

**Abdo El Tassi C.M, O.M. (Vice President)**



**Abdo El Tassi** was born in Lebanon, where he became a schoolteacher and principal. He came to Winnipeg in 1969 and his first job was loading trucks in the shipping department of Peerless Garments. In 1978, he was appointed their General Manager and by 2003, he had become President and CEO. Since that time he has increased the company's annual sales from \$3 to \$45 million. He brings this drive to the many boards on which he sits, including the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice in St. Paul's College.

Mr. El Tassi has sponsored dozens of people to come to Canada and established training and development opportunities at Peerless Garments for newcomers to learn marketable skills and English. To date, he has provided over \$1.7 million in interest-free loans to cover business startup costs, mortgages and university tuition for immigrants building new lives in Canada

He is founding member of the Islamic Social Services Association of Manitoba, the Al Hijra Islamic School, and the Mosque of Thompson. He is also a member of the Arab Jewish Dialogue group, which helps bolster relations between differing cultures and religions in Canada.

Mr. El Tassi has helped build several schools around the world. He has given to the University of Manitoba, Sick Kids Foundation, SOS Children's Villages Canada, UNICEF, the United Way and World Vision. He was awarded in 2014 the 'Philanthropist of the Year Award' as well the 'Humanitarian Award' from the Red Cross and was recognized for his generosity by the Variety Club.

Over the past seven years he has supported the Mauro Centre's Winnipeg International Storytelling Festival and is the largest personal contributor to the Military Family Fund which provides support to families of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. El Tassi is recipient of the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals, Mr. El Tassi is also a member of the Order of Canada and the Order of Manitoba. The University of Manitoba awarded Mr. El. Tassi an Honorary Doctor of Laws in 2013.