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Habitatou was born in 1996 in Bamako, Mali. Her father died in an accident in 1996. File # 3061-MALI

Mohamad Ali was born in 1994 in Beirut, Lebanon. His father died in 2000. File # 1252-LBN



Fargana was born in 1988 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Her father died in an accident in 2000. File # 0620-AZR

Pervin was born in 1997 in Chandpur, Bangladesh. Her father died in 2000. File # 2104-BANG



Mohammad was born in 1997 in the Shamshatoo camp for Afghan refugees outside Peshawar, Pakistan. File # IQRA-198

Muna Yousef was born in 1991 in a camp for Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Her father died in an accident in 1999. File # 2116-PAL



Muhamma D. was born in 1992 in Katabira, Uganda. His father, Hood Sebanakita, died in an accident in 1994. File # 4075-UGA

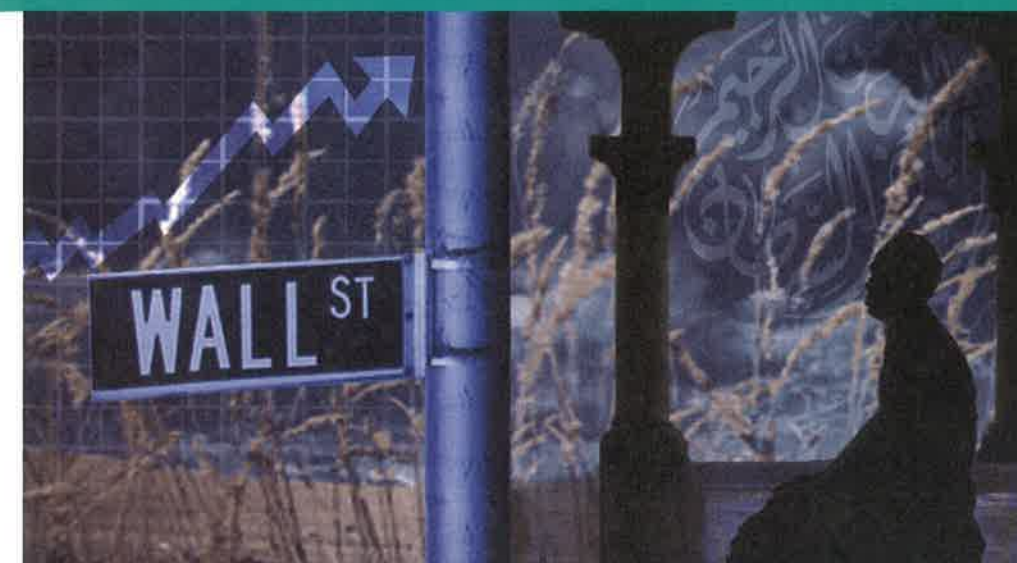
Full names are withheld here in the interests of privacy, but will be made available to the sponsor Federal tax i.d. # 431439369

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Amana Mutual Funds Trust

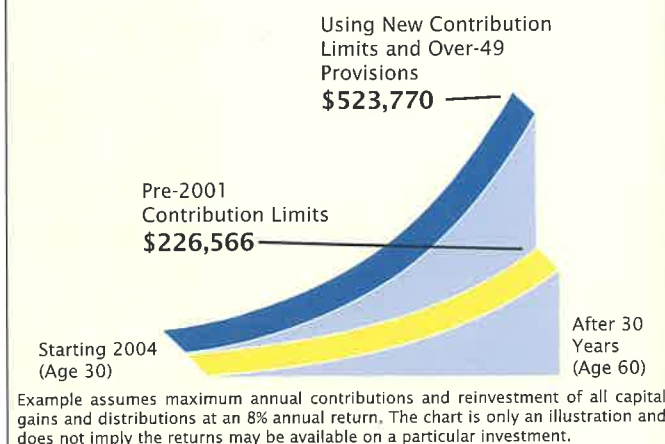
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*Tax-deferred growth means the individual delays paying federal taxes on earnings until money is withdrawn from the IRA.

**Tax-free means that qualified withdrawals are free from federal income tax. Roth IRA must be open and funded for at least five years and you are age 59 1/2 or older, buying a first home for yourself, your spouse, child or grandchild (\$10,000 lifetime maximum) or the withdrawal is due to death or disability. Saturna Brokerage Services. (January 2004).

Begin Investing Today

To open an Amana IRA, or any other type of Amana account, carefully read the adjacent Fund Profile, and then fill out the application on the reverse of the Fund Profile. Your application must be accompanied by a check in order for the account to be opened. There are NO charges or fees when your IRA is invested in the Amana Mutual Funds. There is a \$25 annual fee if you choose a self-directed IRA brokerage account.



For more information about the Amana Funds, or to order a complete Prospectus, please call 1.888.73.AMANA or visit www.amanafunds.com.

Amana Income & Amana Growth



December 31, 2003



This profile summarizes key features of the Amana Income and Amana Growth Funds. The Prospectus includes additional information about the Funds that you may want to consider before you invest. You may obtain the Prospectus and other information about the Funds by calling Saturna Capital Corporation at (888) 73-AMANA, or accessing our website (www.amanafunds.com).

Investment Objectives: *Amana Income* seeks current income and preservation of capital. *Amana Growth* seeks long-term capital appreciation.

Principal Investment Strategies: *Amana Income* purchases only dividend-paying companies, which are expected to have more stable stock prices. *Amana Growth* invests in middle and smaller-size companies expected to grow earnings and stock prices faster than the economy. The Funds invest only in U.S.-traded common stocks. Investment decisions are made in accordance with Islamic religious principles. The Funds diversify their investments across industries and companies and generally follow a value style approach to investing. Additional information about investments and performance is included in semi-annual shareowner reports, over the phone, and on our website. The annual report contains discussion of the conditions and strategies that affected performance.

Principal Risks: The Funds' total return, like common stocks generally, will fluctuate within a wide range. Only consider investing in the Funds if you are willing to accept the risk that you may lose money. The smaller and less seasoned companies in *Amana Growth* have greater risk of price volatility. Islamic principles restrict the Funds' ability to invest in certain stocks and market sectors, such as financial companies and fixed income securities. This may limit opportunities and may increase the risk of loss during market declines. Because Islamic principles preclude the use of interest paying instruments, the funds do not maximize current income because reserves remain in cash.

Fund Performance: The table and bar chart to the right provide an indication of the risk of investing in *Amana Income* and *Amana Growth*. Table information is presented for the most recent ten years for the Income Fund and since inception for the Growth Fund. Two standard stock market indexes are included for performance comparisons. These unmanaged indexes reflect no operating costs or Islamic principles. During the period depicted in the bar chart, the highest return for *Amana Income* in a calendar quarter was +16.40% (quarter ended 12/31/03) and the lowest return for a quarter was -16.50% (quarter ended 9/30/02). During the period depicted in the bar chart, the highest return for *Amana Growth* in a calendar quarter was +62.7% (quarter ended 12/31/99) and the lowest return for a quarter was -18.70% (quarter ended 3/31/01). All returns before taxes.

Fees and Expenses: There are no sales charges or transaction fees on purchases, redemptions, or dividend reinvestments. The tables below illustrate the fees and expenses you pay if you buy and hold *Amana Income* and *Amana Growth* shares. The expenses shown under "Annual Fund Operating Expenses" are based on operating expenses for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2003. The expenses are deducted from the assets of each Fund, and not paid directly by shareowners. The table entitled "Example of Shareowner Fees" is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Amana Funds with the cost of investing in other funds. It illustrates the hypothetical expenses you might incur over various periods if you invest \$10,000 in *Amana Income* and *Amana Growth*, respectively. This example assumes both of the Funds provide a respective return of 5% a year, and that operating expenses remain the same.

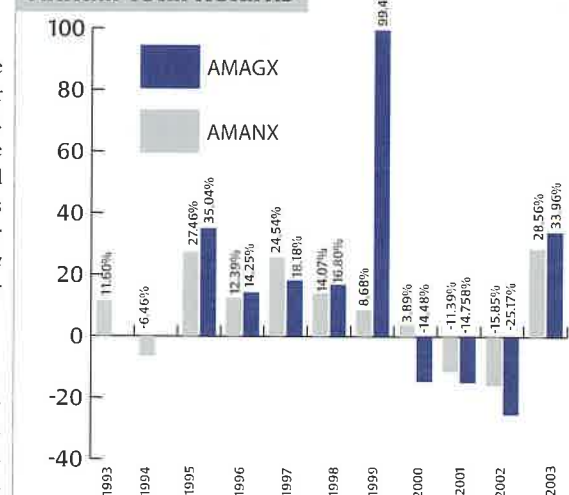
Price and Dividend Information: Daily Fund prices are carried in some newspapers and quoted on electronic systems (symbols AMANX and AMAGX), available by calling (888) 73-AMANA (888-732-6262), and accessible online at www.amanafunds.com. Dividends, if any, are paid semi-annually at the end of May and November. Capital gains, if any, are distributed annually in December. Dividends are normally reinvested, and can be expected to qualify for favorable tax rates.

Buying and Selling Shares: The minimum initial purchase amount is \$250 (\$100 for retirement plans). Investments are normally made by check or bank transfer (ACH). You may sell all or a portion of your shares on any business day by phone, by mail, or by bank transfer. You may exchange shares to another Amana Fund. Other forms may be required.

Investment Adviser: Saturna Capital Corporation, Bellingham, WA, has served as the investment adviser and administrator since 1989. Nicholas Kaiser, MBA, CFA, president of Saturna Capital, has been the portfolio manager for both Funds since 1989. Under an agreement with Saturna Capital Corporation and Amana Mutual Funds Trust, the Fiqh Council of North America, Leesburg, VA, has served as Shari'ah Consultant for both Funds since January 2000.

Services Available: Saturna Capital provides a number of services free to Amana shareowners, including telephone assistance, exchange between funds, website, systematic purchase and withdrawal plans, Zakah computations, and retirement plans.

Annual Total Returns



Average Annual Total Return (years ended December 31, 2003)

1 Year 5 Years 10 Years 2/3/94 (Inception)

Amana Income 28.56% 1.60% 7.50%

S&P 500 28.68% -0.58% 11.05%

Amana Growth 33.96% 7.83% 10.34%

Russell 2000 47.27% 7.20% 10.53%

After-Tax Returns on Distributions

Amana Income 28.09% 0.38% 6.03%

Amana Growth 33.96% 7.64% 10.11%

After-Tax Returns on Distributions and Sales of Shares

Amana Income 18.75% 0.49% 5.26%

Amana Growth 22.07% 7.63% 10.08%

Annual Fund Operating Expenses, Amana Funds

	Income	Growth
Management Expenses:	.95%	.95%
12b-1 Distribution Fee:	.22%	.22%
Other Expenses:	.72%	.79%
Total Fund Operating Expenses:	1.89%	1.96%

Example of Shareholder Fees, Amana Funds (\$10,000 Investment)

	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
Income:	\$202	\$638	\$1,118	\$2,544
Growth:	\$210	\$662	\$1,160	\$2,640

Amana Mutual Funds Trust
INVESTMENT APPLICATION

December 31, 2003

Mail application and check to:
 AMANA MUTUAL FUNDS TRUST
 Box N, Bellingham WA 98227-0596

For assistance, call:
 888-73-AMANA or 360/594-9900
 FAX 360/734-0755

Account Type

Additional forms may be required.

Individual Accounts

- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Joint Tenants - Rights of Survivorship
- ☐ Custodial (UGMA/UTMA)
 Under _____ (state)
- ☐ Estate

IRA Accounts

- ☐ Traditional IRA
- ☐ Roth IRA
- ☐ IRA Rollover
- ☐ Education Savings Account

Required Information This information must be provided in accordance with industry regulations.

	Account Owner/Minor	Joint Account Owner/Custodian
Name:	_____	_____
Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):	____/____/____	____/____/____
Social Security or Taxpayer ID #:	_____	_____
Country of Citizenship:	<input type="checkbox"/> US <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> US <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Residence Address:	Street Address _____ City State Zip	Street Address _____ City State Zip
Phone Numbers:	Daytime Home	Daytime Home
Email Address	_____	_____
Country of Tax Residence:	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Identification: (You must establish identity by attaching a photocopy of a driver's license, passport or other government-issued document)	Driver's License # State	Driver's License # State

Investment Selection (Minimum \$250 per Fund, except \$100 for IRA & ESA)

Amana Growth Fund	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 2003 IRA Contribution	<input type="checkbox"/> 2004 IRA Contribution
Amana Income Fund	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 2003 IRA Contribution	<input type="checkbox"/> 2004 IRA Contribution

Signature

The undersigned warrant(s) that I (we) have full authority to make this Application, am (are) of legal age. Unless this sentence is struck, I (we) certify, under penalties of perjury, that I (we) am (are) not subject to backup withholding under the provisions of section 3406(a)(1)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code. This application is not effective until it is received and accepted by the Trust.

Signature of Individual (or Custodian)	_____	Date	____/____/____
Signature of Joint Registrant, if any	_____	Date	____/____/____

You may buy shares after reading this Profile or you may request a Prospectus, containing additional information, to review before investing. If you buy shares after reading this Profile, Saturna Capital will send you a Prospectus with your purchase confirmation.

NOTE: Application must be accompanied by a check for an account to be opened.

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The views expressed in Islamic Horizons are not necessarily the views of its editors nor of the Islamic Society of North America.

All references to the Qur'an made are from *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Amana, Brentwood, MD.

Strengthening the Shoots

The generation of Muslims that came to North America during the 1950s and 1960s consisted of students and professionals seeking self-improvement, skills enhancement, and a life characterized by the freedoms that the continent offered. Such pursuits did not distance them from their heritage, however, and organizations soon appeared to help implant the seeds of Islam in this new soil. Over time, their focus spread to educating their children and, eventually, the youth.

The youth movement, expressing itself as the Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA), offered an array of constructive activities ranging from education to civic activism. As the years passed, MYNA witnessed many phases of activity and dormancy. Today, it is not very active, but an urge to reactivate and revitalize the organization exists among alumni and today's youth.

ISNA, which has its roots in the Muslim student movement and who nurtured MYNA throughout its formation and development, continues to focus on youth needs. Thus, it was only natural that the second priority delineated by the March 2003 Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), which met in Kansas City, was to develop youth programs. The SPC recommended appointing a youth activities coordinator at ISNA Headquarters, and ISNA leaders took quick action. By August 2003, a youth coordinator was tasked with coordinating all youth activities; networking with national organizations to build youth coalitions; developing a 5-year plan for devising youth programs; and working to make MYNA strong and viable again. In addition, the coordinator will develop programs that focus on building a strong Muslim character and sense of self, and infusing community service activities into the Muslim youth groups' activities.

In addition to the Convention and regional conferences, ISNA is planning to hold MYNA leadership and youth conferences during the summer.

Our youth are the seedlings that will blossom forth into the *ummah* of tomorrow. ISNA invites all parents, interested individuals and organizations to join in this effort to empower our young people so that they can make their own valuable and unique contributions not only to our community, but, also, to North American society at large.

Another main concern of Muslims in North America has been the education, not just religious but in a holistic sense, of their children. Today, three types of institutions help Muslim American youth achieve success: full-time Islamic schools, part-time and weekend Islamic schools, and home-schools. ISNA has been in the forefront of the effort to support these community efforts. The 5th Annual Education Forum (April 9 - 11, 2004, Rosemont, IL) is one such effort. The Forum brings together educators, administrators, and community leaders, providing them with opportunities to exchange ideas and information and to learn from each other. Education, especially Islamic education, is an area that requires the cooperation of all Muslims, and ISNA welcomes all forms of contributions to this noble goal. We believe that if our youth have a true understanding of their faith, they will not only live as believers and pass on this heritage, but they will, also, be upright and moral citizens who contribute to the greater good of their nation.

ISLAMIC HORIZONS

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1:30~5:30PM SHARP**

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NEW YORK

**Invited / Expected
Guests & Speakers**

- Karen Armstrong
- Michael Hart
- Shaikh Suhaib Webb
- Imam W. D. Mohammad
- Dr. Jamal Badawi
- Imam Siraj Wahhaj
- John Esposito
- Imam Abdul Malik
- Dr. Ingrid Mattson
- Dr. Ahmad Sakr
- Dr. Sulayman Nyang
- Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi
- Shaikh Ibrahim Negm

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UNITY**

**SUNDAY
MAY 9, 2004
2:00~7:00PM SHARP**

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Toronto
Convention
Centre

South Building, Ballrooms
222 Bremner Blvd., Toronto, Ontario

- Imam Siraj Wahhaj
- Dr. Jamal Badawi
- Dr. Abdalla Idris Ali
- Dr. Sulayman Nyang
- Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi
- Dr. Zulfikar Ali Shah
- Imam Abdul Malik
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ISNA MATTERS

2004 Convention Prep Starts

ISNA leaders and staff have started preparing for the 41st annual ISNA Convention, which will be held on Labor Day weekend 2004 at Chicago's Rosemont Convention Center. The theme will be: "Islam: Dialogue, Devotion, Development."

In January, the ISNA Headquarters in Plainfield, IN, hosted the first meeting of the 2004 ISNA Convention Program Committee. Close to a dozen well-known Muslim leaders attended, including some new additions to the committee.

ISNA's Vice President-Canada, Dr. Syed Imtiaz Ahmed, who again serves as Program Committee chairperson in 2004, presided over the 2-day gathering. A list of over 20 potential speakers was drafted, ranging from well-known members of various Muslim communities to Muslim entertainers, athletes, activists, and scholars who have never before been on the ISNA main-stage.

One new idea was a session devoted entirely to Muslims who help the community at large in different cities, with a particular focus on those providing services to inner city communities (e.g., homeless shelters).

Other program committee members present at the meeting included ISNA President Shaikh Muhammad Nur Abdullah; ISNA-US Vice President Dr. Ingrid Mattson; Secretary General Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed; Kareem Irfan, returning Convention Steering Committee chairman, ISNA Majlis ash-Shura member, and chairman of Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago; Dr. Faroque Khan, ISNA Majlis member and president of the Islamic Center of Long Island, NY (a new addition); and Eman Hasaballah, the new MSA National Treasurer and MSA representative. Suhail Khan of Washington DC, a new committee member, was unable to attend. ISNA Convention Department director Tipu



Ahmed and the Headquarters staff, also, attended the meeting.

Nominated by the ISNA Majlis ash-Shura at their meeting in October 2003 at ISNA Headquarters, the Program Committee members were confirmed in a subsequent Majlis conference call.

Organizers hope that the changes will make more time for the ever-hectic convention preparations come summer time, diversify its scope, and

increase inclusiveness. Over 300 local and national volunteers organized into over a dozen subcommittees help make the convention a reality each year, in conjunction with the ISNA Convention Department and the ISNA Headquarters staff.

Suggestions/proposals for sessions can now be submitted by all interested parties via reference to the parallel guidelines currently posted on www.isna.net.

ISNA Launches Leadership Center

The ISNA Leadership Development Center (ILDC) headed by Dr. Louay Safi, the most recent former president of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), started work on Jan. 1, 2004.

The center emanates from decisions taken at the ISNA Strategic Planning Retreat — the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) — which took place in March 2003 in Kansas City, MO. At that event, "Muslim community leadership and imam training" was named ISNA's top priority for the next 10 years.

The ILDC will focus on providing training and standards of leadership for the literally thousands of Muslim imams, community leaders, and Muslim chaplains who currently serve the 7-10 million-strong North American Muslim community.

A taskforce was formed to develop the idea, which led to the creation of the ILDC. Many prominent committee members now serve on its Board.

The ILDC board includes executive director Dr. Safi, who serves as its secretary; Dr. Ihsan Bagby, former director of the ITC and SPC Leadership and Training Committee chair; Dr. Ingrid Mattson, ISNA Vice-President-US and director of the Islamic Chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary; Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, ISNA Secretary General; and U.S. Army Major Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, the first Muslim chaplain in the U.S. military. ISNA President Shaikh Muhammad Nur Abdullah serves as chairman.



Louay Safi

AMSE Elects New Executive

The 2004 executive council of the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers (AMSE) was elected by acclamation for a 2-year term that commenced on Jan. 1, 2004. Its members are President Dr. Khurshid Qureshi, president & CEO, zeeWAVES Systems Inc.; Vice President Dr. Mohammad Alam, professor and chair, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of South Alabama; Treasurer Dr. Iqbal Unus, dean of students, The Fairfax Institute, Herndon, VA; and Secretary Jalaluddin, president of Ansarco and Ansar Financial & Investment Services Inc.

