

Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans

A. Alex Lari is a founder and Director of the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans. PAAIA is the largest non-profit independent organization that represents the domestic interest of the Iranian American community before the US policymakers, opinion makers and American public at large. PAAIA works to expand opportunities for the active participation of Iranian Americans in the democratic process at all levels of government and in public debate, and to foster greater understanding of the community and its Persian heritage.

PAAIA sponsors the Annual Public Opinion Survey of Iranian Americans, a scientific gathering of attitudinal and demographic information, to have a better understanding of the community. The results have been used in meetings on Capitol Hill with members of Congress, the White House, Department of State and other agencies. A mentorship program for Iranian American young adults pairs them with accomplished Iranian American mentors to help them identify and pursue their desired career paths. The Opportunities for Growth, High Achievement and Betterment program places young Iranian Americans in internship programs in business and on Capitol Hill. In addition, PAAIA raises funds from its members for grants to Iranian students studying in the U.S. who are in dire financial need. PAAIA sponsors numerous cultural events each year such as the annual Nowruz celebration on Capitol Hill, the Cyrus Cylinder Museum Tour and the new "A Thousand Years of Persian Books" at the Library of Congress.