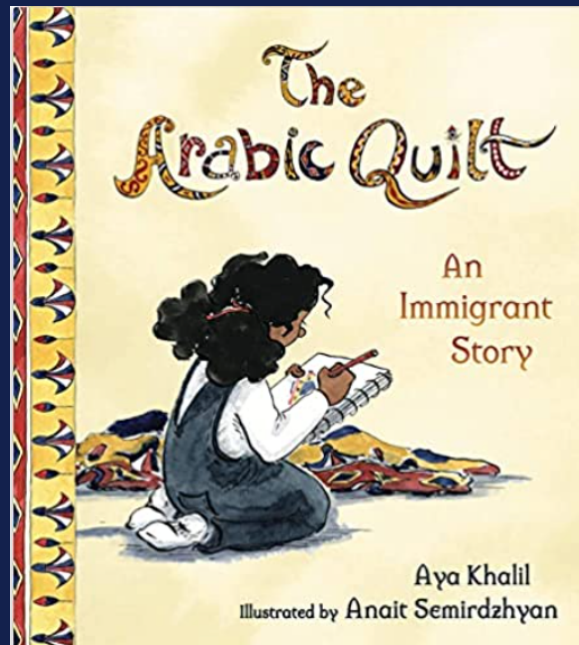


Answer our quiz or color one of the coloring pages and drop it in the box in the office labeled Arab American Heritage Month, for a chance to win "*The Arabic Quilt: An Immigrant Story*" by Aya Khalil.

Winner will be drawn randomly.



# Win a Book!



For a chance to win the book  
*"The Arabic Quilt: An Immigrant Story"*  
by Aya Khalil

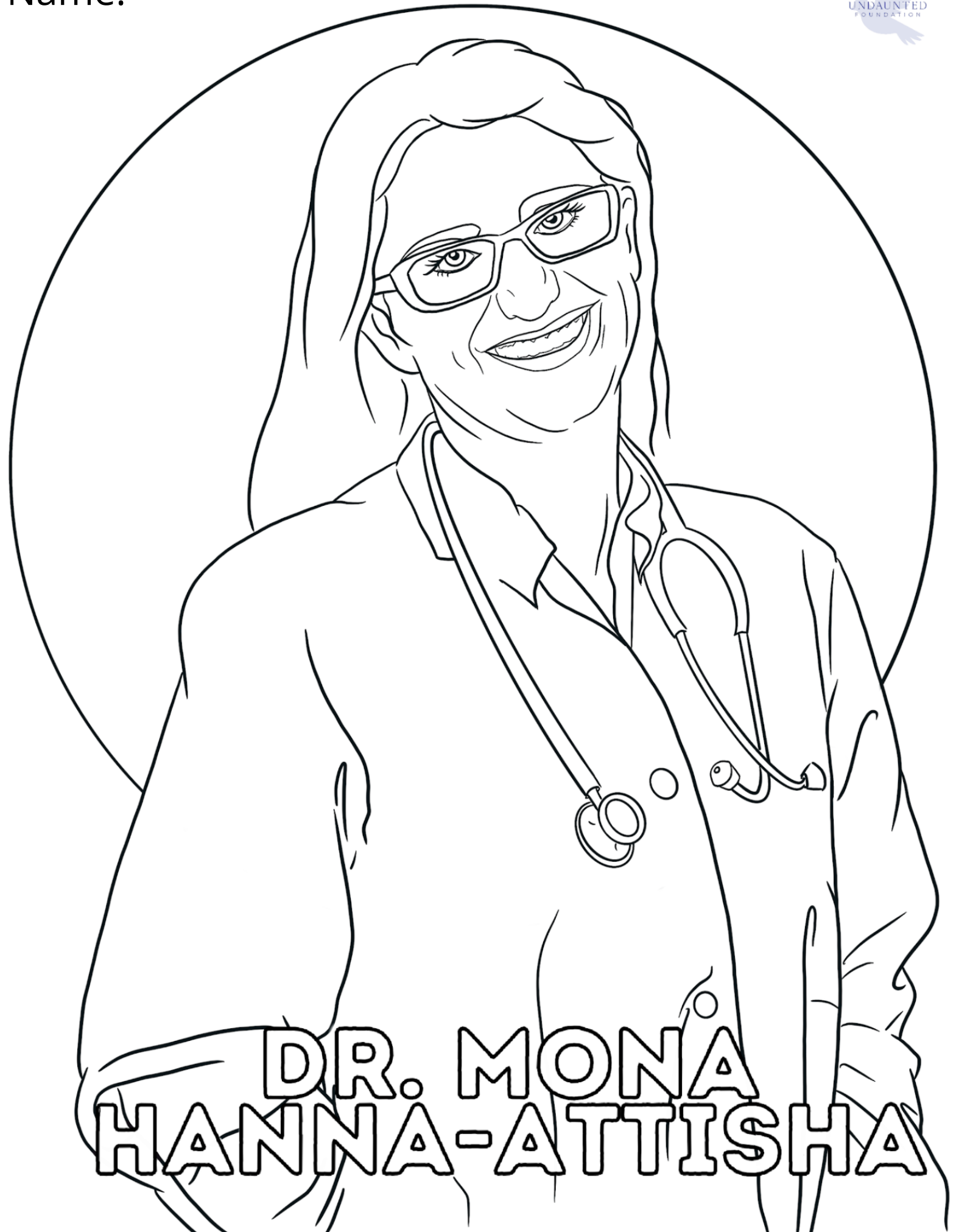
**For those in grades 3-6: Answer our quiz and drop it in the box in the office labeled Arab American History Month "Win a Book" Drawing.**