For more information about the group, visit www.amse.net.

ISNA Join Elections Taskforce

ISNA joined several other Muslim organizations to launch the American Muslim Taskforce on Civil Rights and Elections (AMT). This umbrella organization represents the American Muslim Alliance (AMA), Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), Muslim Alliance of North America (MANA), Muslim American Society (MAS), Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Muslim Student Association - National (MSA-N), and Project Islamic Hope (PIH).

Muslim Americans have 4 main objectives: 1) become full partners in the development and prosperity of their homeland, the U.S., 2) defend civil and human rights of all, 3) mainstream the Muslim American community, and 4) develop alliances with like-minded fellow Americans on a wide variety of social, political, economic and moral issues.

In 2004 Election, they will focus their efforts on a "Civil Rights Plus" agenda, which means 'civil rights for all' is the main issue but not the only issue. Muslim Americans remain equally committed to education, homelessness, economic recovery, environmental and ecological safety, electoral reform, crime, and global peace and justice. The civil rights plus agenda is broadly organized under three categories: a) civil and human rights, b) domestic issues of public good and general welfare, c) global peace with justice, prevention of war, and US relations with the Muslim world.

AMT has asked all Muslim Americans to register to vote and participate fully in the electoral process at all levels.

ISNA SETS GOALS FOR ADVANCING FUNDRAISING BASE NATIONWIDE.

A Planned Financial Future

Fundraising is a life-or-death matter for organizations such as ISNA, which depend on donations for the majority of their revenue. Little wonder, then, that during the strategic planning meeting in March 2003, ISNA identified the development of a sound financial base as a pressing priority for the next ten years.

As a part of that process, ISNA's revenue generating engine, the ISNA Development Foundation (IDF), held a strategic planning retreat with the ISNA Founder's Coordinating Committee (IFCC) on Dec. 6, 2003 in Chicago. The retreat was jointly organized by ISNA's Strategic Planning Committee on a Sound Financial Base, whose members were present, including representatives of the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT) and ISNA's Conventions & Marketing Department. ISNA Secretary General Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed and representatives of ISNA's Membership & MIS Department were, also, among the participants. The purpose of the meeting was twofold: to review and evaluate the past year's activities, and to brainstorm on how to increase and stabilize ISNA's income over the next five years.

Attendees at the meeting came up with several new and innovative ideas, including:

- The implementation of a National Zakat Strategy to facilitate and standardize the fulfillment of Muslim Americans' zakat duties, including local support structures.
- Project Centered Fundraising - campaigns that focus on sponsorship of particular ISNA programs, rather than raising funds for ISNA in general.
- Implementation of the Planned Charitable Giving Program, which will include local seminars with legal and financial counselors available to advise community members on wills and trusts.
- An increase in Field Visits whose purpose is threefold: 1) to inform communities about what ISNA has been doing, 2) to seek feedback on ISNA activities and input on the

Dr. Abdulalim Khandekar, right, and Dr. Ghulam Nabi Mir preside over a session where IDF Executive Director Ahmed Elhattab, left, presented the Funds progress.



needs communities perceive as most pressing, and 3) to raise funds for ISNA's programs and activities. Among other cities, Northern Virginia; Columbia, MO; Tampa, FL; Houston, TX; and Minneapolis, MN were identified as potential field visit sites for the year 2004.

■ The refinement of the 1000 Donors Club to reflect different levels of commitment - \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$1,000 annually - and to include specific incentives for members.

■ The establishment of a Mega Club whose members donate large sums (\$100,000 or more). Donations from the Mega Club will be directed to ISNA's Endowment Fund.

■ The establishment of an ISNA Endowment Fund Committee to supervise the Fund's operation.

■ The reaffirmation of ISNA's commitment to a 100 percent North American donor base and commitment to 10 percent of contributions going into ISNA Endowment Fund.

■ The development of local committees to mobilize communities, recruit new members for the \$1000 Donors Club in major cities, and help organize local events.

■ The creation of a core subcommittee from IFCC to oversee and follow-up on the implementation of IDF 2004 Action Plan, including the improvement of the annual convention and luncheon fundraising activities.

Several members stressed that communication between ISNA and the community is still lacking and that the gap in understanding what exactly ISNA does hampers fundrais-

ing efforts. In response, the ISNA electronic newsletter has been revamped so as to be more informative. Additionally IDF's year-end newsletter will be included in the Islamic Horizons magazine. Other plans for communication with the donor base include the quarterly IDF newsletter, improvement of the ISNA/IDF website (www.isna.net), and easy to read bulleted reports.

The meeting, also, included an in-depth report of IDF's 2003 fundraising efforts. ISNA's 2003 operating budget was approximately \$3 million. Of that, IDF was responsible for raising approximately \$1.6 million, and, as of the end of Ramadan 2003, IDF had acquired approximately \$1.3 million. Nearly half of IDF's fundraising income is generated during the annual convention, and other significant donations come from direct mail campaigns, zakat payments, Ramadan charity, and field visits.

IDF was pleased with the outcome of their fundraising efforts, as several new approaches were implemented in 2003. The donor base increased by 11 percent over the previous year, a total growth of almost 25 percent in the past two years. The Endowment Fund grew by approximately \$212,000.

ISNA's secretary general updated the participants on ISNA's current affairs. NAIT representatives made a presentation about investment

strategies for the ISNA Endowment Fund. ISNA's Conventions & Marketing Department coordinator reported on revenues from the annual convention and led a lively discussion on convention fundraising as a vehicle to increase ISNA's revenues. The director of ISNA Membership & MIS Department described the development of ISNA's database, which has been generalized and standardized to allow information to pass between departments and to facilitate the updating and maintenance of records.

Retreat participants included ISNA's Strategic Planning Committee on a Sound Financial Base Members: Dr. Abdul Alim Khandekar, Chairman; Dr. Abdul Rauf Mir; Muhammad Akram Dar; Dr. Bassam Osman (NAIT chairman); Basharat Saleem, Coordinator ISNA Conventions and Marketing;

The ISNA donor base increased by 11 percent over the previous year, a total growth of almost 25 percent in the past two years.

Mohamed ElSanousi, Liaison for Strategic Planning Committee and Coordinator of Special Projects and Media Relations; Ahmed ElHattab, Director General IDF. Members of the IFCC: Dr. Ghulam Nabi Mir, Chair-

man; Dr. Abdul Rauf Mir, Dr. Muhammad Akram Dar; Dr. Talal Sunbullah; Dr. Husain Nagamia; Dr. Ashraf Sufi; Dr. Mohammad Saleem Bajwa; Dr. Tayeb Jukaku; Dr. Khalid Bhatti; Dr. Abdul Piracha; ISNA Representatives: Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, ISNA Secretary General; Sh. Abdalla Idris Ali, Majlis as-Shura Member; Ashfaq Lodhi, Director ISNA Membership Department; Kareem Irfan, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago; Hanane Elabbassi, IDF Secretary; Pamela Taylor, IDF Consultant; NAIT representatives: Mujeeb Cheema, Executive Director; M. Naziruddin Ali, General Manager NAIT. ■

Pamela Taylor is an Indianapolis, IN based freelance writer whose writing has appeared in "Islamic Horizons" and other national Muslim and mainstream media.



BUILDING UNITY

An international conference on "Good Practice in Muslim-Christian Initiatives: Building Positive Inclusive Communities through Housing and Regeneration," was held February 17-19, 2004, in Philadelphia, PA. It was sponsored by the London-based Faith Regen UK.

This conference discussed how Christian-Muslim and multifaitih initiatives could provide realistic solutions to social issues while creating a more inclusive approach to Housing and Regeneration. It was pointed out that faith communities are extremely well-placed to play a pivotal role

in regeneration, socioeconomic development, and promoting voice and participation — particularly within disadvantaged communities.

Faith Regen UK is a national multifaitih organization that works alongside faith communities, government, and other organizations concerned about social exclusion. Its goals are to regenerate deprived areas and provide them with a range of integrated empowerment opportunities. Whether the people thus helped are faithful, atheist or agnostic is irrelevant. The organization has a track record of working with black and minority ethnic and multifaitih communities.

CITY HONORS MUSLIM

Talat Rashid, a Pakistani American Muslim, was named Bolingbrook Village, IL, Citizen of the Year 2003. He is a founding member and long-time board member of the Bolingbrook Muslim Association.

Rashid was an easy choice because his activities have stood out recently, Mayor Claar said. A senior executive who runs his company's manufacturing operations, Rashid is a certified six-sigma green belt holder (quality control). He also teaches management at the Robert Morris College.

A past director and current member of the Bolingbrook Lions Club, Rashid has been actively involved in community work for the past 16 years. He has chaired and worked in such projects as blood drives, sight and sound, children's



Talat Rashid

programs, street cleaning, scholarship committee, collecting donations for the needy, and collecting used eyeglasses for the Lions Club.

In 1992, Rashid, who also owns a local car care center, received an award from an Asian-American coalition for his service to the Pakistani community. In 1982, he received an award from Asian community human services from the city of Chicago.

Rashid, who came to the U.S. in 1979 and is a 19-year resident of Bolingbrook, is past chair of the Pakistan Independence Day Parade Committee, Chicago, and past president of the Pakistan Federation of America.

In March 2003, the mayor, along with the city council's approval, appointed Rashid as a planning commissioner for a 2-year term.

Muslim Wins Prestigious Scholarship

Sameer Ahmed, 23, of Leawood, KS, will pursue a master's degree in international relations at the University of Westminster's Center for the Study of Democracy under a British Marshall Scholarship.

Ahmed (BA Stanford 2003) also won on a 1-year internship to the American University in Cairo. Ahmed, who served as editor of the "Stanford Daily," is an adviser for the AUC student newspaper and is also taking two Arabic classes.

Marshall Scholarships, which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, finances up to 40 young outstanding Americans to study for a degree in Britain. The program allows scholars, who are potential leaders, opinion-formers, and decision-makers in their own country, to gain an understanding and appreciation of British values and way of life. Each scholarship is held for 2 years. Former scholars include Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer.

Ahmed's parents, physicians Iftikhar and Shaheen Ahmed, are the founders of Crescent Peace Society.

Cornell Cites Interfaith Unity Project

Afsha Abid, was named among 25 most influential persons of 2003 at Cornell University, from among 13,000 undergraduates, by the independent student-run "The Cornell Daily Sun" Dec. 4, 2003.

Abid, a junior, conceived and organized the joint creation of a peace mosaic by Muslim and Jewish students under the aegis of the Muslim Educational and Cultural Association (MECA) and the campus Jewish group, the Cornell Hillel.

The project won the 2003 James A. Perkins Prize for Interracial Understanding and Harmony—that recognizes efforts toward making Cornell a more inclusive and diverse place. Abid, a business major, and Julia Stone 03 and Sara Rosenblum 03 who shared the award, have dedicated the award money to programs that promote tolerance and understanding.

Abid, an executive member of MECA and chair of her college's Ambassadors Steering Committee, said, "The mosaic project is truly special to me in that it truly signifies how Cornell fosters openness and multiculturalism. Given the present climate, the fact that Hillel and MECA were able to put together this event truly shows that unity is possible."



The Search for Justice

The Center for Study of Islam and Democracy is hosting its 5th Annual Conference in Washington, DC, May 27-29, 2004. The conference topic is "The Search for Justice in Islam: Defining and Establishing Political Justice in Muslim Societies."

The conference will offer papers on five topics: The political foundations of justice and their relationship to democracy in Muslim states; The centrality of economic justice to democracy in Islam; Does social organization limit justice in Islam?; What constitutes justice in Islamic democracy?; and how the Shari'ah is related to democracy, said CSID president Radwan A. Masmoudi.

Dr. Akbar Ahmad of American University will serve as conference chair. For information, check out www.islam-democracy.org.



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ISLAMIC ART GETS NEW HOUSE

Britain's Victoria and Albert Museum is to open The Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art with a \$10 million donation honoring Abdul Latif Jameel, late founder of the Saudi Arabian automobile company.

It will house treasures from the V&A's collection of more than 10,000 ancient Islamic objects from the Middle East. The donation — one of the most generous gifts it had ever received — will allow the museum to transform a gallery to show thousands of artifacts including carpets, glass, ceramics and woodwork, from 2006. The gallery will include such famous pieces as the Ardabil Carpet from 16th Century Iran — said to be one of the largest and finest carpets in existence. Displays will include carved ivories from Islamic Spain, inlaid metalwork from medieval Egypt, Iznik ceramics from Ottoman Turkey, tile work from 14th Century Uzbekistan and oil paintings from



The Ardabil carpet, dated 1539-40 (A.H. 946); (bottom) An early sixteenth century Jar from Turkey

19th Century Iran.

The donation will also fund a touring exhibition of the artworks that will visit the U.S. and Japan before returning to Britain in Sheffield ahead of the gallery's scheduled opening in 2006.

The Abdul Latif Jameel Group, founded in Saudi Arabia 60 years ago, has a reputation for philanthropy. It has funded a \$30m project providing vocational training for young Saudis, and developed programs helping Saudi women to learn new skills. ■

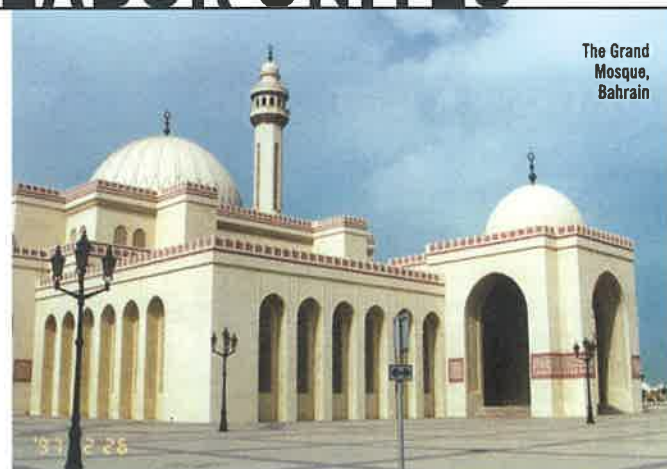


BAHRAIN LABOR UNITES

Bahrain's first general federation of labor unions was formed Jan. 12, 2004 — a result of 70 years of struggle, said interim leader Abdul Ghaffar Abdul Hussein at the founding conference of the General Federation of Bahrain Workers Unions (GFBWU).

"Bahrainis have worked for this day since the 1930s. It has been a long, and sometimes bloody march that led to the imprisonment and exile of many labor leaders," he told the delegates.

The 150 delegates, representing 40 labor unions from the public and private sectors, in attendance elected the union's general secretary and board members. They also voted on the federation's constitution, which was drafted by a



The Grand Mosque, Bahrain

preparatory committee led by Abdul Hussein.

GFBWU is the second such body in the Gulf. Kuwaiti workers established their own union in the 1950s.

King Hamad bin Isa Al

Khalifa issued the new labor and trade unions law in September 2002, under which workers can form unions without seeking government permission. The law, part of the king's sociopolitical re-

Kuwait Opens Banking Sector to Foreigners

On Jan. 12, 2004, without a formal vote, Kuwait's Parliament approved a draft law that opens the country's banking sector to foreigners, in line with a new government policy to attract foreign investment. The bill amends a law allowing the Central Bank of Kuwait to grant licenses to foreign financial institutions.

Late last year, the government jump-started a law allowing 100 percent foreign ownership of firms. Kuwait hopes to attract billions of dollars in investment.

The bill stipulates that foreign banks that want to open branches in Kuwait will face the same restrictions as local banks, which means that half of the workforce must be Kuwaiti, part of a government drive toward "Kuwaitization."



forms initiated soon after he assumed power in March 1999, is based on the National Action Charter, which stipulates that the state "guarantees freedom for the formation of civic, educational, cultural and professional societies and syndicates, to achieve legitimate objectives through peaceful means." The law includes the workers' right to strike and collective bargaining. A strike, however, must be approved by a secret ballot by three quarters of the union members, and the company must be warned 2 weeks in advance. No strike is allowed in the vital sectors of security, civil defense, airports, ports, hospitals, communications, telecommunications, electricity, and water.

In Oct. 2002, Bahrain held its first national elections since 1974. ■

China's Anti-Muslim Pogrom

Ethnic tensions heated up in part of China's northeastern Shandong province, about an hour's drive from the provincial capital of Jinan, after an alleged riot on December 25, 2003 by the Muslim Hui minority, reported The Far East Economic Review (Jan. 22, 2004).

The Hui resent colonization by the Chinese and the preference given to imported Han Chinese settlers at their expense.

A provincial reporter told the magazine: "We are not allowed to report such incidents... conflict between nationalities is taboo for Chinese media."

Ethnic violence is not new to the province. In December 2000, five Hui were killed and 40 injured in a confrontation with police in a neighboring county, the Hong Kong-based Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy reported at the time.

OLD JEDDAH CHARMS PILGRIMS

Jeddah, the port city near Makkah, enjoyed its usual post-Haj boom as pilgrims shopped for gifts before heading home. However, it was not

to the shopping malls of north Jeddah or the chic retail outlets of Tahlia Street that the pilgrims headed, but rather the souks of downtown Jeddah.

Pilgrims from the world over swelled the streets of the old city, making it the world's most cosmopolitan city. They were busy

shopping, busy eating, busy talking to each other, or just taking it all in and promenading with ear-to-ear smiles.

A major attraction for the pilgrims was Souk Al-Alawi that winds through much of old Jeddah.

Abdul-Ghani, a Nigerian pilgrim, carrying Afghan rugs and saffron from Iran, told Arab News, "There are things here that I can't find anywhere else."

A Yemeni jeweler said business often doubles during and after the Haj season because downtown Jeddah is more attuned to the pilgrims' shopping needs. Prices are more competitive and the art of bargaining is better understood, he added. "It is one of the most profitable periods; it is a magnet for visitors," he said.

A major reason why so many pilgrims flock to Al-Balad is that besides the souks, it is home to Jeddah's largest public transport hub, with buses coming from all over the Saudi Arabia and from around the region. The Saudi Public Transport Company (SAPTCO) operates regular international bus services between the Kingdom and Jordan, Syria, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Turkey. SAPTCO assigns about 2,000 buses every Haj season for services to and within the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.



Pilgrims looking for a bargain purchase at a clothes shop in Jeddah's Old Balad district. (AN photo by Ahd Al-Shihawi)

Muslims Win Libel Suits

Leading Saudi Arabian businessman Khaled Bin Mahfouz accepted undisclosed libel damages Jan. 13 over The Mail on Sunday's October 2002 claim that he was the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden and had helped fund al-Qaeda activities, reported the London-based Asharq Al-Awsat.

Associated Newspapers, owners of The Mail on Sunday, accepted that the allegations were unjustified and published an official apology on Jan. 18, 2004. The defendants agreed to pay substantial damages, which Bin Mahfouz will donate to UNICEF and use to cover his legal fees.

This verdict came less than a month after another prominent Saudi businessman, Mohammed Jameel, president of the Abdul Latif Jameel Group, won a libel suit against the Wall Street Journal Europe.

Bin Mahfouz's son Abdul Rahman declared the British court verdict a just answer to the smear campaign suffered by some Saudi families and individuals after 9/11.

The article had also incorrectly alleged that Bin Mahfouz had been the chief operating officer of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), which collapsed amid claims of market rigging in 1991. He denied any involvement in market manipulation, arms trafficking, and supporting international terrorism. He also disputed the newspaper's contention that he was dismissed from the National Commercial Bank (NCB) for suspected illegal funding of Islamic charities that support terrorism. Bin Mahfouz's wife is from the Kaaki and not Bin Ladin family. He was never a BCCI chief operating officer and resigned from NCB for health reasons. Moreover, there was no audit report that uncovered any illegal funding.

NEW FUND BENEFITS PAKISTANI ORPHANS

On Oct. 29, 2002, Carnegie Mellon University, class of '99, lost an alumnus, 26-year old Asad Ali Zaidi. Today, this active MSA worker's memory is enshrined in the Asad Ali Zaidi Education Fund established by his mother, Samina Omar, a Lahore, Pakistan based architect, in the SOS Children's Village in Lahore.

