Impact 100 Metro Detroit 2019 Grant Summary
Grant Finalist: **Zaman International**
Project: **Culinary Arts Workforce Development Program**

Background: Zaman's story is one of vision-guided growth, beginning in 1996. Zaman CEO and founder, Najah Bazzy, encountered desperate poverty in metro Detroit while making house calls as a registered nurse to refugees and immigrants. Starting with family members and friends, Bazzy mobilized a grassroots network of donors willing to provide basic necessities to these marginalized families. This humble initiative grew steadily to become Zaman International. Today, Zaman has assisted more than 247,493 local families and nearly two-million individuals through its international work. In 2016, Zaman established the Hope for Humanity Center, a 40,000-square-foot building in Inkster. It is the organization's headquarters and houses the crisis assistance center and resale store as well as the culinary arts, sewing, and literacy training hub.

Unmet Need: Zaman's work is concentrated in a part of southeast Michigan that's been slow to benefit from the state's economic recovery. High unemployment, stagnating wages, and growing poverty plague Inkster, Dearborn, and Dearborn Heights, exacerbated by substandard public transportation and few options for affordable childcare. All of this adds up to isolated communities devoid of employment opportunities.The decline in Michigan's unemployment rate, however, is challenging employers to find qualified workers to fill no fewer than 90,000 job vacancies, many in the manufacturing and service industries. The state's continued economic recovery could stall unless this problem is resolved.The Department of Labor confirms that training and recruiting women for non-traditional occupations is one solution to the labor force issue. Through its workforce development programs, Zaman is doing just that, addressing both the need for qualified workers and clients' desire for self-reliance.

Project Summary: The culinary arts program is part of Zaman's Building Ongoing Opportunities through Skills Training (BOOST) collective. A culinary arts instructor and case manager facilitate the program in two, 16-week semesters. Upon completion, select students receive 12-weeks of paid, on-the-job training in Zaman's culinary social enterprises. First, up to 20 enrollees are wrapped in basic needs support from the crisis center. They then follow a curriculum modeled on a traditional culinary school and covering sanitation, knife skills, spices and herbs, and more.. Nutrition education and talks with culinary professionals add knowledge while exposing them to the food landscape.BOOST also offers tutelage in literacy and sewing as well as activities that build self-esteem, teach job-hunting skills, and introduce entrepreneurship.

Outcome: Success is defined by participants having marketable skills, as well as certificates attesting to their skills. Success is also defined by participants being prepared for apprenticeship programs, business ownership, secondary education, or the workforce. Additionally, participants will have sustained social and emotional confidence.

Sustainability: Zaman launched social enterprises with items produced by the kitchen. Cafe Lunch is a weekly happening that invites people from nearby businesses to the Hope for Humanity Center for a freshly prepared lunch. Zaman also established a catering service and offers prepared foods for purchase in Good Deeds, the resale shop. Proceeds support the kitchen's staff and programs. Further, Zaman's culinary program has been approved by the Department of Labor as a certified apprenticeship program. This approval has made the organization eligible to pursue new state and federal funding opportunities.To fund its overall operations, Zaman uses a multi-channel approach that includes special events and social media. Major funding is provided by individuals and grants from WIOA, UWSEM, and Islamic Relief USA. Ninety-one cents of every donated dollar are used for client services and programs.