**For those in grades K- 2nd: Color one of the coloring pages and drop it in the box in the office labeled Arab American Heritage Month "Win a Book" Drawing.**

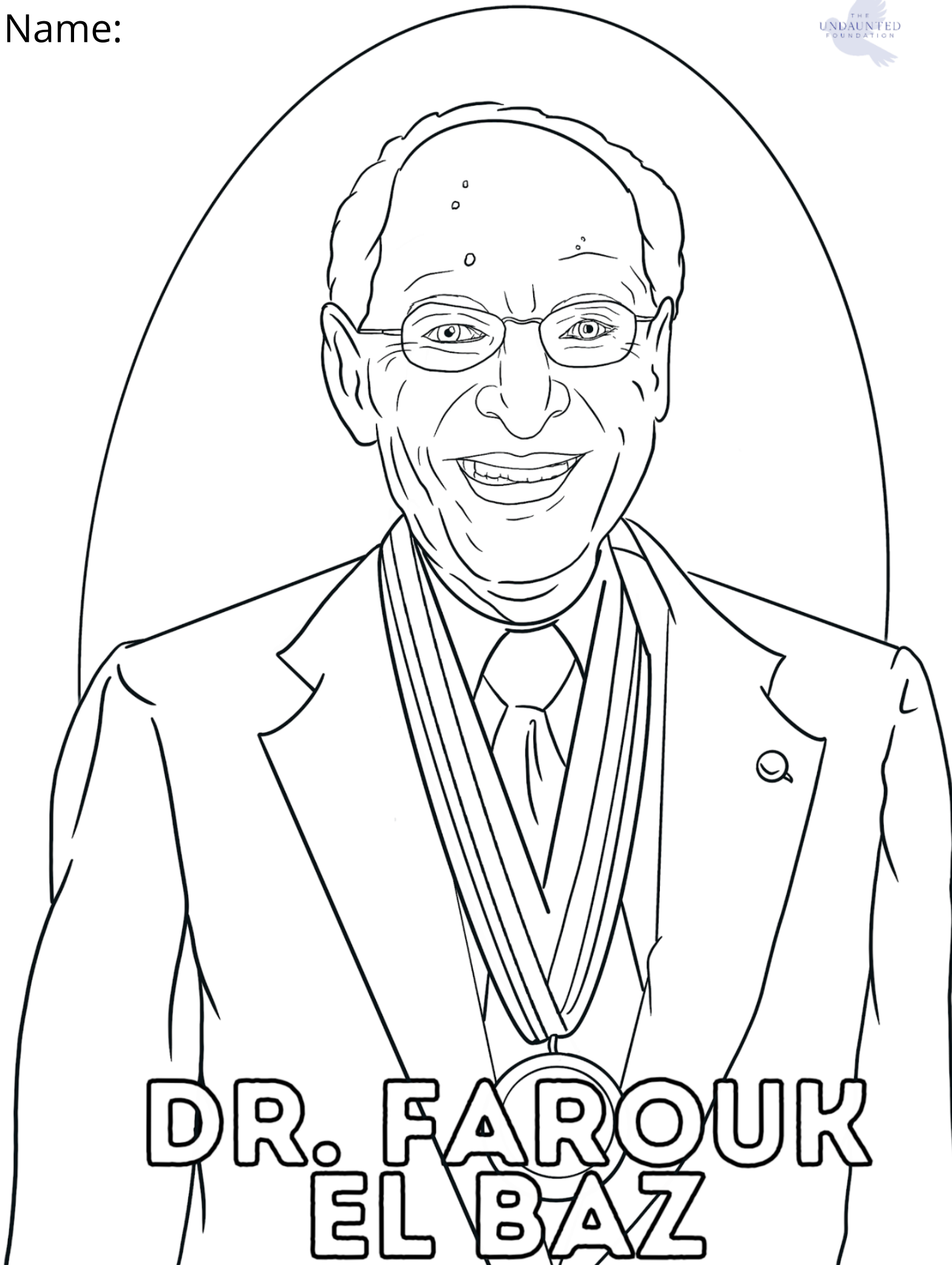
**Two winners, one for the coloring pages and one for the quiz, will be drawn randomly.**