The SOS Children's Village (www.sos-childrensvillages.org), an organization of international repute, has several Villages in Pakistan. Each facility provides room and board and on campus elementary schooling, and as they grow up, they go to other



Asad Ali Zaidi: An achiever is remembered

schools and colleges. SOS supports them till they find jobs or establish themselves in life.

The Asad Ali Zaidi Education Fund, supported by Asad's family and friends, is currently sponsoring 30 children. Some of them are fully sponsored (living and educational expenses), and others

are receiving an educational endowment (educational expenses).

The educational endowment for one child is Pak. Rs. 250 per month (\$5 approx.); partial sponsorship Rs. 500 to Rs 1,500 per month (\$9 to \$26 approx.); and full sponsorship of one child is Rs. 2,000 per month (\$35 approx.)

If you would like to support this program, donations can be sent in cash or checks made out to "SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE." All donations are tax-exempt in U.S. and Pakistan. SOS

accepts checks in US dollars. Checks can be sent directly to the Asad Ali Zaidi Education Fund or to SOS assigned to the Fund and mailed to: The Asad Ali Zaidi Education Fund, 6 College Road, GOR 1, Lahore - 54000, Pakistan, or; Director, SOS Children. Email: saminaomar60@hotmail.com

Navy Removes Offending Article

U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains, Rear Admiral Louis Iasiello, responding to a letter from Dr. Louay Safi, executive director, ISNA Leadership Center (ILDC), has removed Salman Rushdie's article posted at the Chaplain Corps website. The article "Yes, This is About Islam," originally published in "The New York Times," said the world leaders' assertion that the war on terrorism is not a war on Islam is merely propaganda and disinformation meant to appease Western Muslims and to maintain the coalition against terrorism. The article further alleges that Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden are supported by Muslims worldwide.

Dr. Safi said the article not only insults the majority of Muslims worldwide, particularly Muslim American soldiers who every day put their lives on the line... but it also accuses the American commander in chief, and virtually all senior members of the government, of duplicity.

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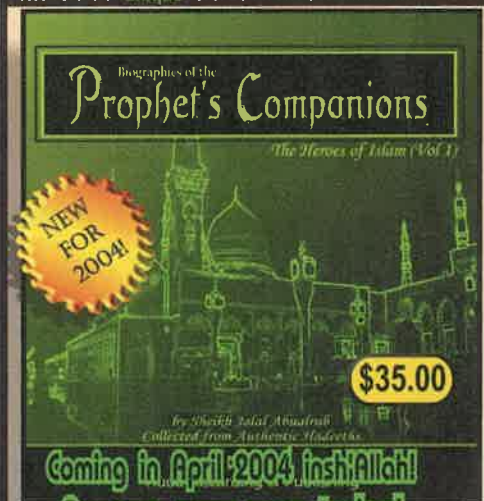


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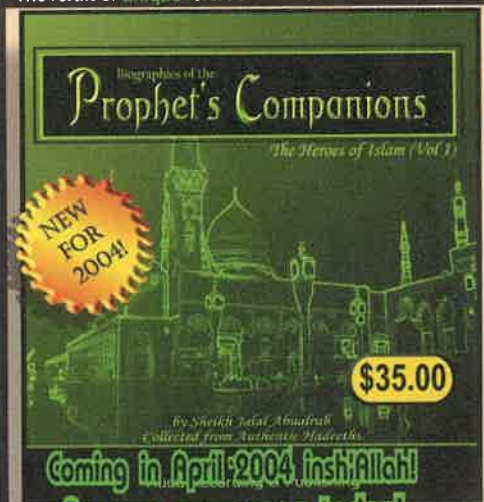


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ISNA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTER (ILDC) AIMS TO SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR MUSLIM AMERICAN LEADERSHIP. BY LOUAY M. SAFI

Leadership is often perceived as a position of power and authority bestowed upon particular individuals by organizations and governments. While power and authority are obvious manifestations, leadership involves much more. To lead is essentially to move ahead of others; guide and show the way; and be willing to withstand the friction, resistance, and uncertainty often experienced by those who lead. Those who are inspired to lead must have vision and acquire the qualities and skills needed to deal with the many challenges that confront one who chooses to advance human life and enhance the human condition.

In the last few decades, many theories of leadership have been articulated. Some emphasize leadership traits. Others stress leadership skills or styles. Still others focus on the position of leaders within an organization.

Among the theories that have recently gained attention is the contingency theory of leadership. According to this theory, leadership hinges more on the circumstances surrounding the acts of leaders, than any specific set of traits, skills or style. Simply put, contingency theory argues that it is the circumstance in which people find themselves that determine the effectiveness of particular traits or styles. Hence, what might be considered useful traits or styles in one circumstance may turn out to be unhelpful in another.

Although, the contingency theory, alone, cannot provide sufficient insight into the act of leadership, it is particularly useful in shedding light on the "exceptional" circumstances in which Muslim Americans find themselves. It, also, helps to outline potential contributions.

American Exceptionalism. Muslim Americans find themselves in unique and exceptional circumstances that are pregnant with mounting challenges and unlimited opportunities. Driven by adverse political and economic conditions, many immigrant Muslims braved their way to the land of the free, joining the already flourishing African American Muslims and other Muslim Americans, thus raising the number of Muslim Americans from a few hundred thousand in the early sixties to several millions by the turn of the 21st century.

Muslim Americans experience many of the same social phenomena that other social groups, who have made North America their home, do. One particular phenomenon is American Exceptionalism.

American Exceptionalism is a term used by historians to refer to the absence of traditional restrictions rooted in the feudal order of medieval Europe, and the ability of early European immigrants, who fled the persecution of the ancient regimes of Europe, to found a new society based on modern ethos. The founding fathers and mothers for that matter of the new nations of North America have been able to establish the freest and most egalitarian society to stem out

To fulfill their historical mission, Muslim Americans should undergo deep self-examination and understand both their strengths and weaknesses.

of enlightened Europe. While the Enlightenment ideals were compromised by the old feudal structure of Europe, Americans enjoyed greater freedom in reconstituting their society in accordance with those original, modern ideals.

American Exceptionalism can, and should, work today to enable Muslim Americans to reorganize their communities in accordance with their Islamic ideals. This process could be uninhibited by the cultural norms and habits that prevent many in the Muslim world from breaking out of decadent conditions resulting from centuries of complacency and neglect of Islamic values, the values that built the great Islamic civilization. Muslim Americans are blessed with an opportunity to liberate Islam and Islamic values and principles from the cultural limitations of historical Muslim societies; they have an opportunity to bring the pristine and sublime Islamic values to bear on the modern world.

Muslim Americans, given their exceptional conditions and strategic positioning, have a historical mission to fulfill. Their historical mission is to reform their inherited conditions and develop an inspiring model in which Islamic values flourish again and contribute to advancing modern life and human civilization. To take advantage of this unique opportunity, an open mind and a brave attitude, both rooted in deep faith, are required. Muslim Americans must be prepared to provide vibrant and enlightened leadership to a troubled world.

Strengths and Weaknesses. To fulfill their historical mission, Muslim Americans should undergo deep self-examination and understand both their strengths and weaknesses. Without an honest and penetrating look at their present state of affairs and a strong desire to overcome shortcomings and build on strengths, no serious achievements will be possible.

On the strength side, the community is made of diverse and vibrant groups, representing the cultural heritage of every major ethnic community in North America and the world. Muslim Americans share the cultural heritages of the Arab, African,



A vibrant and informed leadership is vital for the Muslim life in America, says Dr. Louay Safi introducing ILDC

European, East and South East Asia, Indo-Pakistani, Persian, Latino, Turkic and Slav. Although cultural frictions continue to plague the community, Muslim Americans have made major strides to maintain a unified commitment to Islamic ideals.

Regardless of ethnic divisions, Muslim Americans are, by and large, well educated, resourceful, and have strong sense of purpose and determination. African American Muslims continue to be a source of inspiration in the pursuit of civil liberties and political activism, carrying the legacy of the civil liberties movement and moving the U.S. closer to its declared ideals of liberty, equality, and due process for all. However, many African American Muslims face challenging social and economic conditions; many live in financially deprived areas with limited access to educational and economic opportunities. Some, particularly those who live in inner cities, feel alienated from mainstream America and are discontent with the eagerness of many immigrants to embrace the suburban community.

Immigrant Muslims who form another large contingent of the Muslim American community consist mainly of professionals and business people. Many fall on the high-

er end of the American socioeconomic ladder. Their financial resources have helped to build hundreds of Islamic centers, schools, and national organizations. They, however, continue to be more politically passive and lack grounding in American culture and society. They, also, tend to have limited understanding of their historical and strategic positioning within the American context.

Rising Challenges. Islam, as a social organization and a religious community, has made new inroads into American public life over the last few decades. A host of Islamic centers, schools, and national organizations have made local and international impact, and these impacts have generated positive responses. Many people of other faiths have developed positive relationships with Muslims, having had opportunities to interact with them as neighbors, coworkers, volunteers, students, teachers, and concerned citizens. Muslims have, also, become politically active, using their voting power to influence issues and events.

The rapid increase in numbers and growing influence of Muslim individuals and organizations have alarmed a few small, but powerful, groups within the American political spectrum. The Christian Right and supporters of Israel's Likud party coalesced to disfranchise Muslims and stop the growth of Islam in the U.S. These ultraconservative groups embarked on an anti-Islam campaign that was started in the mid-nineties and intensified after 9/11/2001. Taking advantage of the misguided and violent acts of some Muslims and of the rampant misunderstanding of Islam in the West, these groups have made bizarre claims and unfounded allegations against Islam and Muslims.

While the efforts and designs of Islam's detractors present an immediate and clear challenge, the true challenge Muslim Americans face comes from within. It comes from the cultural quietism—even fatalism—that prevents many Muslim communities from providing an adequate response to issues that affect their well-being and the future of their children. Quietism comes from weakness of community spirit, rivalry, internal frictions, and wasteful competition that prevent



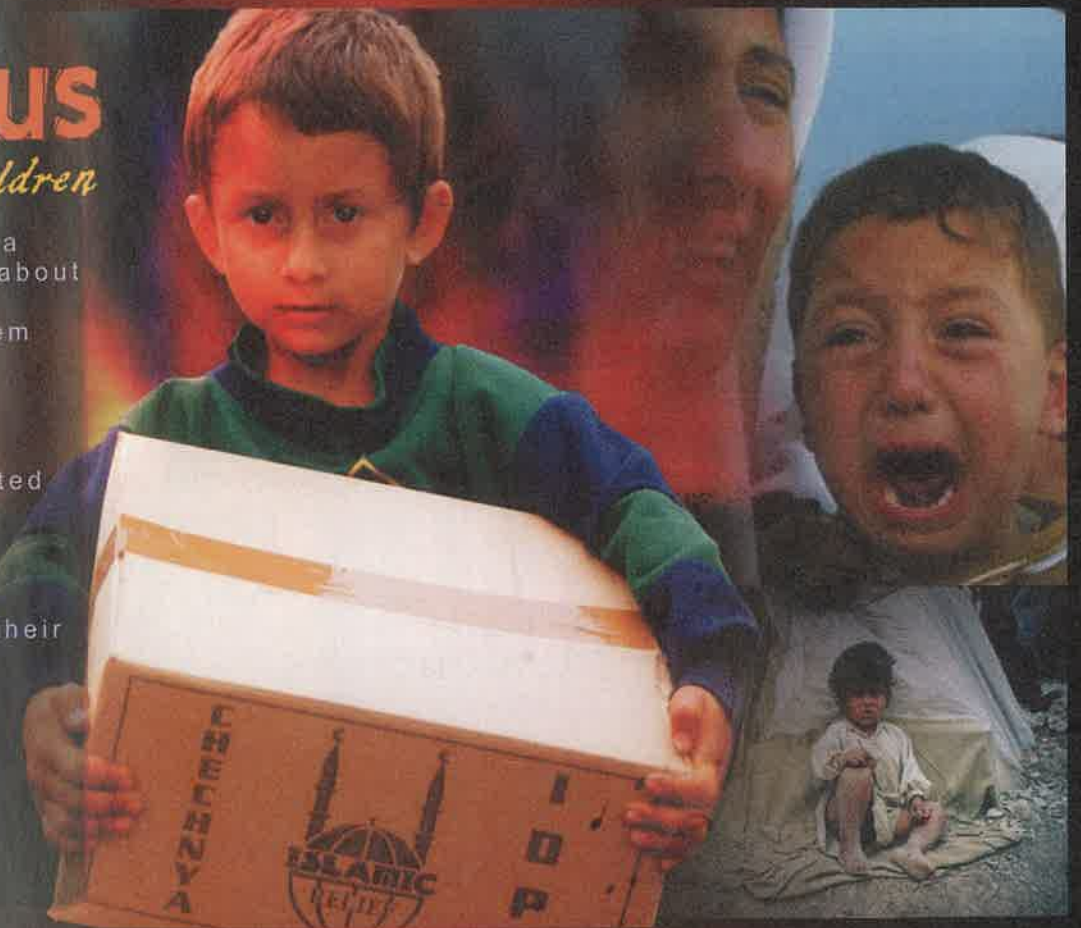
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To live up to its historical mission, the community must invest in nurturing leaders who will become agents of positive change in their communities.

meaningful cooperation. It, also, results from the lack of articulate, shared vision, and the failure to understand the context in which Muslim Americans live and the historical mission they must fulfill.

The real challenge for Muslim Americans lies, therefore, in articulating their values and faith and developing the necessary institutions and community structures for the realization of their mission. The challenge is to express Islamic principles of moral integrity, justice, compassion, cooperation, and respect of religious diversity in ways that relate to the issues and concerns of the time.

Agents of Development. To meet challenges and to promote the humane, moral, and forward-looking vision of Islam, Muslim Americans need to develop their human resources and nurture their leadership capabilities. They must respond to happenings at the higher level of competency and performance, and they should be able to articulate their values and visions

clearly to the larger American society.

To live up to its historical mission, the community must invest in nurturing leaders who will become agents of positive change in their communities, the larger American society, and the world. Developing Muslim leadership is a must at this critical juncture in the growth of Islam in North America; it could, literally, be the difference between another success story for Islam, America, and the Muslim world, and the tragic end to developing a vibrant Islamic presence in North America. This fact was identified by ISNA membership during a survey conducted last year; respondents ranked developing Muslim leadership at the top of a list of priorities.

The efforts to develop a strong and vibrant Muslim leadership should naturally focus on five distinct groups in the Muslim community: chaplains, imams, youth, teachers and community leaders.

Muslim chaplains are currently serving in the U.S. armed forces, university campuses, and federal and state prison systems.

The Muslim chaplaincy program has, recently, come under direct attacks, spearheaded by two important Democratic senators, Charles Schumer (NY) and Dianne Feinstein (CA) who demanded, under insinuations by anti-Muslim groups, the withdrawal of ISNA's Muslim chaplaincy endorsement. The continuation and further development of this program is vital. The Muslim community will have to pay more attention and give more support to protect its representation in the U.S. military.

Full time imams serve in several hundreds mosques and Islamic centers. Imams are trained in different institutions, both American and foreign, and enjoy various levels of competency. There is an obvious need to define a set of standards for imams. While some imams are, for instance, competent in both Islamic learning and their knowledge of American cultures and institutions, other are lacking in their understanding of American politics, religions, and history. These deficiencies make them vulnerable to making serious mistakes in the application of

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The task at hand is enormous and requires the cooperation of Islamic centers, national organizations, and leading community members.

Islam in this context; due to limited experience, they are prone to extrapolation from their own limited experiences.

Teachers and community leaders would greatly benefit from concerted efforts to develop background material in the form of reports, position papers, and leadership awareness sessions that focus on issues of concern to the Muslim American community.

Finally, Muslim youth encounter novel circumstances and would markedly benefit from leadership skills development and awareness programs.

A Positive Agenda. Muslim Americans need to contribute to America's betterment by advancing the values of family, community and compassion. Although North American nations were built on the high and noble values of freedom, equal dignity, and the respect of the rule of law, it took centuries to bring actual practices in line with declared principles. America can still do more to move closer to its ideals and, at least, not undo any accomplishments of the past. Not only are civil liberties increasingly under attack, but also, efforts to align the power of the U.S. with narrow religious interests and ethnic biases have intensified. Muslim Americans must pay their dues as citizens to advance the values of fairness, decency and compassion. They are critical in preventing this country from reverting to medieval practices of domination, exploitation, suppression of civil rights and inequality.

Even though Muslims constitute a small group in the larger American society, they can play a vital role; they can become a pivotal force working to reform and develop the social conditions and political practices of their powerful nation. In order to do so, they must be able to speak with clear voices and address the larger concerns of the American society.

Muslims need to pursue the following important tasks with determination and vigor:

- Articulating the humane and uplifting principles of Islam with clarity and candor. Islamic values must be expressed in ways that relate them to our current social context. Muslim American positions on major issues facing this society must be articulated and announced. This does not mean that the community must agree in its entirety on specific positions. Rather, there must be an open debate among Muslim scholars to generate ideas and allow for more informed decisions. Muslim organizations and think tanks can benefit

A Training Resource

ISNA Leadership Development Center (ILDC) functions as a nucleus of leadership development for the Muslim American community and offers a fully equipped facility to conduct occasional and regular programs to train chaplains, imams, youth, and community leaders. The center activities will include:

- ▶ Setting standards for imams and chaplains, and organizing training programs to meet these standards.
- ▶ Granting certification and providing endorsement to Muslim chaplains.
- ▶ Conducting conferences, seminars, workshops, continuing education, and other programs for the purpose of developing a new caliber of imams and community leaders.
- ▶ Preparing and publishing guides, manuals, handbooks, and other material for training purposes.
- ▶ Developing and distributing training aids including audio and videotapes, charts, kits and packages.
- ▶ Making and promoting training plans, motivate and help trainers, and carry out activities to enhance the training dimension in human performance.
- ▶ Organizing joint programs with various universities and colleges in North America.

Who Benefits from ILDC Programs

- ▶ Aspired chaplains, and chaplains serving in U.S. armed forces, university campuses, hospitals, and federal and state prison systems.
- ▶ Aspired imams, and imams serving in the various Islamic centers, universities, armed forces, and the various departments of government.
- ▶ Community leaders, including directors and board members of Islamic centers and national and local Muslim organizations, Muslim activists, and active community members.
- ▶ Teachers interested in developing leadership qualities among their students.
- ▶ Youth leaders, including leaders of youth organizations, as well as youth with the potential to provide leadership to the Muslim community.
- ▶ Individuals interested in acquiring leadership skills.

Board of Directors: Dr. Muhammad Nur Abdullah, Chair, Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Dr. Syed Imtiaz Ahmed, Abdul Rashid Muhammad, Dr. Ihsan Bagby, Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, and Dr. Louay Safi, Secretary

from such debates in formulating positions and publishing position papers, accessible to both Muslim communities and the larger American society. We cannot afford to let others define what Islam is and what it stands for.

- Promoting and defending Islamic organizations and institutions. Mainstream Muslim organizations have come under concerted attack by influential persons in government, the religious establishment and the media. The goal is obvious: to

silence Muslims and prevent the development of their institutions.

- Defending democratic institutions and the civil liberties that form the backbone of this great society. While Muslim Americans bear the brunt of anti-democratic legislations and policies, the harm is ultimately directed at the foundation of American democracy. Secrecy in dealing with American citizens and intimidation of those who are critical of misguided actions and policies benefit only autocratic and power hungry individuals and groups.

- Reforming Muslim practices and speaking against deformed, corrupt, and excessive actions within the Muslim community. Muslim Americans must not be complacent, nor silent, when fellow Muslims commit acts of which they disapprove. Religious solidarity must not be allowed to trump our moral and legal commitments. Justice and good judgment, rather than sympathy, must guide Muslim positions and actions.

- Bridging the growing gap between the Muslim world and America. Muslim Americans, who have first hand insights into the world of Islam and the West, can see the biases and prejudices on both sides. They have a moral duty to clarify issues and positions and facilitate communication and dialogue.

A Catalyst for Leadership Development. Training and development of chaplains, imams and community leaders have undoubtedly become a matter of paramount importance for the Muslim community. It is clearer than ever before that the limitations of the community do not stem from any deprivation in financial resources or talents, but from the absence of strong and capable leadership.

The task at hand is enormous and requires the cooperation of Islamic centers, national organizations, and leading community members.

