

BTMENA seeks to foster connections and friendships among Barnes & Thornburg's Middle East and North African (MENA) teammates and allies. The group also strives to cultivate an awareness of the legal challenges facing MENA communities nationwide.

### Empowering our MENA teammates

Nearly 4 million Americans trace their roots to a Middle Eastern or North African country, with two-thirds of them living in just 10 states. Currently, MENA is not an ethnicity category listed on the United States census, leading to underreported numbers for the group. BTMENA is working to bridge that gap, providing a community of support for individuals at the firm who identify as MENA.

"Not many law firms, companies, or other institutions have MENA affinity or talent resource groups," said Michael C. Zogby, co-chair of BTMENA. "We are ahead of our peers, leading the way with thought leadership and setting a course for our colleagues, teammates, and friends."

### Cultivating community through a common thread

"We might be the most diverse affinity group," said Alice Kyureghian, co-chair of BTMENA. "The Middle East covers a multitude of countries and religions with their own unique traditions."

This group showcases that, though MENA teammates have many differences, there is always a common thread. The importance of family, food, and community runs deep, as demonstrated by BTMENA sharing traditional Arab American recipes in honor of National Arab American Heritage Month in April. The group is hosting regular meetings, and has been coordinating presentations by members of the judiciary, academia, thought leaders, and clients who share their heritage and a dedicated interest in promoting shared values.

For more information regarding BTMENA, please contact co-chairs [Michael Zogby](#) and [Alice Kyureghian](#).

## BTMENA REFLECTIONS



MIHRAN YEZBEKYAN



My Armenian culture is sewn into the fabric of my identity. Diversity in all forms helps contribute to successful ideas and bringing those ideas to fruition, including in the legal community. I draw from my cultural and ethnic background in the work that I do and in the ideas I contribute.

## BTMENA Co-Chairs



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