Name:



Name:



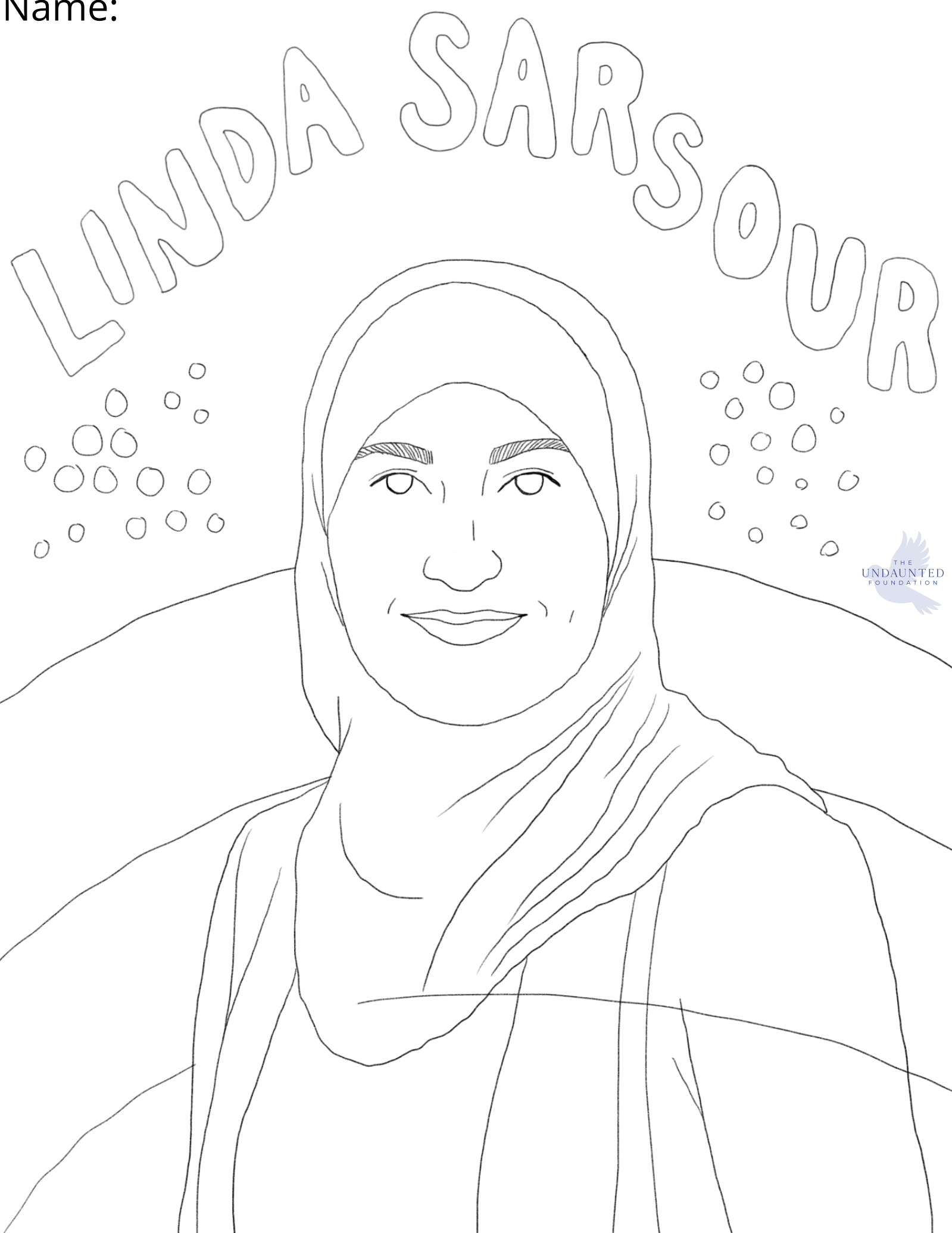