ISNA Leadership Development Center (ILDC) is intended as a catalyst for facilitating the development of Muslim leadership. In the next few months the ILDC will be consulting with community leaders across the nation and soliciting the input and help from scholars and experts. ILDC welcomes all views and asks for support so that, together, we can develop the strength of this promising community and prepare to play our role for the betterment of the human condition. ■

Louay M. Safi is executive director of the ILDC (director@ildc.net)

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QUENCHING THE THIRST

ISNA West Zone conference begins a new era in Islamic work in Southern California. **By Fawad M.S. Yacooob**

Humanity is thirsty "for spirituality, for faith," and ISNA is destined to quench that thirst in every way possible, said ISNA president Sheikh Muhammad Nur Abdullah, concluding the ISNA West Zone Conference in Long Beach, CA (Dec. 25-27, 2003).

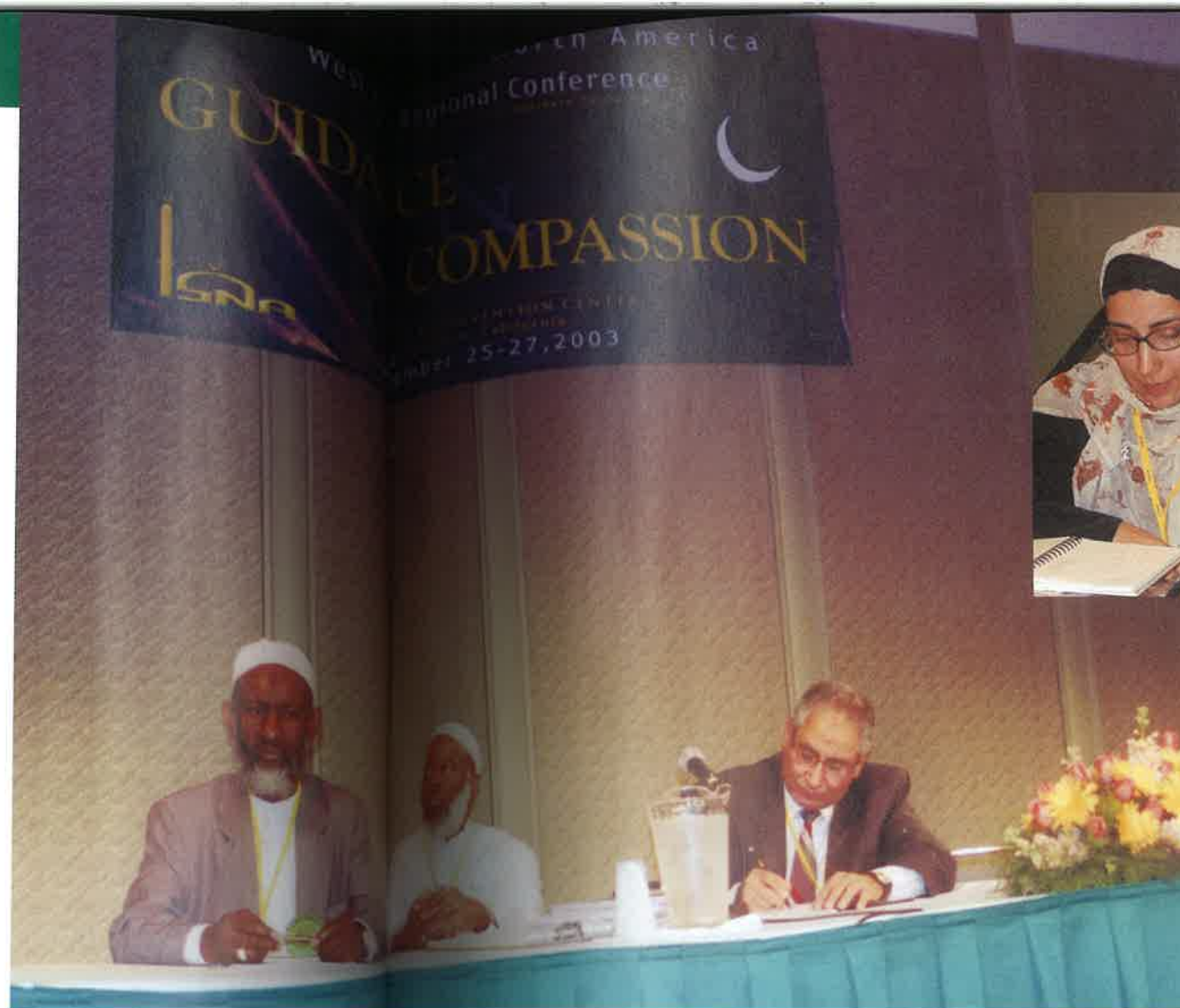
The conference, "Islam: Guidance and Compassion," was cosponsored by the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California (ISCSC). Attracting a diverse crowd of approximately 2,000 people, mostly from southern California, it featured many plenary sessions, workshops, and parallel programs, as well as parallel conferences hosted by the MSA and Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA).

Among the conference's outstanding features was the presence of many well-known Muslim North American leaders, among them Dr. Jamal Badawi; Dr. Maher Hathout, senior advisor of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC); ISNA vice president Dr. Ingrid Mattson; Imam

Muhammad Majid; ISCSC president Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi; Imam Suhaib Webb; and Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah.

ISNA secretary general Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed reflected on how the community's early history has "set a stage for the establishment of a dynamic and vibrant Muslim presence in America." He emphasized his strong conviction and belief that ISNA's 40 years of hard work has gained the community's trust, and that this had prompted the conference.

Political Participation, Family Issues, and Finances. As 2004 is an election year, several sessions addressed political participation. Dr. Hathout, mentioning that "We must not fall into the trap of being asked why are you an Egyptian Muslim talking about American democracy," spoke passionately about Muslim Americans needing to act as U.S. citizens while understanding their role as Muslims living in the world's most powerful nation.



Muslims should make waves in the entertainment industry instead of neglecting this important avenue of persuasion.

Mauri Salakhan, founder and director of the Washington, DC-based Peace and Justice Foundation and author of "The State of the Union 2003: Don't Say You Didn't Know!" and "The Message of Rachel Corrie", declared that the "character of the country is being challenged at this time" in the current climate of the war on terrorism, and that "we must go to the people and take our message to the masses."

Omar Zaki, the southern California director of governmental relations with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), outlined and presented a step-by-step approach to lobbying as an introduction to political activism.

Among the highly attended sessions were workshops dealing with family issues. Waleed Muhammad, conference attendee and father of four, commented, "Muslim American parents must learn new parenting skills and techniques to build healthy families living in this part of the world. The same stuff from back home will not cut it." Dr. Badawi spoke about cultural baggage and the concept of the marriage in Islam. Imam Majid, one of the foremost coun-

selors in the country dealing with marriage issues, discussed gender relations from an Islamic perspective.

Munira Lekovic and Imam Sadullah Khan discussed how to build a Muslim family. Lekovic, author of the new book "Before the Wedding: 150 Questions for Muslims To Ask before Getting Married", provided guidelines for potential spouses and their families. Sadullah, in his charismatic and humorous style, talked about building and maintaining family harmony.

Dr. Sulayman Nyang, who identified Islamic economics and finance as a major challenge facing the community, said, "the challenge of the philosophy of money and the survival of Muslim in the secular world [is that] of high finance and marketing."

One of the main plenary sessions dealt with compassionate giving. Dr. Yahya Abdurrahman, founder of LaRiba-American Finance House, provided a religious and historical framework for Islamic finance. Marghoob Quraishi discussed the challenge of centralizing zakat collection and distribution, while Dr. Ahmad

Sakr, an MSA founder, examined endowment-based institutions. Imam Saadiq Saafir analyzed zakat's role and benefits. One of the workshops, "Islamic Economics: From Concept to Reality," analyzed the growth and development of Muslim organizations and financial institutions.

Parallel Workshops. Parallel workshops provided opportunities to delve into greater depth. The workshop on media brought together Tariq Jalil (an NBC producer), Dr. Aslam Abdullah (editor-in-chief of the "Minaret" magazine), Khalid Baig ("Impact International" magazine), and Sabiha Khan (Director of Media Relations, CAIR Southern California office). The panelists emphasized the need for Muslims to actively articulate their message and make sure that it is heard.

Jalil noted that Muslims are very talented, and that they should make waves in the entertainment industry instead of neglecting this important avenue of persuasion. Dr. Abdullah presented the pros and cons of journalism as a career, stressing that it is a life-long commitment and

not simply a 9 to 5 job. Khalid asserted that alternative media is a very powerful force in shaping public opinion. Khan conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the how-tos of working with the media.

The Islamic center and the masjid play a pivotal role in the community. The session, "People & the Masjid," explored the ideals of this relationship and its practical reality as manifested today. Imam Abdul Karim Hassan, resident director of Masjid Bilal, one of southern California's first mosques, gave some insights into building the "ideal" Muslim society. Dr. Ahmad Sakr, a founder of MSA (today's forerun-



The bazaar, an essential part of any convention, offers something for everyone; (top) ISNA President Dr. Muhammad Nur Abdullah and Imam Siraj Wahhaj during a panel discussion; (opposite page) The amicable resolution of disputes is a passion that attorney Najeeba Syeed-Miller, left, shares with her audiences.

Fawad M.S. Yacooob is a freelance writer and photographer.

A new genre of Muslim American writers is at the forefront of an emerging, unique school of literature. **By Saman Fatima Khaled**

BESIDES RUMI

Besides a few poems by Rumi, Iqbal, and the one time Freddy Mercury said "Bismillah!" in the song "Bohemian Rhapsody," modern Muslims seem largely unaware of the artistic achievements that Islam has inspired throughout time. Today, an exciting wave of authors is redefining the landscape of Muslim literature in America. "Islamic Horizons" recently had the chance to interview three of these authors, representing different generations and styles of writing, and to ask about their thoughts on Islamic literature.

So, without further *adieu*, prepare to meet popular Muslim feminist, Mohja Kahf; punk rock Muslim rebel, Michael Muhammad Knight; and modern day Sufi, Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore...

At age 63, Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore of Philadelphia has spent much of his life producing books of poems, prose, plays and puppet shows, all with an Islamic perspective. With over 50 manuscripts of poetry to his name, Moore is easily one of today's most prolific Muslim American writers. Through books of poetry, including "The Ramadan Sonnets" (1996) and his latest, "The Blind Beekeeper" (2002), Moore seeks to inspire others through written expression of his personal love for Allah and humanity. "For me the province of poetry is a private ecstasy made public," says Moore, "and the social role of the poet is to display moments of shared universal epiphanies capable of heal-

ing our sense of mortal estrangement—from ourselves, from each other, from our source, from our destiny, from The Divine."

Originally from Oakland, CA, Moore converted to Islam in 1970, traveling throughout Europe and North Africa to learn more about the faith before returning to continue his career in literature. His work has since been featured in national magazines, including "The Nation", and on Soundvision's RadioIslam.com. He has, also, been active in the fields of puppeteering and theatre, while continuing to try new and different things.

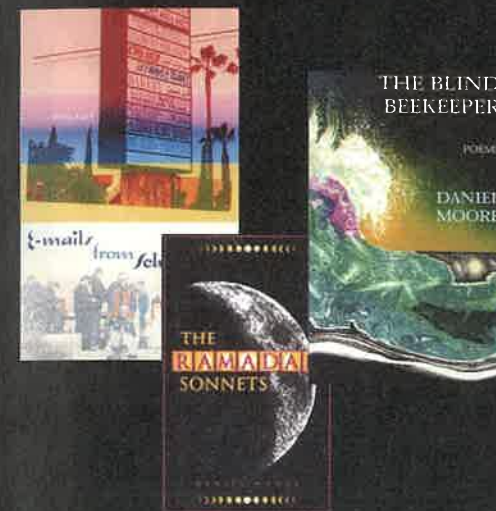
Today, Moore describes his style of writing as, "lyrical, personal, symbolic, surreal, and is something now forged for many years, always flexible and eager for expansion and renewal."

Syrian-American Mohja Kahf, 36, who grew up with MSA and ISNA, reminisces about growing up at ISNA headquarters: "We'd spend time after school climbing the apple trees, helping Uncle This with the audiovisual equipment in the Muhajireen House or Uncle That with stuffing envelopes for a mass mailing in the Ansar House." Now this child of ISNA is a mother herself, and the critically acclaimed author of "E-mails from Scheherazad" in which the legendary heroine of the Arabian Nights is recast as a sophisticated feminist from New Jersey. Kahf's passion "is interpreting figures from Islamic texts and Islamic history with a modern sensi-

bility, such as Hajar and Aisha." As an assistant professor of English and Middle-Eastern studies at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Kahf is grounded in Islamic knowledge and is a powerful voice for the growing Muslim community, often quoted in mainstream press coverage of the Arab-American and Muslim writing scenes. Her scholarly work has meanwhile led to a book on the representation of Muslim women in western literature. Michael Muhammad Knight embraced Islam at 16; studied Islam at the prestigious International Islamic University at



A new generation of Muslim American writers such as Dr. Mohja Kahf (left) and Moore (top) are making waves in the field of literature.



Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore's "Ramadan Sonnets" or "The Blind Beekeeper" and Mohja Kahf's "E-mails from Scheherazad" may be purchased through popular booksellers such as amazon.com, overstock.com, aba.books.com, etc. Michael Muhammad Knight's "The Taquacores" is available through www.alternativetentacles.com.

The emergence of prominent Muslim voices in American literature is needed now more than ever, say the authors, despite challenges that range from communal to political.

then try to show why I love them," he says. His novel, hand-copied by Knight himself, is distributed online by punk rock music label Alternative Tentacles. Knight, also, writes for self-proclaimed "progressive Muslim" e-zine, "MuslimWakeup!", where his travel narratives take the reader into the strange world of the Islamic American legacy, interviewing everyone from Elijah Muhammad's grandson to singer Omar X of hardcore band Rogue Nation.

No stranger to controversy—having at one point had even renounced his faith only to later reclaim it—Knight is heralded by the website as a great, up-and-coming writer because of the refreshingly youthful and daringly honest voice he adds to Islamic literature.

In current times, although developing from simple memoir writing (the most famous example of that form being "The Autobiography of Malcolm X"), Muslim American literature is still small and scattered in comparison to other English

efforts by Muslims in Britain, where books and movies have even gained mainstream attention.

The emergence of prominent Muslim voices in American literature is needed now more than ever, say the authors, despite challenges that range from communal to political. Moore says the events of 9/11 and the war in Iraq have put Muslims Americans "in the cultural environment of distrust of Islam, to say the least." "We enjoy freedom of speech, but have recently seen its dimensions curtailed," he says, "and to poets in the United States, Muslim or not, often the feeling of vacuum is palpable and the frustrations huge."

Kahf and Knight, meanwhile, believe that another major obstacle is that today's Muslim society, itself, places little value on art. "So many kids are taught from day one to become engineers, doctors or computer programmer, and there's such pressure for money and status, we don't have a lot of Muslims determined to produce great art," says Knight, and that as a result many of those who can write prefer to do it on the side. "I'm a novelist, and that's it; whether it pays or not, whether it gives me prestige in the 'community' or not. It's my way of life," says Knight.

Kahf says that she feels hindered not by religious constraints, but by close-minded Muslims or, what she calls, the Islamic Identity Squadron. "They are the ones who try to put limits on what we are allowed to think, speak, and write. They check what you write against their 'Checklist for Islamically Correct Identity,' and if it's not on there, they come after you."

Despite a lack of community appreciation at times, all of the authors, also, said that they actually view their writings about Islam or within an Islamic context as a form of prayer.

Novels and poems are conversations with yourself and with Allah, says Kahf. "The criteria is, are you producing something of lasting beauty," she says, warning against a recent increase in contrived poetry with overly nice or moral messages.

Overall, though, Kahf says she is hopeful for the future, and sends a call to all inspiring writers to get out there and produce something beautiful that will stand the test of time.

"In twenty years or so, I'd love to see a bookshelf of high quality fiction and poetry and literary essays by Muslim American authors that is good enough to stand among the best in contemporary world literature," she says. ■

Saman Fatima Khaled graduated from Birmingham-Southern College with a degree in English Literature and plans to attend graduate school in the fall.



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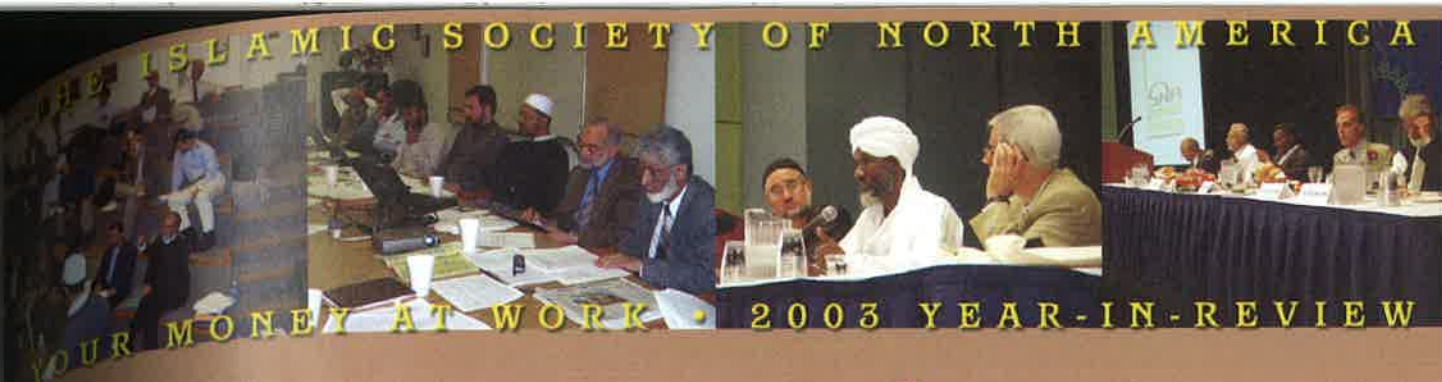
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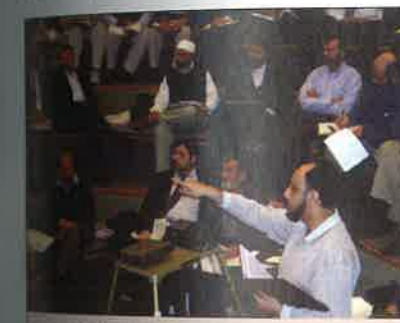
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2003: A Year for Reflections & New Directions

Assalamu alaikum! As we draw to the end of ISNA's fortieth year, we can look back to a long list of accomplishments. The handful of men and women who started the MSA, which was to become ISNA, must have had no idea what their organization would become. They could not have imagined their little group would grow into a national organization that encompasses over 350 Islamic organizations and mosques, with affiliate organizations for medical practitioners, engineers and scientists, social service providers, *Islamic Horizons*, a national magazine with a distribution of 70,000

read by some 250,000 individuals, ATP, an Islamic publishing house, and IBS, a book distribution center. They could not have foreseen an annual convention that draws over 35,000 participants, national television



Group Chairman presenting results

appearances, invitations to consult with the President of the United States of America, cooperative ventures with major religious groups, a fiqh council to address issues facing American Muslims and a dozen annual thematic and regional conferences. Alhamdulillah for all the successes ISNA has to its credit!

ISNA, however, is not content to rest on its laurels. In the spring of 2003, 60 ISNA leaders and community

activists met for a Strategic Planning Retreat. During this retreat ISNA's strengths and weaknesses were examined, its past successes and failures assessed and a set of goals and action plans devised to guide ISNA's work for the next ten years. The Retreat attendees reaffirmed ISNA's traditional mission to be an "association of Muslim organizations and individuals that provides a common platform for presenting Islam, supporting Muslim communities, developing educational, social and outreach programs and fostering good relations with other religious communities, and civic and service organizations."



ISNA Strategic Planning Retreat

The priorities that were agreed upon include:

- **Imam Training and Leadership Development** to produce well-rounded and capable Imams and leaders for the North American Muslim community
- Promoting **Involvement of Youth**, to develop a new generation of dynamic, practicing Muslim youth
- Achieving a **Sound Financial Base** to provide for continuity in ISNA's work

Important Information for Donors!

Since 9-11 and the subsequent raids on some Islamic organizations and the closing of certain Islamic charities, many in our Muslim community have wondered just which groups are safe.

