



Edward J. Bagale
Vice Chancellor for Government Relations
The University of Michigan-Dearborn

Edward J. Bagale, Vice Chancellor for Government Relations at The University of Michigan-Dearborn, has served as the University's chief government relations officer since 1985. He represents the University to public agencies and elected officials in Lansing, Washington, D.C., and local governmental units and agencies throughout Southeastern Michigan.

With approximately forty years of advocacy work in higher education, Mr. Bagale has served as Director of Admissions at The University of Michigan-Dearborn and as Associate Director of Admissions & Scholarships at Oakland University.

He has spoken at numerous national conferences on topics involving the ramifications of term limits, improved marketing, and productivity models for regional universities. Mr. Bagale received national recognition for his innovative incentive- and merit-based scholarship programs. Most recently, he has provided leadership to collaborative efforts to establish an Automobile National Heritage Area and promote sustainable development throughout the Detroit Metropolitan Area.

From 1983-84, Mr. Bagale served as district administrator for Congressman Sander Levin.

Mr. Bagale serves as a consultant and special assistant to the president of The Henry Ford, where he has worked to build partnerships among the museum community and various sectors of the education community, including inner-city schools and higher education.

Mr. Bagale serves on the boards of directors of –

- The Dearborn Community Fund,
- ACCESS (Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services),
- American Arab Chamber of Commerce,
- MotorCities/Automobile National Heritage Area Partnership,
- SEMCOG - Ann Arbor to Downtown Detroit Rapid Transit Steering Committee, and
- The Michigan Humanities Council.

He is Vice Chair of the Henry Ford Hospital and Health Network Board of Trustees, and co-chair of the Rouge River Gateway Partnership.

Mr. Bagale holds a Bachelor of Arts in economics and management from Oakland University and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Detroit.

Dr. Farouk Obeid



Dr. Farouck N. Obeid, a renowned trauma surgeon, critical care specialist, and community leader lost a valiant battle to cancer on March 8, 2008. He was 58 years old.

Dr. Obeid was born in the village of Mishtayeh, Syria and began his education in Homs, Syria where he graduated from Zehrawi High School. He pursued his medical studies at Damascus University and came to the United States in 1973. He completed his surgical residency and subsequent vascular surgery fellowship at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit in 1979. By 1983, he was promoted to Director of the Division of Trauma & Emergency Surgery at Henry Ford Hospital and from 1991-1999 became Henry Ford's first Division Head of Trauma & Critical Care Surgery. From 1999 until the time of his death, Dr. Obeid was Division Head of Trauma & Surgical Critical Care at Hurley Medical Center in Flint. In 2005, Dr. Obeid established and led Hurley's Bariatric and Minimally-Invasive Surgery Center.

His professional accomplishments are too numerous to mention. He was instrumental in leading both Henry Ford Hospital and Hurley Medical Center to be certified as Level I trauma centers as determined by the American College of Surgeons. He was the president of the Michigan Trauma Coalition in 2001.

Dr. Obeid had various academic appointments at the University of Michigan Medical School and at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. Since 2002, he had been a Professor of Surgery at Michigan State University. He published innumerable articles in peer-reviewed journals and many book chapters. He was honored with several teaching awards.

But despite these tremendous professional accomplishments, Dr. Obeid will be fondly remembered by us as a pillar of this community. He was the president of the American Syrian Arab Cultural Association in 2003. But perhaps more importantly, Dr. Obeid was a community leader since his arrival in Detroit. His engaging and giving personality made him the center of a large social circle. His willingness to provide help to anyone who needed it, coupled with immense humility and boundless hospitality and generosity made him an anchor for the Syrian and Arab community. He promoted and facilitated the education, health, and careers of literally hundreds of people. He touched many lives in many ways.

Dr. Obeid personified the best qualities of our heritage and of his adopted country. He demonstrated hospitality, love of family, love of homeland, community service, professionalism, and excellence in patient care. Those of us who knew him all claimed him as one of our own. To be associated with Dr. Obeid was a privilege, and all of us knew it. Yet he never made anyone feel that way. On the contrary, he welcomed and celebrated everyone and made them feel respected and loved. This is most true for his beloved wife, Gloria and his children Nadia, Nabeel, Leila, and Nicholas.

Those of us who had the privilege to know Dr. Farouck were enriched by his expansive knowledge, his teaching, his humor, and his larger-than life personality. By almost all measures, he was a giant- both professionally and personally. We will always remember his legendary wit and gentle spirit.

Our community has been blessed and strengthened by having him among us. Though he has left an irreplaceable vacuum, he has been an incredible role model by any measure. He had all the right qualities in all the right measures. There aren't many like him, but we would all do well to try to emulate him.



James C. Thomas

Plunkett Cooney

James C. Thomas is a well-respected criminal defense attorney who joined Plunkett Cooney as an Of Counsel attorney in the firm's Detroit office in 2006.