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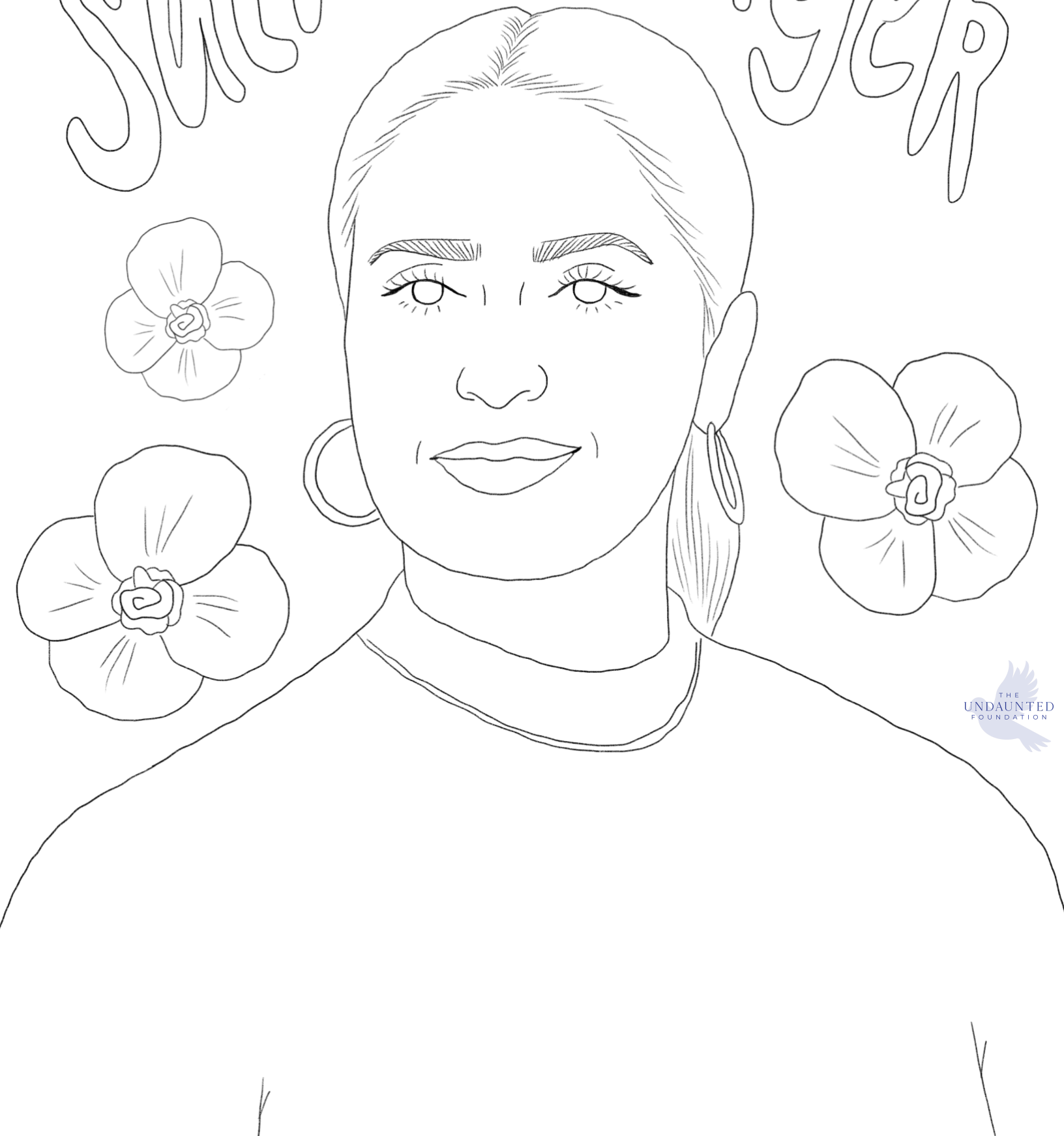
**RASHIDA TLAIB**