To reassure those who have generously supported ISNA over the years, the Secretary General recently queried the Senate Judiciary committee if ISNA had been named in any of their investigations or at the hearing held on this matter in October 2003. Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ), a member of the Senate

Judiciary committee, replied that ISNA had not been named in the investigations that are being carried out by Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security.

In a separate statement, Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "I applaud the positive contributions that ISNA has made in developing educational, social, and outreach programs and fostering good relations with other religious communities, civic and service organizations."



Hamza Yusuf, Abdalla Idris, Siraj Wahhaj

Abdalla Idris and Yusuf Islam

Louay Safi, Executive Director TLDC

Paul Findley

Taneeza Islam, Youth Coordinator

ISNA Islamic Art Exhibit

ISNA VP at press conference

Bob Edgar of NCC at the Interfaith Banquet

- Improving the **Public Image of Islam** by presenting true and accurate information about Islam
- Strengthening **Interfaith Cooperation and Coalition Building** by coordinating with Muslim and other faith and issue based organizations on areas of common interest
- Fostering **Community Development** to help grassroots communities build programs and be more effective in social services, education, dawah, economic development and self-sufficiency, and Zakah.

IMPLEMENTING THE TEN-YEAR PLAN

The priorities developed at the Strategic Planning Retreat were adopted by the ISNA Majlis Ash-Shura in April and implementation began immediately. Here are some of the activities ISNA has undertaken to meet our goals in each of these areas. Of course, some activities, such as the Annual Convention and our regional and topical conferences, serve many goals.

Imam Training and Leadership Development

- Established Training and Leadership Development Center and hired Dr. Louay Safi as Executive Director.
- Fourth Annual Education Forum provided training to over 400 participants and also provided an opportunity for a dialogue between school leaders and the US Department of Education.
- Fourth Annual Community Development Conference included imam and leadership training in the areas of domestic violence, legal issues and grant writing. This event was attended by more than 100 participants.
- Grant Writing Training program taught communities the process of obtaining grant funding from the federal government. 50 community representatives took part in this event.
- Third Annual Islam Amongst Latino Americans and Islam in American Prisons Conferences attracted over 200 participants to discuss issues pertaining to these groups.
- Launched Online Grant Writing Training Center.
- Created a new ISNA-sponsored internship at the Hartford Seminary which designates Hartford as the training institution for ISNA-endorsed Islamic chaplains.
- Over 100 hours worth of training video are being added to www.isna.net for people across the world to view for free.
- Zonal Conferences throughout the year — South Central, in Dallas, Texas; Upstate Regional in Rochester, NY; Central

Zone in Kansas City, MO; the Annual Seerah Conference in Northern California; and the West Zone Conference to be held in Los Angeles, December 25-27th.

Involvement of Youth

- Taneeza Islam was hired as Youth Coordinator. She is currently working with MYNA and MSA leadership to develop plans for Youth forums at Regional Conferences, the Annual Convention, an Alternative Spring Break, a Muslim Youth Peace Corps, Youth Convert Support, and a website aimed specifically at Muslim youth.
- Initiated recognition program for Muslim valedictorians and salutatorians.
- Islamic Art Exhibit, Film Festival, Entertainment Session and Qir'at Competition at ISNA Annual Convention attract youth participants from across the continent.
- Revived and strengthened ties of communication and activity with the Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA), ISNA's youth wing. Conducted meetings with the new MYNA Advisory Board to discuss their plans to reinvigorate the continental youth organization.
- Reached out to young people through Muslim arts and culture at a series of Islamic Entertainment events held across the country throughout the year in Dallas, TX.

Madison, WI, Washington, DC, and Houston, TX, and at the ISNA Regional Conferences.

- Living the Legacy of Islam MYNA Conference to be held in conjunction with the West Zone conference in December.

Sound Financial Base

- Developed the 1000 Donors Club, a sponsorship program in which contributors commit to a donation of at least 1000 dollars annually for the next five years. 80 supporters signed up as of December.
- Annual Community Service Recognition Luncheon (CSRL) at ISNA Annual Convention featured John Esposito.
- IDF conducted field visits throughout the year to assess community needs and for ISNA fundraising. Also regular mass mailing campaigns such as the post-Convention, Ramadan, and zakat letters assure continuity of income.
- 10% of donations added to the ISNA Endowment Fund. Fund total increased from \$976,000 in January 2003 to \$1,100,000 in December 2003.
- ISNA maintains commitment to a 100% indigenous donor base.

Public Image of Islam

• ISNA Secretary General, Sayyid M. Syeed, hosted an inter-

national meeting of Fulbright Scholars to discuss Islam in America.

- 7th Annual Islam in America Conference.
- The 32nd annual AMSS conference held in Bloomington, IN addressed the theme: East meets West, Understanding the Muslim Presence in Europe and North America.
- The ISNA Secretary General and other ISNA officials conducted widely attended press conferences at ISNA Regional and topical conferences, answering questions on Islam, current events and organizational activities. Also conducted several separate press conferences throughout the year in Washington, DC to address various issues.
- Initiated a series of six well-publicized ISNA Islamic Arts and Entertainment events throughout the country to help show different sides of Islamic experience, foster a more positive image of Islam and counteract negative news and media portrayals of Muslims. Also conducted successful Arts/Entertainment sessions at all regional and topical conferences and the annual convention, and started work on a website to highlight Islamic arts at www.isna.net. Each event enjoyed large attendance and positive media coverage.
- Organized media sessions at the Islam in America Conference and annual convention bringing together Muslim and non-Muslim, mainstream and community journalists and media practitioners to discuss the state of Islam in American Media today and encourage cooperation, involvement and accuracy in reporting.
- Organized a film festival at the national convention with participation from over 30 Muslim and non-Muslim amateur, student, and professional filmmakers, encouraging more accurate portrayals of Muslims in various TV, film and video genres, and networking amongst Muslim filmmakers.
- Started ISNA's Islam in America this Week, a webcast show featuring positive news coverage of ISNA and the Muslim community. The show will, inshallah, be available for telecast on local TV stations across the country.
- Website, www.isna.net, receives over 2 million hits per month.
- *Islamic Horizons* distributed to public and university libraries, members of Congress, and churches of various denominations.

Interfaith and Coalition Building

- Hosted the 8th Annual Midwest Dialogue of Muslims and Catholics at ISNA Headquarters with the US Conference of

A Month at ISNA...

Sometimes people wonder just what goes on at ISNA Headquarters. Here's a sample of the ISNA calendar for April 2003. And that doesn't include planning for ISNA's conferences, the Annual Convention or the *Islamic Horizons*.

- April 4** Field Visit to Richmond, VA Fundraiser for the benefit of the local community
- April 5** Meeting of ISNA Majlis Ash-Shura
- April 7** Press conference for Anti-Smoking Campaign, Indianapolis
- April 8** Visit by 25 students from North Central High school, International Baccalaureate Class, Indianapolis
- April 9** Field visit to New York & Washington, DC
- April 10** Visit to Utah for MSA program and a keynote address at Conference on Islam In America

- April 15** TV Interview with Mayor Bart Peterson program, Indianapolis
- April 15** Visit by 25 students from Taylor University, Indiana
- April 17** Visit by 30 students from Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis
- April 18-20** Education Forum & Community Development Conference, Chicago
- April 20** Field Visit (Town Hall meeting and Fundraiser) Merrillville, Indiana
- April 24** Meeting with Christi Sanford, National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
- April 25** Address national convention of Religious Communicators, Indianapolis
- April 26** Central Zone Leadership Training, Houston, TX
- April 28** Association Church Press visit ISNA
- April 29** National Interfaith Summit on Iraq, Chicago

ISNA 1000 DONORS CLUB

It is like the bricks of a wall, reinforcing each other.

Join The 1000 Donors Club!

This important program aims to address ISNA's need for a dependable, stable annual income. Members of the club commit to a minimum contribution of 1000 dollars a year for the next five years. We intend, insha Allah, to have 1000 club members by 2008. In the first three months we have signed up nearly 100 members. Won't you join them today?

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or at: idf@isna.net

Catholic Bishops. Finalized work on a jointly written booklet to be distributed for educational purposes to both the Catholic and Muslim community.

- Granted free registration to the ISNA Annual Convention to all attendees of the concurrent convention of the American Society of Muslims (ASM) and conducted a joint press conference with Imam Warith Deen Mohammed at the start of the ASM Convention, stressing cooperation between the organizations.
- Co-sponsored the national Interfaith Summit on Iraq with American Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders at Chicago O'Hare.
- ISNA Secretary General gave keynote address to National Convention of Religious Communicators Council, and ISNA representative, Fawad Siddiqui, was appointed to the NRCC board.
- ISNA representatives, along with representatives of Sikh, Arab, and other Muslim organizations, met with the FBI Director to discuss issues of law enforcement and civil rights, including profiling, harassment, detentions, visa delays, and registration requirements.
- Joined with the Alliance for Marriage in sponsoring a Federal Marriage Amendment to define marriage as between a man and a woman, not male/male or female/female.
- Participated again in the "9-11 Respond to the Call," a nationwide interfaith effort to stem hate and bigotry through Christian/Muslim dialogue, and encouraged member organizations to participate.
- Joined the National Temperance and Prohibition Council and will host its annual meeting in 2004.
- Participated in the National "Cover the Uninsured Week" which advocates for securing health care for all Americans. Other participants included the National Council of

Churches, Southern Baptist Convention, Congress of National Black Churches, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, US Council of Catholic Bishops, the Salvation Army, United Methodist Church and the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers.

- Established ISNA Interfaith Kit for Christian Communities — a collection of books and dvds on Islam geared towards Christians.

Community Development

- 11 Regional and Topical Conferences and the Annual Convention address issues of importance to local communities.
- 29th Annual ISNA Canada Convention in Toronto focused on the theme of Enduring Values for Humanity.
- Fourth Annual Muslim Peace Building Conference provided a forum for scholars and practitioners to exchange information and insight into the field of Islam and Conflict Resolution in the post 9/11 world.
- Introduced the Muslims Against Domestic Violence Online Center which provides needed information to communities and social service activists.
- Worked with communities to assist them in receiving 501 (c) (3) status from Internal Revenue Service.
- Established online affiliations program.
- Established www.islamiccentersnet.org allowing Islamic centers to develop revenue generating websites at no cost.
- Established online center for thanatology to facilitate communication to help Muslims to deal with death, dying and burial issues.
- Amended the ISNA Constitution to accommodate more equal community representation in ISNA leadership and conducted the first meeting toward establishment of the long-awaited ISNA House of Community Representatives.

A Brief Report from the Convention

ISNA's 40th Annual Convention was held at the McCormick Place Convention Center in Chicago, IL over Labor Day weekend. Approximately 30,000 people attended.

Some of the special features were, "40 years of ISNA," a commemorative documentary, the second annual ISNA Film Festival, an Art Exhibit, Islamic Entertainment, Health Fair, Qira'at Competition, Interfaith Banquet, and Community Service Recognition Luncheon. Speakers included peren-

nial favorites like Siraj Wahhaj, Hamza Yusuf, Jamal Badawi, Ingrid Mattson, John Esposito and Yusuf Islam. The bazaar had more than 500 vendor booths and about 300 businesses and non-profit organizations.

For those who weren't able to travel to Chicago, ISNA streamed 4,590 video files. 1,278 users viewed the online programming during the convention; over 5,500 users have since viewed the webcast.

All in all, it was a great success, alhamdulillah.

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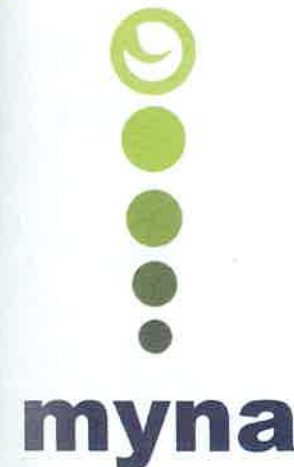
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Moving Ahead

A new generation and alumni team to revitalize the Muslim youth movement.

BY TANEENZA ISLAM



Where is MYNA? What happened to MYNA? Is MYNA coming back? All of these questions are asked as Muslims in North America, young and old, reminisce about MYNA (the Muslim Youth of North America), an affiliate of ISNA, what it once was and what it could be again. While the first two questions can be answered by the accompanying story on MYNA history, for the answer to the third question, look no further. The answer is: "Yes." Yes, MYNA is back. Yes, it is revitalized. Yes, it is again preparing to serve the Muslim community. But how, why, and who is behind this push for a new and improved MYNA?

MYNA: THEN AND NOW. MYNA was created in 1985 by a group of passionate Muslims, young and old, who realized that Muslim youth in North America needed a place, a forum, an environment where they could be Muslim and American at the same time. This need crystallized into a vigorous organization that stretched across Canada and the U.S., touching the lives of thousands of Muslim youth. The annual conferences and the youth groups all across North America provided an environment that parents and young people cherished, an environment that made them feel that they belonged.

The key ingredient to MYNA's initial success was that it was an organization "for youth by youth," which at the time (a timeframe

to come to our camps?," now the concern was, "There are too many youth to host in just one camp!"

MYNA's structure was, also, challenged due to a lack of standardization of leadership skills and a break in the passing of leadership from adults to young adult advisors to youth leaders. While some youth groups still affiliated themselves with MYNA and continue to do so till today, outside of the parallel programs found at the annual ISNA conventions and zonal ISNA conferences, MYNA did not hold any formal events of its own for years.

Then came the beginning of the reformation.

In the year 2000, a number of now key players in MYNA (mostly MYNA alumni) and others noticed that problems had developed within MYNA's leadership structure and programming. Some of these MYNA graduates came together to propose a new vision, mission, and structure for

of about 12 years) included a dynamic group of youth that truly exemplified what it meant to be Muslim-American youth leaders. Those leaders became adults, but many returned to MYNA to act as advisors, and so the cycle continued. Then, all of a sudden, it all came to a screeching halt.

While there are different hypotheses for why it happened, the momentum of the first decade eventually dwindled by the late 90s. However, the number of Muslim youth and local Muslim youth groups continued to grow exponentially in North America. This proved to be a mixed blessing for MYNA. Where once the concern was, "Where were we going to find youth

the group. However, things really started moving when, in Oct. 2002, ISNA leadership declared the necessity of the focus on youth and the need to revitalize MYNA. The ISNA Majlis-AshShura appointed a Board of Advisors to assess the situation within MYNA and charged this group with the responsibility of developing an action plan. Seventeen years after its founding, and five years after its initial decline, change was, once again, in the air for the Muslim Youth of North America.

NEW DAY, NEW ISSUES. Times have changed. When the first generation of MYNA members was growing up 19 years ago, the main concern was finding other Muslims to interact with and creating the idea that a positive identity, at once American and Muslim, was possible.

While the question of being both American and Muslim is no longer a prime con-

IMMIGRANT
PARENTS CREATED
MYNA, BUT TODAY
IT IS BEING
SHAPED BY FIRST-
GENERATION
MUSLIM
AMERICANS

cern, the question of how Muslims in America identify themselves is an ever-evolving issue; Muslims in America were worried about their Muslim American identity years ago, and rest assured that Muslims in America will be occupied with this topic for years to come. Since the regretful acts of September 11, 2001 and its aftermath—which have created grave misconceptions about Islam-forming a healthy, positive identity as a Muslim American has become more challenging for Muslim American youth.

Furthermore, as our community has busied itself with sharing Islam with other faiths, the Muslim youth, who are also directly affected, have been forgotten. Just as adults are discriminated against in the workplace, so are young Muslims in high schools and middle schools. This in itself poses a great risk as it can push Muslims to disassociate from Islam in practice, belief, culture, and self-identification.

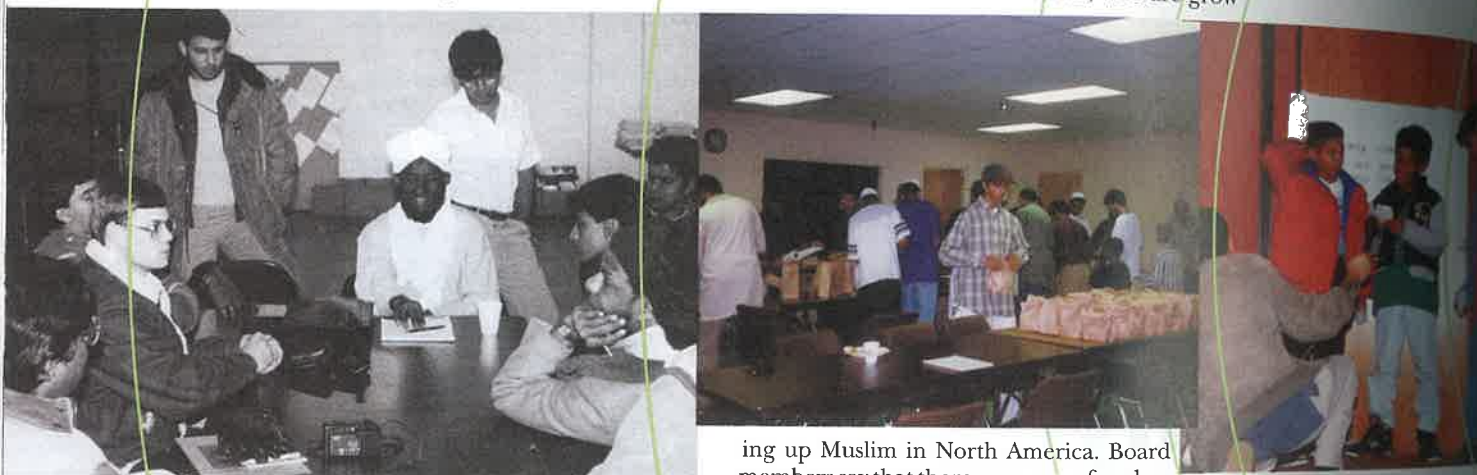
Who is looking out for them? Who is comforting them? Who is supporting them?

The questions raised by Sept. 11th, 2001, are just some of the issues that have

opment as a young Muslim growing up in America. "It helped me develop into a leader," says Sahin. "It provided positive role models and friends who kept me out of trouble. MYNA said I was important, my deen was important, and that I could be both American and Muslim. I learned it was not a conflict, inherently."

Developing a positive Muslim American identity is an intrinsic ideal that the Board wants to pass on to future generations. As Ayesha Kazmi, a current Board member who has been involved with MYNA since 1990, states, "I am motivated to be on this Board because I have a desire for youth to have regular and planned events to learn about Islam, as well as have an open forum for discussing difficulties with growing up Muslim in America."

There is a big difference between today's leadership of MYNA and past leadership. Immigrant parents created MYNA, but today it is being shaped by first-generation Muslim Americans, who have built successful careers, and many of whom now have children of their own, who are grow-



become foremost concerns when thinking about the restructuring of MYNA.

LOOKING FORWARD. MSA-alumni and former ISNA Central Zone Representative Monem Salam was the chairperson of the new MYNA Board of Advisors. In real life, he works as a financial consultant for Amana Mutual Funds in Seattle, WA. "The Board members are greatly invested in the future of MYNA and its sustainability, and each was individually asked to join the team because of their past participation with MYNA or understanding of youth issues," says Salam. They all know how it works, as most of them were a part of MYNA in its brightest days, and all went through its unraveling.

"MYNA allowed me to explore my Muslim American identity," says Inayet Sahin, the first MYNA female chairperson (1992-93), who is now involved with the restructuring of MYNA. Sahin emphasizes that MYNA was a vital component in her devel-

ing up Muslim in North America. Board members say that there was a gap of understanding, as there always is in immigrant experience, between parents and their children. Now there is a group of adults who have been through it; they have been challenged by making decisions such as whether to go to prom or to tafsir class. They have been through high school and all its awkward phases, through college with all of its life-altering stages, and they have started their own families.

This first hand experience and knowledge of what really challenges youth are great resources that can be used to help the next generation of Muslims develop healthy and positive identities.

