Ezldean M. Shalabi

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Brand designer & writer building identity systems, campaigns, & brand experiences

Adobe Creative Suite | Figma | Claude Code | Replit | Midjourney | Shopify | English & Arabic

EXPERIENCE

Founder & Creative Director **Chicago, Illinois**

HAWA Design & Brand Studio *Jan. 2022 – Present*

- Built HAWA into a streetwear brand rooted in Islamic aesthetics with $200K+ in revenue & 10,000+ pieces sold, designing its identity & every collection's graphics, prints, & packaging
- Sold 400+ pieces & reached 5,000+ people by designing a 10x10 ft pop-up brand activation, from signage to merchandising & customer flow
- Designed & produced custom merch to brand guidelines for 50+ clients, from universities to influencers
- Shot the product photography for each collection's e-commerce launch
- Hired & led 2 graphic designers across social, print, & client work
- Selected for UIUC's iVenture Startup Accelerator (11th Cohort, 2025), receiving $20K in funding & mentorship

Marketing & Brand Director **Chicago, Illinois**

Nur House | Chicago coworking & community space *Aug. 2026 – Present*

- Launched a new brand system & carried it across investor decks, web design, social media, & the physical space
- Designed Instagram campaigns & event promotion for a weekly event calendar on 1–3 day turnarounds, & photographed the 15–80 person events they promoted
- Created Replit Open Studio, a hands-on website-building workshop & template library hosted at Nur House

Senior Designer, Human-Centered Design Strategy **Urbana-Champaign, Illinois**

Siebel Center for Design | University of Illinois *May 2024 – July 2025*

- Turned around weekly design projects on a 6-person team in the university's brand: print, digital signage, Instagram & LinkedIn posts, & 10+ permanent wayfinding pieces
- Partnered with a copywriter to concept posters, signage, & event campaigns, pairing each visual with its message
- Set up reusable templates & layout standards that kept the brand consistent across signage, events, & promos
- Took exhibitions & spaces from concept to installation alongside interior designers, researchers, & faculty
- Taught 5+ workshops for 200+ students on design fundamentals & bringing AI tools into design workflows

Freelance Brand Designer **Various Locations**

Startups & small businesses *Sept. 2019 – Present*

- Created a luxury fragrance startup's brand & guidelines from scratch: logo, type, color, persona, & packaging
- Lifted average order value 15% for One Ummah Collective by producing 200+ product images & infographics
- Raised search ranking 10% on Amazon, TikTok Shop, & Shopify by rewriting all product copy for SEO
- Developed logos & identity systems for 12 organizations, plus UI/UX for 6 websites & 2 apps
- Designed pitch & investor decks for 8 startups, turning business models & financials into clear visual stories

Photographer/Videographer **Urbana-Champaign, Illinois**

Illini Union Media Team | University of Illinois *Feb. 2023 – Feb. 2024*

- Shot & retouched student headshots & event photography on daily turnarounds, used across the university's website, print, email, & social channels

EDUCATION

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign | *B.S. Sustainable Design, Minor in Architecture*