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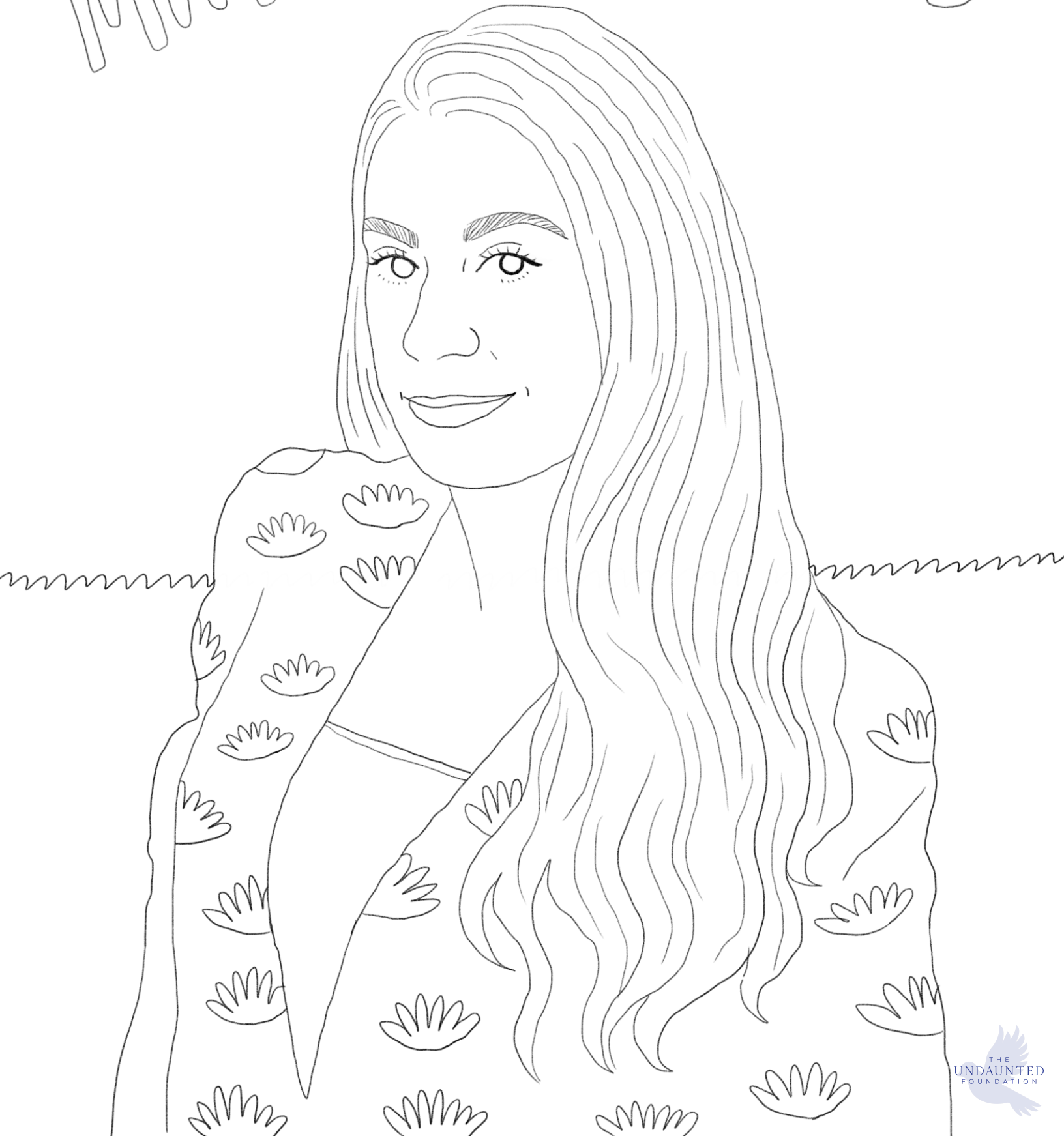
Name:

Salma Hayek



Name:

MAYSOON ZAYID



Name:

DR. FADY JOUDAH