A CHARGE FOR ACTION. The MYNA Board has been working over the past year to reformulate MYNA as a whole. Salam says that he and his colleagues see a great task in front of them, but they have made a lot of progress in the past year. They have engrossed themselves in creating a process and structure for the organization to

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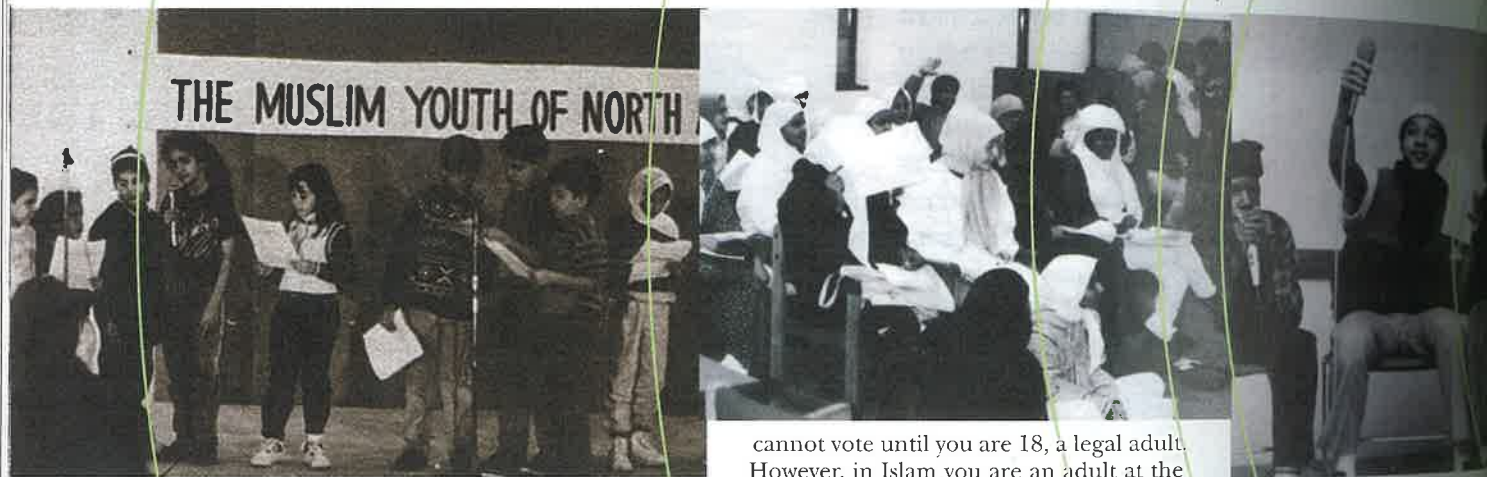
MYNA'S ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES WILL HELP LOCAL YOUTH GROUPS CREATE DYNAMIC PROGRAMS THAT WILL ATTRACT YOUTH PARTICIPATION.

remain sustainable for at least the next 50 years and to continue to be a unique youth-led organization. Board members recognize that this process requires a lot of time, commitment, and innovativeness.

The new mission, vision, and purpose has been formally documented, and a new MYNA logo has been created. ISNA, meanwhile, as the umbrella and parent affiliate-organization, has also, added the position of Youth Coordinator, filled by Taneza Islam, to coordinate all youth programming from the ISNA Headquarters in Plainfield, IN.

When asked what we can expect from MYNA in the next six months, Salam responds, "Since MYNA is still in the revitalization phase, a better question would be what we can expect from MYNA in general. Look for MYNA not to define the Muslim Identity, but create an environment where families, youth, and communities answer the question for themselves." Salam said the Board understands that many more complex issues are impacting the scope of Muslim youth work in North America

ty seminars. Representatives from the MYNA Board, as well as the ISNA Youth Coordinator, plan on traveling to major cities across the U.S. and Canada to present the new youth leadership structure, as well as to receive feedback from youth on what they think will work and what will not work. The seminars will, also, include basic leadership training, to motivate local communities to form youth groups if none exist or strengthen existing groups. Youth groups are at the core of MYNA's structure. Many of the activities and services MYNA will provide will be to help local youth groups create dynamic programs that will attract youth participation. Another central point is youth leadership development. The MYNA age group (12-18) needs to develop skills that will provide the potential for them to become dynamic youth leaders. When talking about an Islamic perspective on youth leadership, Riyad Shamma, MYNA Board of Advisors, expressed that in Islam youth are regarded on a higher level than here in North America. For example in the U.S., you



today. The MYNA of the past was an opportunity for youth to come together, make new friends, and feel comfortable with themselves; the revitalized MYNA is looking to encompass more youth services, which deal with internal and intellectual conflicts that affect youth today. "The best venues for this kind of effort are not only camps and retreats, but also events that reinforce and/or build culture through engaging youth and parents in dialogue, entertainment, and knowledge building," he said. Sustainability in structure, revision of its mission, and revamping youth programming are three of the main components on which the Board is and will be focusing.

Board members say they are committed to involving youth in this process as well, as youth are the true source of information on what issues are most pertinent today and what they would like to see happen with a national Muslim youth organization. A grassroots effort is being made to involve youth through local communi-

cannot vote until you are 18, a legal adult. However, in Islam you are an adult at the age of 14. Therefore, in Islam, a young person can be given the responsibilities of an "adult" as perceived by the West, and MYNA is here to support young people in becoming adults and effectively fulfilling responsibilities.

As the twentieth anniversary of its inception draws near in 2005, it is reassuring to see that the country's oldest functioning Muslim youth organization continues to provide dynamic programming during the ISNA zonal conferences and annual convention, and that it is ready to branch out again into the larger field of Muslim community work.

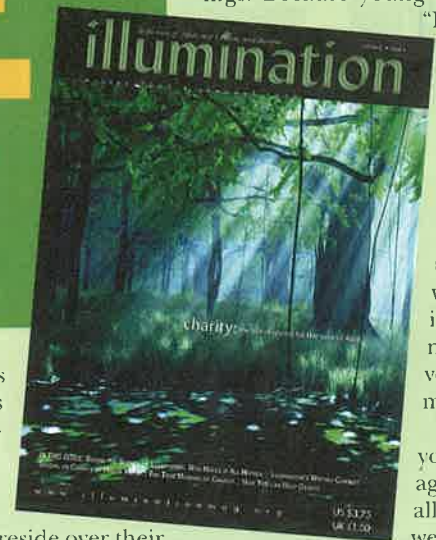
Insha'Allah, in the next six months MYNA will be ready to serve.

Make sure you visit the MYNA website (www.myna.org) for updates on programming in your area and resources you can use to build and strengthen youth groups in your communities! ■

Taneza Islam serves as youth affairs coordinator at ISNA.

Youthful VOICE

A magazine evolves from a teenager's quest to respond positively to Islamophobia. **BY AZIZA HUSSAIN**



The Twin Towers in New York City had fallen, but I was determined to save the faith of the Muslims from crumbling. It was only a few days into my sophomore year, and a few months since I started to observe hijab, when Muslims shifted into the spotlight. The world was the stage. What seemed to me to be every second, the images of Muslims flashed on the television screen. Muslim names and faces were plastered on every newspaper page. Every corner I turned, people were talking about "those Muslim terrorists."

This blaring spotlight was inescapable. I was in the spotlight, and I knew I wasn't the only one.

As I interacted with Muslims, I saw many of them ducking their heads into their shirt collars. These faces wore a look of apprehension. Their eyes switched back and forth. Their cheeks were a little red. Shame was starting to take over the Muslims.

This shame was unacceptable; I wouldn't stand for it, especially among the young Muslims in America. Being born in America and raised as a Muslim, I felt a mixed sense of belonging. As cliché as it sounds, I experienced an identity crisis. I always considered myself American. No doubt that I was Muslim. When the events of September 11, 2001 took place, I didn't know what to think anymore. I soon resolved this conflict within myself, and realized my faith belongs to Islam and Allah. This realization sparked something inside of me.

I launched "Illumination" magazine in the beginning of my sophomore year, just two months after September 11, 2001. "Illumination" was my solution to the identity crisis that I, along with many other American-born Muslim teenagers, faced. My biggest fear was that the next generation of Muslims - my generation - would turn on their faith because of shame, and

lose their identities as Muslims. To prevent this from happening, I wanted to help young Muslims realize that it is Islam that matters most. Their identities as Muslims should preside over their identity as Americans. I wanted to tell them that yes, we were suffering, but we could not leave our faith. This would only lead to further pain.

The magazine's first goal was to offer Muslim teenagers a place of belonging and help them maintain their *iman* (faith). As it brings together Muslim youth from the area and provides a secure environment to speak of their experiences, "Illumination" creates a sense of unity among Muslim

"ILLUMINATION" CREATES A SENSE OF UNITY AMONG MUSLIM TEENAGERS. ITS MAIN MESSAGE TO YOUNG MUSLIMS IS "YOU ARE NOT ALONE."

teenagers. Its main message to young Muslims is "You are not alone."

Collecting various articles, stories, and poetry from young Muslims in the eastern Massachusetts area, I, along with Tina Subedjgo (then 16 years old), published the first issue of "Illumination" - a 60-page publication revolving around the themes of September 11 and Ramadan.

With the endless support of others, "Illumination" has grown into something I would only have dreamed. From the 600 free copies we distributed in November of 2001, "Illumination" now has a readership of over 5,000 in the U.S. with a growing subscription list. We have spread from our small community in Boston to the world around us, creating a branch in Britain. We look forward to launching a branch in Canada soon insha'Allah.

"Illumination" has spread further and further, expanding not only its reach, but

also its organization, relationships with other organizations, and goals. With a dedicated editing and reviewing staff, "Illumination" is published as a professional magazine. After the first two rounds of editing by college students in the U.S., learned adults review the Islamic content of "Illumination", in order to make sure it conforms to Islamic teachings. Because young Muslims write for "Illumination", it is

especially important to check the Islamic content. Our writers come from all over the world and we continue to urge other young Muslims to contribute as well. Our message is simple: "Illumination" is your voice. I urge you to make it heard.

Last year, Muslim youth between the ages of 12 and 18 in all Western countries were invited to voice their opinions by entering the magazine's writing contest, reflecting on the lives of young Muslims in non-Muslim societies.

With increased organization, our goals have expanded from the original goal of offering a place of belonging for young Muslims. Now, "Illumination" works to educate Muslim adults as well as people of other faiths about the thoughts of young Muslims. It works especially hard to educate people of other faiths

about Islam in general by publishing works that are both relevant to young Muslims and educational. Our main project currently is to promote the use of "Illumination" Magazine as an educational tool, especially in Islamic schools. Many of today's Islamic schools lack discussion about being Muslim in non-Muslim societies. This discussion is necessary to strength teenagers' faith, as most will attend Western colleges.

"Illumination" continues to grow with the help of Allah *Subhana Wa Ta'ala*. The magazine is proof that faith and dedication will result in success. As the clock continues to tick (it's already 8:30), I realize it's past my bedtime. Off to sleep I go—another necessity for success. ■

Aziza Hussain (Aziza@illuminationmag.org; 978-407-1754) is founder and editor of the Illumination Magazine (www.illuminationmag.org)

MYNA at Work

North American Muslim Teenagers Created a Vibrant Organization that Merits Revival. **BY FAWAD SIDDIQUI**

At the end of August 1986, a group of 78 youths released over 1,000 multicolored balloons to mark the opening of the 23rd Annual ISNA Convention at the Indianapolis Convention Center. Two days later the event was capped off with its first-ever entertainment session: "Late Night with Umar Hasan." An enigmatic teen-aged African-American, Hasan was chairman of the Convention's first youth program, and it and the opening donor-sponsored charity balloon spectacle were

both contributions from the newest, most energetic member of the ISNA family: the Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA).

For Hasan and his friends (the college-aged kids of the old MSA/ISNA leadership and members of ISNA's last Youth Planning Committee), MYNA was a dream come true: a dynamic, national organiza-

tors, college-aged counselors, and youth, defined as students aged 12-18. Its layout mimicked ISNA's, with North America divided into 5 geographic zones. In its final form, MYNA's executive committee included a president (15 years old or older), a secretary-treasurer, and representatives from each zone (subdivided into regions headed by regional representa-

the now college-aged youth, who were filling the seats of the ISNA Youth Planning Committee that organized MSA/ISNA youth activities for a decade, demanded more attention from ISNA leaders. They were promptly redirected to Zwink.

A dynamic, brown-eyed, Jewish-American convert, Zwink had become a leader of MSA's international relief efforts and

THROUGH THE EARLY 1990S, MYNA WAS STRONG, GROWING, AND PROVIDING SECOND-GENERATION MUSLIMS WITH QUALITY PROGRAMMING

tion that belonged to them and future generations of Muslim youth.

Though unveiled at the 1986 Convention, MYNA was actually founded 8 months earlier, at the monumental "First Muslim Youth Conference of North America" (Dec. 1985) held at ISNA Headquarters.

There, 75 young North Americans spent 2 days in youth-oriented sessions and another 3 days in organizational workshops designed to structure the new "by youth for youth" organization. Their format sought a balance between adult advi-

tives). An Advisory Committee headed a mirror-structure for advisors. When the work was done, MYNA was born.

PRE-MYNA

How did the first generations of American-born children of Muslim immigrants from the 1960s-70s deal with their dual-cultural identity? As MSA activist of the time Dawood Zwink recalls, the kids considered the pre-1984 youth programs rather lame. After a particularly neglected 1984 ISNA Convention youth program,

focused on Somalia. A former Boy Scout now raising Muslim American children of his own, he knew about growing up American and organizing youth activities. Over the next year, Zwink and the committee developed programs to create a sense of unity and pride among North American Muslim youth. Prominent committee members included Indianapolis natives Umar Hasan; Fatima, Muhammad, and Hamid Abugedeiri (children of the late MSA president ElTijani Abugedeiri); and Zwink's own daughters Ambara and Nadifa Abdi.

Sending out youth surveys and organizing the 1985 conference, they vowed to never let another Muslim American generation grow up with insufficient youth programming. In Dec. 1985, with ISNA's full support, the Youth Conference was convened. MYNA was founded, approved, and given a running start. Conference attendees were sent out to establish new

youth groups, gather members, and begin the work of the "youth movement" in earnest. MYNA flourished.

The next year, over 300 youths filled the halls and campgrounds at ISNA Headquarters for a summer camp and the annual "Continental Winter Leadership Training Conference." They slept on couches, filled sessions, emblazoned new MYNA slogans, and commandeered the intercom to make such brazen announcements as "DEATH TO THE FLIES AT SALAM HOUSE!"—one of the facility's cabins.

Eventually, three events served as the national organization's pillars: the general-attendance Summer Continental Conference alongside the ISNA Convention, the selective Winter Training Conference at ISNA Headquarters (featuring elections and discussion of organizational matters), and the later-added Field Youth Leadership Training Programs.

"It was a dream come true for Muslim youth in North America," wrote a MYNA member in "Islamic Horizons". "Finally we had a chance to be the architects of a process targeted to our own needs."

Through the pioneering administrations of MYNA presidents Sameer Bade, Hasan Altalib, Maseer Bade (Sameer's younger brother), and Mehmood Kazmi, MYNA expanded to include dozens of continental, zonal, and regional camps and conferences. Some gathered tens of participants, others hundreds. It also orga-

nized a youth magazine "The New Dawn", a MYNAWear clothing line, a College Match service, Qur'an competitions, plays, essay contests, and cooperated with such ISNA departments as the Islamic Teaching Center and the Islamic Scouts of America.

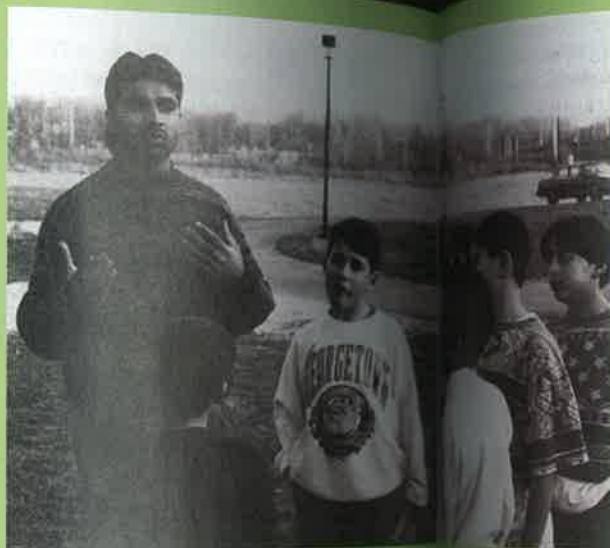
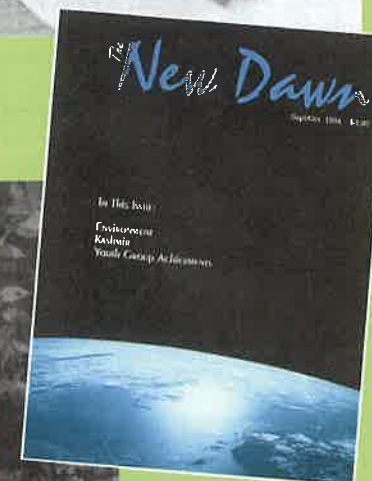
While work was overseen by counselors and advisors like Zwink and Waheed Mustafa (Winnipeg, MB), who attended

MYNA board meetings and lobbied for MYNA concerns among the ISNA leadership, this was not "your father's Islamic movement."

Imbuing youths with pride, confidence, spiritual devotion, and leadership ability, MYNA also added a dose of youthful creativity and humor. For the first time, participants got to pick between camp and conference sessions entitled "Halal Apple Pie," "The Late, Late, but Not so Late Movie," "Are you Confused?" and Opening and Closing "Parties." The



Reminisces from the heady days of MYNA, where a new Muslim American youth identity emerged. The "New Dawn" magazine served as a voice of this generation.



arts were encouraged through talent shows, fashion shows, and calligraphy, art, rap, and poetry contests.

There was plenty of money. Supplied by grants and MYNA fundraising (e.g., bake sales, T-shirt sales, chocolate sales, and donations), MYNA's 1988 budget indicated a \$90,000 surplus. In sync with their parents' organization but working for their own cause, MYNA members sought ways to expand ever-outward, as slogans from T-shirts, fliers, and conferences indicated: "MYNA: The Choice of a New Generation," "MYNA at work," and "MYNA WORLD ORDER."

It said it all. As the 1990s approached, enthusiasm was riding high and the sky, it seemed, was the limit. However, what goes up...

GOLDEN AGE

In 1991, Aimen Mir (17; Akron, OH) became the first MYNA president elected to two terms, part of a golden age that

would culminate 3 years later with MYNA's then-biggest-ever Summer Conference (900 attendees) alongside ISNA's own biggest-ever 15,000-person 1994 Convention in Chicago, IL. Kazmi's dynamic East Coast-centered 1989 presidency was part of that golden age. However, the increased outreach/activities from his time depleted MYNA's 1980s surplus.

From Herndon, VA, future East Zone advisor and Advisory Board Chairperson Kazmi (17) traveled the continent spreading the MYNA message and organized projects like local charter packets and a documentary on MYNA history. A challenge to MYNA's independence from ISNA leaders eventually led to MYNA receiving a seat on the ISNA Majlis ash-Shura and grudging recognition as a constituent organization.

While events were roughly sustaining themselves in 1989, starting in 1990 Mir initiated intrepid fundraising projects while continuing localized work and reorganizing national programs (i.e., the dor-

mant "New Dawn Magazine", a MYNA Worker's Manual, and cooperative efforts with organizations like the Islamic Book Service, AMC, and the MSA).

The winning balance between national and local focuses continued through



the landmark first female presidencies of Inayat Sahin (1992; Seabrook, MD), and Nancy Hanaan Serag (1993). Mir and Sahin's terms also saw the restarting of the FYLTP (started in 1990), the creation of Muslim Writers' and Art Guilds, the birth of the popular MYNA Raps music anthology tape series, a MYNA scholarship program, and expanded productivity to include nearly 100 events a year as well as local/regional/zonal newsletters.

The big numbers continued through the presidencies of Fatima Salman (1994; Troy MI) and Adnan Mir (1995; Aimen's younger brother).

Zwink started to move to the sidelines when his term as ISNA Vice President ended in 1990 - first as an ex-officio member (1991) and then as a former member (1993). His daughter Nadifa remained an active advisor. He was eventually replaced as chair by another MYNA supporter on the ISNA Majlis, Dr.

Ahmed ElKadi (Panama City, FL).

Through the early 1990s, things seemed perfect. MYNA was strong, growing, and providing second-generation Muslims with quality programming undreamed of in 1985, but by 1998, all of it was gone.