During his more than 30 years practicing criminal defense in complex federal and state matters, Mr. Thomas has successfully defended clients in some of Michigan's highest profile criminal cases, including corporate executives, politicians and professional athletes. He has tried a broad range of significant criminal matters in both federal and state courts. His practice is focused on white-collar criminal defense, and he has successfully represented businesses, hospitals and professionals in such matters.

Mr. Thomas is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2007 Gilman Award presented by the Federal Bar Association, Michigan Chapter to outstanding practitioners in the area of criminal law. He has also received the "Defender of Justice Award" from the National Lawyers Guild and the "Justice for All Award" from the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan, an organization for which he currently serves as a member of its board of directors.

Representative Client Work

- Veteran trial attorney in more than two hundred jury trials
- Acquittal of client in a noteworthy federal case involving Young Boys, Inc.
- Acquittal of police officer in major Detroit Police Corruption Case
- Acquittal of client in first federal trial of terrorism suspects following the attacks of September 11th

Professional Affiliations

- Arab American Bar Association
- Attorney Discipline Board (Chairman, Panel No. 23)
- State Bar of Michigan (Criminal Law and Criminal Jurisprudence Committees, 1989-1993)
- American Bar Association
- Federal Bar Association (Eastern District of Michigan)
- Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan (Board of Directors, 2004 to present)
- National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- American Board of Criminal Lawyers (Fellowship; President, 2006)
- American College of Trial Lawyers (Fellowship)

Publications and Lectures

- 2007 Plunkett Cooney Nursing Home Seminar and Mock Trial, lecturer, Troy Marriott Hotel, June 14, 2007
- “Case Themes and Motion Practice,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Fall Seminar, Traverse City, November 2004
- Selected as CDAM faculty for a five day intensive criminal practice seminar, Trial Practice College at Cooley Law School, March 2004
- “Forfeiture Nuts and Bolts: Current Litigation for the Defense,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Fall Seminar, Traverse City, November 2001
- “Handling the Narcotics Case,” Criminal Advocacy Program (CAP), Wayne County Records Court Bar Association, October 2001
- “The Commerce Clause and Relevant Issues in Criminal Advocacy,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Spring Seminar, Southfield, March 2001
- “Civil Forfeiture Reform Statute (CAFRA) or As It’s Affectionately Known, the Hyde Amendment,” Federal Bar Association, U.S. Courthouse Detroit, September 2000
- “Federal Forfeiture and Disgorgement of Attorneys Fees,” Federal Bar Association, U.S. Courthouse Detroit, March 1999
- “Civil Forfeiture From a Claimant’s Perspective,” Federal Bar Association Seminar, U.S. Courthouse Detroit, March 1998
- “Trial Practice Techniques,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Fall Seminar, Traverse City, November 1997
- “Alteration of Patient Records,” Current Criminal Issues for Health Care Risk Managers, Michigan Society of Healthcare and Risk Management, March 1996
- “Forfeitures: Fascist or Fair,” Michigan State Bar Annual Meeting, Criminal Law Section Symposium, September 1996
- “Current Issues in Forfeiture and Double Jeopardy,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Fall Seminar, Traverse City, November 1995
- “Double Trouble: Consequences of State Criminal Convictions in Federal Court Prosecutions,” Criminal Advocacy Program (CAP), Wayne County, Records Court Bar Association, November 1993
- “Issues in Forfeiture: The Good News,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Fall Seminar, Traverse City, November 1993
- “Jury Selection and Voir Dire in Federal Courts Post *Batson*,” Federal Bar Association Seminar, U.S. Courthouse Detroit, May 1993
- “Proportionality of Sentences in Michigan,” Advanced Criminal Practice, CDAM Spring Seminar, Southfield, April 1993
- “Advanced Criminal Practice - Examination of Police Witnesses,” CDAM Spring Seminar, Southfield, April 1992
- “Sentencing Options in Michigan - Downward Departures,” Criminal Advocacy Program (CAP), Wayne County Records Court Bar Association, March 1991



Mohammed Sabbagh

Chase Bank

Mohammed (Mo) Sabbagh is a Vice President in Retail Financial Services with JP Morgan Chase. He is a proud member of the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights business community, and Branch Manager of the local Chase Bank at Ford Road and Outer Drive, in Dearborn Heights.

Prior to joining JP Morgan Chase, Mr. Sabbagh owned and operated his own businesses. As a former franchisee with ExxonMobil, and owner of multiple commercial properties, he brings years of experience in small business entrepreneurship, and the experience of an Internationally renowned Financial Institution. An annual recipient of ExxonMobil's Top Producer award, Mr. Sabbagh understands what it takes to be successful, and the challenges that small business owners face on a daily basis.

Mr. Sabbagh, a member of the community for over 30 years, has always found ways to give back to the community. As a member of the Chase Family, he constantly finds ways to make the lives of all his clients financially rewarding.

He is a graduate of Fordson High School, and Wayne State University where he earned his B.B.A.

His hobbies include sports, reading, and most importantly spending time with his wife Lamis, and their 2 boys.