My name is Abrar Hammoud and I’m a clinical assistant professor in the department of Technology Leadership and Innovation in Purdue’s polytechnic institute. And today I’m going to share with you my AAARCC story.

Growing up, the term Asian-American wasn’t a term that really resonated with me. Rather, I would describe myself as Lebanese-American because the country from which I originate is Lebanon. Which is located in the Middle-Eastern region of Asia. As I grew older, and particularly during my undergraduate years, I began to realize that perhaps one of the features of the Middle-East is the western ethnocentrism that displaces us from really having a continental affiliation. We were more so described as partway to somewhere else. As this gateway and passage between East and West. Now the term Asian-American, to me, is representative of the wide variety of cultures and ethnicities and religions that Asia offers the entire world. And I connect with that heritage everyday. I live it through the languages I speak, and the clothing I wear, the food that I eat, and the different celebrations, both religious and non-religious, that I partake in.

A message that I have to share with folks who are Asian-American but perhaps are wary or resent that identity due to the current social climate is to really stop and consider the cradle of civilization and some of the greatest empires in human history emerged from Asia. And that’s really something to be celebrated and to be proud of. When you look at any industry, what we find is that we benefit from the contributions that Asians from across the entire continent have contributed to the world. So we celebrate you this month! Thank you so much for allowing me to partake in this celebration and to share this message with you all.