REINVENTING MYNA

By Aug. 1999, MYNA's heyday had vanished. Though thousands of youths attended its Summer Continental Conference alongside the ISNA Convention, remaining MYNA programs were now disjointed or continuing under different names, and many MYNA positions were vacant. The MYNA structure had fallen apart.

How? Riyadh Shamma, son of 1970s MSA-National president Muhammad Shamma and MYNA advisor Freda Shamma, was by then MYNA National Advisory Committee Chairperson, and he sought answers. Practically raised by MYNA, Shamma had been a member from its earliest days and had served as The New Dawn's editor, head of the Writers' Guild, and advisor for the magazine and MYNA's Central Zone. He'd even met his wife, Molly, through the youth group.

In 1998, he, MYNA President Huma Chowdry (Toronto), and her executive committee met in Washington, DC, and commissioned former MYNA president Aimen Mir and Canadian advisor Waheed Mustafa to study what had hap-

THE WINNING BALANCE BETWEEN NATIONAL AND LOCAL FOCUSES CONTINUED THROUGH THE LANDMARK FIRST FEMALE MYNA PRESIDENCIES OF INAYET SAHIN (1992) AND NANCY HANAAN SERAG (1993).

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THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE YOUTH STRUCTURE BETWEEN 1996-99 HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO FACTORS SUCH AS MORE FOCUS ON ISNA CONVENTIONS AND THE LACK OF FULL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MYNA AS A SEPARATE ENTITY.

pened and how to fix it. At the 1999 Convention, with no president in office, Shamma organized a meeting of ex-MYNA advisors to discuss their proposal and MYNA's possible fate.

To deal with shortages in trained youth position-holders, elections had been replaced by handpicked selection, and then by nothing at all and vacant seats. With this came a loss of communication between the executive committee and active regions and zones.

Mir and Mustafa's "Reinventing MYNA" study mentioned problems in the youth structure itself, such as too much pressure on too few youth for specialized training; a lack of continuity; and the MYNA-inspired, positive flowering of non-MYNA youth work and more dynamic Muslim college activities. Thus, there was now almost no need for a continental MYNA to help impart a sense of identity.

The disintegration of the youth structure between 1996-99 has been attributed to factors such as more focus on ISNA conventions and the lack of full acknowledgement of MYNA as a separate entity.

The proposal suggested that while MYNA's youth structure had produced positive gains, it had to change. It suggested disbanding MYNA and creating a new service organization called "Muslim Youth Services" (MYS) to produce more suitable youth programs. This group could and should include youth volunteers at lower levels, but should be nationally administered by MYNA graduates, and have a grassroots, bottom-up structure instead of the former top-down zones and regions.

This latter idea was controversial to many long-term members at the 1999 meeting and debate raged. Though most sided with the study, notable holdouts

included Shamma and East Zone Advisor Naeem Muhammad, maybe the only two officially recognized MYNA advisors at the time. So Mir and Mustafa revised their proposal and re-presented their findings at the 2000 Convention.

ONE-MAN SHOWS

Another possible factor in MYNA's decline was the allegedly more individualistic leadership styles of latter presidents Salman (1994), Adnan Mir (1995), Khurram Siddiqui (1996-97), and Chowdry (1998), nowhere more prevalent, say former advisors, than in Siddiqui's term.

During the still-active years of Salman and Adnan Mir, it had become harder to find willing position holders, with more handholding from advisors. Mir himself had been very reluctant to take the job. The last strong MYNA president, newcomer Siddiqui reached out to tradition-

ONLINE UMMMAH

The Internet offers new roads to ummatic unity and cohesion, and the youth are yapping it up. BY FOUZIAH HAQ

Many times, today, it is hard to imagine a Muslim community where factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic status and age do not play a big role in first impressions. A community where bonds are made through mutual appreciation and understanding. A community where opinions are expressed and questioned within a non-threatening environment and met with amusement instead of ridicule. Is it even possible for such an ummah to exist in our global, divergent society?

Welcome to the Internet ummah, powered by the Muslim youth.

While the Internet as a whole is still admittedly far from a full representation of an ideal society, today more and more Muslim youth are turning to this vast electronic communications network to reach out and find each other. Whether as a source for advice, Islamic knowledge, or just a place to have engaging discussions, Islam-related message boards are quickly gaining popularity amongst Muslim youth.

National and community organizations are taking note. The Muslim Students Association of the US and Canada (MSA), the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), and the Islamic Association of Long Island (IALI) all have online message boards geared to Muslim youth available on their websites. General Islamic forums, such as those provided by Islamicity.com and IslamOnline.net, though not specifically geared to youth, have strong youth followings. In a recent poll on one such general Islamic discussion site, approximately 90 percent of respondents were under the age of 24. Some Muslim entrepreneurs are, also, aware of this younger demographic.

ENTER ISLAMICA. One of the companies that has been most successful in its attempts to create a unified "internet ummah" has been the Chicago, IL-based Islamica. Their website, Islamicaweb.com, offers one of the most popular Muslim forums currently online, in addition to other youth-oriented services including a humorous Islamic clothing line, funny electronic Eid cards, and a satirical mock news publication, "Islamic News," written in the style of the now famous

mainstream "faux" newspaper, "The Onion."

"Of the users that have provided their birth date information to us, approximately 34 percent overall are under the age of 24," reports Azher Ahmed, one of Islamica's founders. "I suspect that the actual number is probably closer to the 40-60 percent range."

Overall Islamica currently has 2,742 members from nearly 100 countries and over 10,000 discussion threads. Ahmed attributes Islamicaweb's success to its atypical censorship-free environment.

"Our goal was to provide a forum for Muslims to relax and have some lighthearted conversation in a friendly atmosphere. Islamica was founded as a platform to enable Muslims to come to together and 'enjoin the good', which is an often neglected principle since so many focus on the 'forbidding the evil' aspect alone," Ahmed notes that the Islamica staff monitor the message boards and adjust accordingly.

"The influx of 16-and-under members has also warranted the creation of our 'Petting Zoo' where many younger members discuss youth life in school such as homework, adjusting to public schools, prom, etc. and home issues such as 'My parents just don't understand' topics."

Reflecting the diversity of Islamica's membership is the diversity of discussions on the boards. As Ahmed points out, "The open nature of our forums allows people of Sufi-oriented beliefs to interact with others of Salafi-oriented beliefs and while there are certainly fireworks that sometimes happen, I think in the end there's more respect, understanding and tolerance for the differences of opinion." Members seem to agree. Abdul Hameed Abdul-Majeed, 19, of Bloomington, IL, an active member of Islamica's message forum for about 5 years, feels Islamica "brings a lot of the youth together. In a way it's bringing all faces and culture of Islam together for just a discussion. Whereas, our parents probably had nothing like this and might have not even dealt with other perspectives and cultures in discussion other than their own."

Yasir Billoo of Pembroke, FL shares similar sentiments; "I've always said that forums like Islamica are

microcosms of the Muslim world as a whole. The bigger and more popular the forum is, the better the indication is of what Muslims are thinking—reactions to certain issues and apathy for others are eerily parallel."

Nura Sedique, 18, of Toledo, OH, believes message boards are especially beneficial to Muslims in regions lacking strong Muslim communities; "Message boards really help unify the ummah and in places where there are not a lot of Muslim youth, by going online and talking to youth in other places, you feel comforted

and more normal in your own Muslim identity. This may help strengthen a Muslim's iman and prevent them from going astray in a means that the previous generation did not have. Prophet Muhammad (salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said to keep yourself in the best of company, and Islamica provides a means to do so."

Message boards, also, have their negative aspects. Abdul Majeed reminds members to be cautious when receiving Islamic information online; "Most people posting on there are just average people. You don't know what's right or wrong until you do your own research."

"It is very easy to get addicted," adds Sedique, who recommends monitoring one's use of message boards. "It is something that can take away from other activities, homework and such. It should really be used in moderation."

Though many topic threads show the positive diversity of the board, differing opinions, also, many times lead to frustration and arguments on some issues. Despite this, Ahmed says the need for administrators to moderate the boards has been minimal. "Our administration is fairly hands off, and the only things we actively look for are violations of our terms of service, vulgarities and personal attacks which, *alhamdulillah*, hasn't been a huge problem thus far."

BRANCHING OUT. Islamica has continued to gain popularity, not only online, but also, as a company with some mainstream success. With its multimedia approach, the company has featured a popular booth at each year's ISNA Annual Convention, where they sell their clothing line and distribute "Islamica News." It has produced short skits for a recent Islamic Entertainment Event in Dallas, TX, and has been featured in an "MSNBC News" segment about up-and-coming companies catering to the Muslim American niche market.

"Personally, I've always thought of Islamica as being that weird, funny uncle that everyone has in their family," says Ahmed. "The one who manages to make everyone laugh no matter how bad a situation may be."

As serious as some of the websites' discussions may get, says Ahmed, it has been humor, creativity, and a desire to serve as an outlet for escapist thought, that have helped make their uniquely diverse community such a welcoming one. ■



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MUSLIM YOUTH

ally unexposed areas. This worked for his first term, but after that he began avoiding established MYNA centers of activity and MYNA National advisors, saying, according to former advisers, that they were too caught up in old school ISNA/MYNA movement politics at the expense of youth work.

After a noble yet only partially successful effort to reestablish direct cooperation between ISNA and MYNA National, free of advisory intermediaries, Siddiqui eventually ended up trying to fix the organization's problems on his own terms and holding onto his job for an extra year to try and do it. ISNA tried to help through its ISNA Summer

(New Jersey) argued for zonal independence, claiming that MYNA National and ISNA had too much bureaucracy and too little energy. They pushed for more outreach and bigger East Zone events to serve as an example for the rest of the organization. To their credit, it worked.

The Zone ran like a separate entity, with its own offices, an independent budget upwards of \$30,000, magazines, newsletters, and the majority of zonal/regional MYNA events. The biggest was the Thanksgiving Day Weekend East Zone Conference. In 1994, while the Summer Continental drew 900 youth to Chicago, the East

When the last FYLTP was held in 1998, it left the Summer Conference alongside the ISNA Convention as the only MYNA continental conference. As training programs and new attendees did not materialize, new positions went empty.

MYNA alumni Naeem Muhammad reluctantly took Kazmi's place as the advisory population itself went through unsuccessful transitions. Soon, Shamma and Muhammad were the advisory's only voices left, and they were less forceful than their predecessors. By Aug. 1999, the East Zone began to fade away. Today, while recognized as one of its greatest leaders, Kazmi admits that MYNA and the East Zone structure had been too weak to

From 1997-99, MYNA East Zone Representative Shazia Ahmed and East Zone Region 5 Treasurer Hanaa Unus were invited to the 1999 "Reinventing MYNA" meeting. The most qualified of the last few MYNA officers, Shamma and Muhammad informed them that one of them would be the next MYNA President. When front-runner Ahmed declined the job, Unus became the twelfth and last MYNA National chairperson. Today, five years older and in college, she still holds the post.

Ahmed returned to revitalizing the dwindling East Zone, organized a scaled-down East Zone Conference in 1999, finished her term, and moved on to college. Her successor, Hina Farooqi, worked with

In Aug. 2000, at the 2000 ISNA Convention meeting to discuss the second draft of "Reinventing MYNA," Jawaad Abdul-Rahman joined Mir and Mustafa as a co-author. This time, the proposal called for re-creating MYS and a smaller-scale, more localized MYNA youth structure with a minimum of national activities. After more heated debate and another vote of approval from the majority, Shamma remained unconvinced.

For the next 2 years, the proposal was forgotten. Shamma lobbied the ISNA leadership to revive the youth group, and MYNA lay dormant. He, Unus, and Muhammad would stay in their positions as the last ISNA-acknowledged MYNA offi-

AS NATIONAL ADVISORY CHAIR TO FATIMA SALMAN, KAZMI APPLIED EAST ZONE THINKING TO MYNA NATIONAL ACTIVITIES. AS A RESULT, THEY CANCELLED THE WINTER CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE TO ALLOW MORE SIMULTANEOUS LOCALIZED CONFERENCES.

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RISE MIGHTY EAST ZONE

The East Zone's overwhelming success and the natural ascension of its leading graduates into advisory positions may have accelerated these developments. In the 1990s, MYNA's advisors were changing from connected ISNA leaders, like Zwink and Elkadi, to MYNA graduates like Barzinji, Kazmi, and Jawaad Abdul-Rahman of the Central Zone. The shift was solidified in 1994, when outspoken ex-president and East Zone Advisor Kazmi also served as National Advisory chair.

East Zone Advisers Kazmi, Barzinji, and their predecessor Baha Ahmed

which only saw a few MYNA activities a year, such as a single small camp or conference.

It was hoped that the East Zone style of bigger, more regional/less national activism would be contagious, and for a while the East and Central Zones had enough activities to justify the new structure. However, only the East Zone ever really filled all of it. The move to cancel the Winter Conference was also controversial and upset original MYNA advisors like Zwink, who still points to it as one of the reasons for the youth group's decline. Like many, Kazmi moved on from his advisory role by 1997 to focus on family and work.

pump lifeblood into the local units.

While MYNA may have failed as an organization, though, he says, as an idea it successfully revolutionized second-generation Muslim American thought and involvement in their communities.

the last East Zone regional officers and Advisor Muhammad to organize another East Zone Conference. Scheduled for Thanksgiving Weekend 2001, it was cancelled after 9/11. This quietly killed the last and mightiest of MYNA's zones.

cers, until, in 2002, a new benefactor would appear for MYNA amidst the ISNA leaders, and give one last shot...at reinventing MYNA. ■

Fawad Siddiqui is assistant editor of Islamic Horizons magazine

Have You Received a Marriage Proposal Lately?

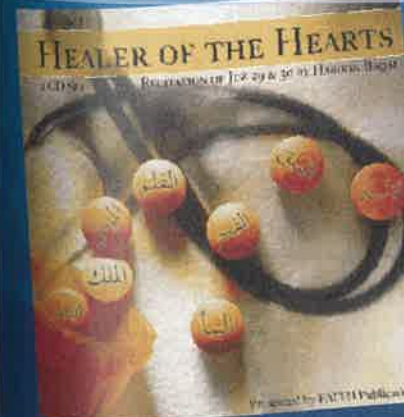
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MUSLIM YOUTH

ally unexposed areas. This worked for his first term, but after that he began avoiding established MYNA centers of activity and MYNA National advisors, saying, according to former advisers, that they were too caught up in old school ISNA/MYNA movement politics at the expense of youth work.

After a noble yet only partially successful effort to reestablish direct cooperation between ISNA and MYNA National, free of advisory intermediaries, Siddiqui eventually ended up trying to fix the organization's problems on his own terms and holding onto his job for an extra year to try and do it. ISNA tried to help through its ISNA Summer

(New Jersey) argued for zonal independence, claiming that MYNA bureaucracy and too little energy. They pushed for more outreach and bigger East Zone events to serve as an example for the rest of the organization. To their credit, it worked.

The Zone ran like a separate entity, with its own offices, an independent budget upwards of \$30,000, magazines, newsletters, and the majority of zonal/regional MYNA events. The biggest was the Thanksgiving Day Weekend East Zone Conference. In 1994, while the Summer Continental drew 900 youth to Chicago, the East

AS NATIONAL ADVISORY CHAIR TO FATIMA SALMAN, KAZMI APPLIED EAST ZONE THINKING TO MYNA NATIONAL ACTIVITIES. AS A RESULT, THEY CANCELLED THE WINTER CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE TO ALLOW MORE SIMULTANEOUS LOCALIZED CONFERENCES.

Internship Program, staffed MYNA Youth at ISNA Headquarters through the summers of 1994-97. Finally, busy as a freshman at Michigan State University, Siddiqui handed the presidency over to Chowdry (MYNA Toronto).

Another outsider from older MYNA National circles, Chowdry focused on activities within Toronto, representing MYNA on the ISNA Majlis and at the national convention, whose MYNA program continues to function under an ad hoc committee system established for it in the mid-1990s.

With no real training mechanism or activist network to help MYNA officers play a substantial role in national Muslim community work, Shamma became the effective head of many of MYNA's functions. Shamma and Chowdry focused on reorganizing MYNA, and the most prominent feature of her term was the DC executive committee meeting that sanctioned "Reinventing MYNA."

RISE AND FALL OF THE MIGHTY EAST ZONE

The East Zone's overwhelming success and the natural ascension of its leading graduates into advisory positions may have accelerated these developments. In the 1990s, MYNA's advisors were changing from connected ISNA leaders, like Zwick and Elkadi, to MYNA graduates like Barzini, Kazmi, and Jawaad Abdul-Rahman of the Central Zone. The shift was solidified in 1994, when outspoken ex-president and East Zone Advisor Kazmi also served as National Advisory chair.

East Zone Advisors Kazmi, Barzini, and their predecessor Baha Ahmed

Zone Conference drew 700 to Hagerstown, MD (minus the crutch of joint programs).

East Zone was where it was at, and to its leaders, bigger, bolder grassroots events were what youth work was all about. As National Advisory Chair to Fatima Salman, Kazmi applied East Zone thinking to MYNA National activities. As a result, they cancelled the Winter Continental Conference to allow more simultaneous localized conferences, such as FYLTs, and to expand the leadership pool. They also created extra zonal and regional secretary and treasurer positions to foster more local organization.

"We tried to make it real and give it some possibility of execution. We said, 'OK, now, let's cut it down into bite-sized regions,'" says Kazmi. From the start, it was understood that the MYNA structure featured stronger zones, such as the East, and those requiring constant "outreach," like the Western US and Canadian zones, which only saw a few MYNA activities a year, such as a single small camp or conference.

It was hoped that the East Zone style of bigger, more regional/less national activism would be contagious, and for a while the East and Central Zones had enough activities to justify the new structure. However, only the East Zone ever really filled all of it. The move to cancel the Winter Conference was also controversial and upset original MYNA advisors like Zwick, who still points to it as one of the reasons for the youth group's decline. Like many, Kazmi moved on from his advisory role by 1997 to focus on family and work.

When the last FYLTP was held in 1998, it left the Summer Conference alongside the ISNA Convention as the only MYNA continental conference. As training programs and new attendees did not materialize, new positions went empty.

MYNA alumni Naeem Muhammad reluctantly took Kazmi's place as the advisory population itself went through unsuccessful transitions. Soon, Shamma and Muhammad were the advisory's only voices left, and they were less forceful than their predecessors. By Aug. 1999, the East Zone began to fade away. Today, while recognized as one of its greatest leaders, Kazmi admits that MYNA and the East Zone structure had been too weak to

From 1997-99, MYNA East Zone Representative Shazia Ahmed and East Zone Region 5 Treasurer Hanaa Unus were invited to the 1999 "Reinventing MYNA" meeting. The most qualified of the last few MYNA officers, Shamma and Muhammad informed them that one of them would be the next MYNA President. When front-runner Ahmed declined the job, Unus became the twelfth and last MYNA National chairperson. Today, five years older and in college, she still holds the post.

Ahmed returned to revitalizing the dwindling East Zone, organized a scaled-down East Zone Conference in 1999, finished her term, and moved on to college. Her successor, Hina Farooqi, worked with

In Aug. 2000, at the 2000 ISNA Convention meeting to discuss the second draft of "Reinventing MYNA," Jawaad Abdul-Rahman joined Mir and Mustafa as a co-author. This time, the proposal called for re-creating MYS and a smaller-scale, more localized MYNA youth structure with a minimum of national activities. After more heated debate and another vote of approval from the majority, Shamma remained unconvinced.

For the next 2 years, the proposal was forgotten, Shamma lobbied the ISNA leadership to revive the youth group, and MYNA lay dormant. He, Unus, and Muhammad would stay in their positions as the last ISNA-acknowledged MYNA offi-

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Fawad Siddiqui is assistant editor of Islamic Horizons magazine

ISNA is an association of Muslim religious communities, and one that provides a common platform for supporting Muslim communities and outreach programs.



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UNIVERSAL DIALOGUE

Muslim American leaders offer their perspective to world leaders. BY ABU AMAL HADHRAMI

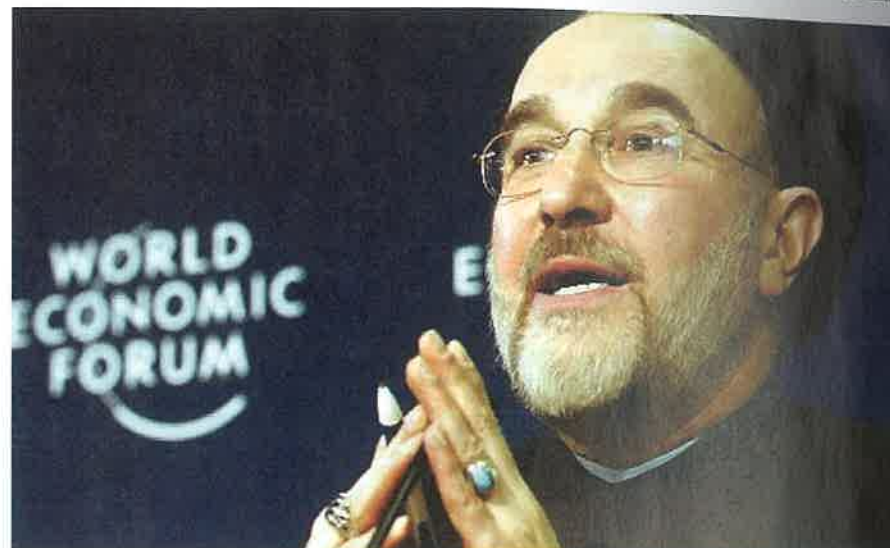
Attorney General John Ashcroft, who spoke, at the 36th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland (Jan. 21-25), about the culture of dialogue and participation that exists in U.S., received a quick response. Former ISNA President Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, a participant in the Forum, who met Ashcroft after his speech, emphasized the need for dialogue with the Muslim American community as well. Many Muslims, Dr. Siddiqi reminded, feel that they are not included in the dialogue. Ashcroft took note of this and promised that he would follow up on this point.

The Forum brought together over 2,000 business executives of major international companies, more than 35 heads of states, many ministers and foreign ministers, presidents of major universities, heads of media organizations, academic scholars and religious leaders.

The theme of the conference was "Partnering for Security and Prosperity." In five days, 255 panels and discussion groups met to discuss diverse issues affecting global economy, safety, development, health, science, technology, business, finance and environment.

Several Muslim leaders addressed the Forum. President Seyed Mohammad Khataami of Iran delivered a profound talk on "Dialogue and Building Trustful Relations." President General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan participated in a panel discussion on "Promoting Inter-civilizational Dialogue and Action" and gave a main address on the situation in Pakistan. He, also, invited some participants for breakfast and an open dialogue with him. King Abdullah II of Jordan gave a brief talk on challenges facing the world.

During the conference, there was, also, a two-day consultation among members of the multi-faith Council of 100. This Council, formed last year to promote dialogue, better understanding and relations between the West and the Islamic world, was formally launched this year. This Council consists of religious, political, business, media and academic scholars from around the globe. The Council's projects include the establishment of an exchange



The conference formally launched the multi-faith Council of 100, formed to promote dialogue between the West and the Islamic world.

program for leaders and research scholars between the West and the Islamic world. It, also, aims to promote cultural exhibits, television programs and sports personalities to emphasize common values and good will between the West and Islamic world. The main idea is to build bridges of understanding; remove hate and prejudices; and establish an environment of justice, security and peace. Dr. Siddiqi, on his second visit to Davos as the guest of the World Economic Forum, was invited to join the Council of 100, along with some other Muslim American scholars.

Besides participating in several panels on Islamic and ethical issues, Dr. Siddiqi met with many leaders to discuss Islamic issues, as well as issues concerning Muslims in America.

In a panel on "Conflict of Cultures," the Muslim delegates were able to engage the French representative in a discussion on the issue of the hijab ban in French schools. Many European Christian leaders, also, criticized the French position on this issue. The Mufti

of Bosnia, Shaykh Mustafa Ceric, spoke very well when he said, "In Bosnia we were very much assimilated with the rest of the population in our dress code and behavior, but we were not trusted." The mufti said that Serbs never trusted the Muslims, and when they somehow found out that they were Muslims, they accused them of hiding their identity. He asked, "In France our women want to wear hijab in public, and they are accused of conspiracy against the state by revealing their identity. I do not know, Gentlemen, how we Muslims should please you in the West?"

President Musharraf invited Dr. Siddiqi for a breakfast meeting and had a brief dis-

cussion with him on his favorite expression, "enlightened moderation." Dr. Siddiqi suggested that it should not be just a slogan, but there should be efforts to develop this idea into a proper program, under the authentic sources of Islam. It should be developed to bring educational, legal, social, and political reforms in Pakistan. Musharraf, then, invited him to come to Pakistan and "discuss it there."

Dr. Siddiqi, also, met with Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada. He thanked him for his inclusive policies toward all people, including Muslims, and emphasized the importance of dialogue between Islam and the West.

The former ISNA president noted that were scores of other religious, political, business and media leaders whom they met on a daily basis and with whom they developed good contacts and relations. Dr. Siddiqi noted, "These international forums are very important. We need to meet people at all levels and build relations to promote goodwill, justice, and peace in the world." ■

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COMMUNITY SELF HELP

West Coast Muslims develop community-based solution to family issues. **BY RESHMA YUNUS**

The disturbing call from a Muslim woman experiencing deep emotional trauma is still fresh in the memory of ISNA West Zone Administrator Manzoor Ghori. The caller was pregnant, separated from her husband, and her marriage was failing. Her family was far away, and she had few friends. She had become so depressed that she was considering suicide; she felt she had nowhere to turn. Fortunately, she found ISNA West Zone's number and called for help. Ghori was relieved that he was able to advise her and provide referrals, so that she could begin to put her life back together.

Incidents such as this one alerted the Muslim community to the need for internal counseling and other social services. Ghori rallied area community leaders to join ISNA West Zone head Dr. Mohammad Rajabally in a brainstorming session on how best to deal with such issues. This discussion led to the first ISNA West Zone Community Development Conference on Oct. 26, 2002, where the concept for NISA (North American Islamic Shelter for the Abused) was launched. A professionally diverse group of volunteers, including the writer, a dentist, a CPA, a software engineer, and a financial analyst, met at the ISNA West Zone offices to transform the concept into reality.

The group decided that NISA should focus on the more encompassing mission of promoting domestic harmony, rather than simply dealing with domestic violence. NISA, the group believed, should focus on prevention and education to prevent the cycle of violence. Moreover, the group wanted NISA to be based on an Islamic perspective of domestic harmony. Indeed, the group believed that the Islamic perspective is what would set them apart from all other domestic violence prevention organizations in Northern California. NISA's guiding principles were to be founded in the spirit of Islam, and its view of the family in the context of love and fear of Allah (taqwa), human dignity, and compassion. NISA's philosophy is to support family cohesion and prevent family breakdown to

the utmost extent. Most existing institutions do not incorporate such Islamic principles. For example, existing shelters for women suffering from DV lack facilities that accommodate Islamic adaab (manners and morals) and dietary restrictions.

NISA achieved its first significant milestone on April 18th, 2003 when it launched a help line (1-888 ASK NISA) at a communi-

NISA'S PHILOSOPHY IS TO SUPPORT FAMILY COHESION AND PREVENT FAMILY BREAKDOWN TO THE UTMOST EXTENT.

ty dinner, attended by approximately 400 people, entitled "The Path to a Happy Family Life." The event featured well-known speakers, including former ISNA President Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, Yusuf Islahi, Sheikh Suhaib Webb, Ameena Jandali, and Dr. Rajabally. The speakers discussed issues related to domestic harmony, including "marriage tune-ups", premarital counseling, and accepting that domestic violence does occur within the community.

At this conference, NISA, also, distributed a survey to ascertain the frequency of domestic disharmony issues, as there were no statistics available that related specifically to Muslim communities, especially in the Northern California geographic region. NISA surveyed the dinner participants, as well as members of local masjid. The responses clearly indicated a strong need for domestic violence outreach and education and psychological counseling in the Muslim community. Of the 113 responses received, 40 percent reported that they knew someone in the Muslim community that was suffering from emotional or psychiatric problems. However, only 13 percent reported that the person suffering from emotional or psychiatric problems was actually receiving help or therapy. Based on the results of the questionnaire, where 60 percent stated that they would seek help for these issues from a Muslim organization, NISA anticipated a large volume of calls. However at first no calls

came, except for some from individuals who were curious to know more about the organization. One of the first clients NISA helped was already in another shelter and needed language and job placement assistance.

Now, NISA advocates receive and respond to, on average, 10 to 20 calls per month. This translates into many more work hours, as most clients require extensive advocacy, help with referrals, translation/interpretation, and other assistance and support. It is genuinely satisfying to provide assistance to people who have nowhere else to turn and are at the brink of resignation. Yet, it is a long journey for them; it is, also, a long journey for NISA volunteers, who must learn how to provide assistance and work in harmony with existing social service organizations.

NISA recently sponsored another community forum, entitled "The Importance of Women's Participation in Community", with Imam Webb and ISNA Vice President Dr. Ingrid Matson. Both speakers touched upon important aspects of women's contributions to society and the permissibility for women

and men to work together, within prescribed boundaries, at all levels, including boards of masjid. NISA's hope was that through events such as these, Muslim community members would learn the correct interpretation regarding the roles of men and women, and that this would lead to greater harmony and fewer power struggles that form the core of the vicious cycle of domestic violence.

NISA's future plan and next major milestone is to start a shelter of their own, Insha'Allah. NISA, also, plans to start men's groups, as soon as they find a qualified volunteer. Meanwhile, NISA is working with local imams, including Imam Tahir of the South Bay Islamic Association, to deliver khutbas on the guidance that the Qur'an and Sunnah provide about developing and maintaining a loving and harmonious relationship in the core unit of society, the family.

In mid-April 2003, NISA plans to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the help-line. The April event will include various workshops, such as conflict resolution, anger management and gaining access to existing services. NISA plans to partner with other local organizations and, in doing so, hopes to not just provide outreach to the Muslim community, but also to provide an opportunity for the community at large to interact with and become familiar with the Muslim community. ■

For further information, call 1-888-ASK-NISA or visit the NISA website at www.ISNA.net/NISA.

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SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH CAMP

A new generation of Muslim students commit to rejuvenating the movement. BY MARYAM PATEL

The South African Muslim Students Association (MSA), formed some 30 years ago, held its first national camp in Hazelmere, KwaZulu Natal, Jan. 16-18, 2004. The camp themed "Social Activism" attracted over 50 participants, representing 14 MSA chapters from 5 regions.

Sessions included challenges facing the MSA and solutions on how to implement them; Muslim involvement on campus; da'wah on campus; how to motivate high school students to get involved in MSA, as well as how to maintain and sustain this interest; the need for a good networking structure; and reports from university and regional chapters. The MSA is planning to establish high school chapters for the youth.

MSA attendees agreed to develop an MSA National structure in South Africa, once the regional chapters stabilize and take roots. In order to strengthen the foundations, networking and constitutional committees have been setup, with representatives from each region. It was resolved that before a national MSA can be established, a needs analysis should be completed in order to guide the national structure. Six projects have been short listed as MSA national initiatives: taking a stand on the 10 year anniversary for democracy in South Africa and possibly linking up with the national campaign; an AIDS Awareness Program; Fast-a-thon; Lecture Tours; a national magazine; and a website. In the words of Luqman Saloojee of MSA, Potch, "...no one can tell us

how this is going to end, only how it is going to begin."

MSA-SA adopted the idea of having a session on "Demystifying the Myth" from the 40th MSA of US & Canada Conference held in Chicago last year. This was an informal session where they discussed guidelines for gender interaction and the need for brothers and sisters to work together as stipulated by Prophet Muhammad (salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam). This was followed by a session in which participants spoke about involvement with MSA, as well as issues that touched their hearts. MSA alumni shared their experiences with the new generation of MSA. The personal stories brought tears to some and moved almost everyone present. It was inspirational and motivating, as well as spiritually uplifting.

The closing prayers echoed the Zulu phrase *ubuntu*, which means, "we are who we are because of others."

The camp was a critical moment for student organizations in South Africa, and participants had to think about the future; they had to come to grips with the fact that there is a lot to be done and that the challenges are many. The road to success is not going to be smooth, but with pure intentions and trust in Allah, they will succeed. ■

Maryam Patel, MSA-KZN



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CONVENTION FOCUSES
ON RETURN TO ISLAM'S
DEMOCRATIC VALUES.

BY ABU ALI BAFAQUIH

The lack of freedom and employment for the majority in some Muslim countries has hindered the development of democracy in Islam, said Radwan Masmoudi, president of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID). He was addressing his words to participants in the 4-day annual Muslim American Society (MAS) and Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) convention, held in Chicago, IL, Dec. 25-28, 2003.

The convention, attended by several thousand Muslim Americans, focused on "Muslims: Citizens of the West: Rights, Duties, and Prospects."

Masmoudi, challenging the notion held in some Muslim quarters that Islam and democracy are incompatible, asserted, "Democracy is required in Islam," and that, at present, it is the only way to implement *shura* (political consultation). According to him, criticizing the government or advocating political change in many Muslim countries leads to imprisonment or death for individuals and even their families.

"You have no excuse!" for not actively calling on dictatorial regimes located overseas to reform or for not advocating for civil rights in the U.S., where one's life is not at risk for holding an unpopular opinion, Masmoudi concluded. He challenged Muslim Americans to break out of their insular communities.

The speakers emphasized political participation and action, and participants were briefed on Islamic political history

and the present targeting of their community's leaders by U.S. law enforcement.

Mustapha Abu Sway, director of the Islamic Research Center at al-Quds University in Jerusalem, Palestine, offered one reason for the general downfall of Muslim civilization: The period of ignorance (*jahiliya*) present in pre-Islamic Arabia continues to exist, as Muslims continually revive it. Addressing the concept of *shura* and democracy, and the gradual loss of Islamic democracy, he stressed that after the demise of Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), the Muslim community's political head was selected through a deliberative process and elected by community representatives who

were present for the meeting. In addition, the community wishes were ascertained. This process, which continued through the elections of the first four caliphs, was interrupted by both internal and external forces: the establishment of dynastic sultanates featuring hereditary rule; the Mongol invasions that sacked Baghdad, the cultural center of Islam at the time; the annihilation of al-Andalus via the Spanish *Reconquista*; and European colonialism.

Abdulazim Siddiqui, an Islamic American University professor, concurred on the reestablishment of *jahiliya*, saying, "The pre-Islamic condition of the third Islamic century has come back again,

where the interest of the tribe over all other matters, is happening again."

Abu Sway said that Muslims reacted in

social/political map of European colonizers," who divided Muslims along geographical and racial boundaries, and lat-

Because Muslim Americans are politically weak, opportunistic politicians can advocate their community's repression for election purposes without fear of political cost.

two ways to the gradual destruction of *shura*: trying to reinvent the process of modernity by creating an indigenous "Enlightenment" or, impressed by the colonial powers' military might, trying to emulate the West. In the end, both avenues did not work. The failure to maintain one Ummah (community of Muslims) and "the failure to get out of the

er on the basis of have and have-nots, produced a "lack of [a] common shared vision." In Siddiqui's words, such things have contributed to the dilemma of Muslim political impotency.

The event included panel discussions and training seminars that focused on issues related to Islamic education in Muslim schools, religious discussions, media

relations, and participation in the American political system.

Discussions were initiated with general themes addressing broad subjects, and one panel analyzed the U.S. government, and especially the Bush administration's targeting of the Muslim American leadership.

"The greatest purveyor of the targeting of my rights is my own government," proclaimed the Muslim American Society's Freedom Foundation Executive Director Mahdi Bray. He said that because Muslim Americans are politically weak, opportunistic politicians can advocate for their repression for election purposes without fear of political cost.

Civil rights and immigration lawyer Ashraf Nubani said that present attacks on the Muslim American community are tolerated because the administration is couching its justification in the name of "keeping Americans safe." He added that there "is not going to be any outcry, no political fallout, if you tell the American public you are keeping them safe."

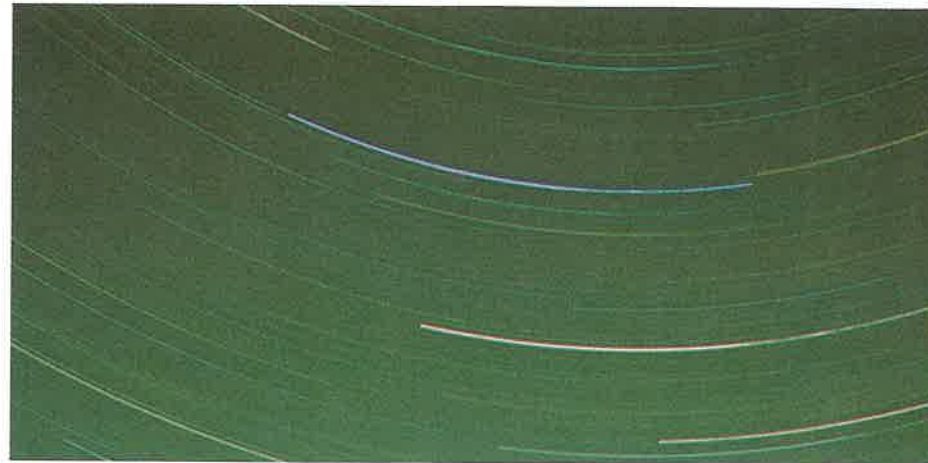
Nubani noted that by allowing federal law enforcement agencies to wantonly

harass Muslim Americans, the Bush administration has "alienated the very community they needed to help them in the fight against terrorism."

Some politicians who are campaigning "on the backs of American Muslims by spreading fear, can use them as a political tool," for there is "no political price to pay for abusing us," he said. ■

Muslim Kinship Warms Chicago





Take a moment to assess your level of certainty in Islam. Is your heart full of love for Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) and Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)? Do you experience Allah in your daily life, influencing everything around you, and showering you with His mercy? Do you worship Allah as if you see Him? Do you regard all of your surroundings, from the trees to the air to your own heartbeat, as testifying to His existence?

In this age of doubt, when media outlets have become saturated with attacks on Islam, the Prophet, and the Qur'an, many of us find it hard to achieve the highest levels of certainty. Instead, we let our convictions languish as mere propositions, and so they do not actively inform our lives. We doubt via our actions, even when assenting to the *shahadah* in our *salaat*. Unshakable *yaqeen* in Allah, His Messenger, the Qur'an, and the Hereafter must be the basis of our Islam. If we have it, we will always want to act in a manner pleasing to Allah. Given this, what exactly is *yaqeen*, its nature, its benefits, and its methods of cultivation?

Many of us are like the person in Imam al-Ghazali's beautiful parable: If you were sitting in a room and a young child shouted: "Watch out, there's a spider on your neck!" what would you do? Most of us would jump up, fumble with our shirts, and try to brush off the spider. Yet simply because we cannot see Allah, we ignore His call, despite the fact that His message is infinitely more serious.

LIFE'S TWO PATHS. In our short time allotted on Earth, we must strive to become conscious of Allah, even though He remains unseen. If we do not do this, we will be shocked in the Hereafter. Our earthly journey to *yaqeen* takes us down two parallel and intertwining paths: "On Earth are signs for those of assured faith, as also in your own selves. Will you not then see?" (51:20-21). The first is the intellectual path; the second is the spiritual path. We will consider each in turn.

FOOD FOR THE SPIRIT

How Certain Are You?

The intellectual path is like a series of interconnected prayer beads. The first bead is certainty in Allah. In Surah Ibrahim, Allah provides a beautiful debate between the Prophets and the unbelievers. The Prophets ask: "Is there a doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and Earth?" (14:10). This verse urges us to examine creation itself and to regard it as proof of God's existence. By contemplating creation, we can get to know Him and increase our certainty in Him. We can see the human body's remarkable design, from its DNA to its veins, the beauty of the evening sky, and the interconnectedness of the living environment. Eventually, we will recognize that nothing in the universe moves without His knowledge, and that He is the Ultimate Controller

Imam Magid bin Muhammad Hagmagid, a Sudanese-born Muslim American, is the son of a leading Islamic scholar, who was an Al-Azhar graduate and the Mufti of Sudan. Imam Magid studied at the hand of his father and other notable scholars, gaining ijaza in several disciplines, including "Al-Muwatta", and "Ihya 'Ulum Ad-Deen" by Imam Al-Ghazali. He has been in the U.S. for over 13 years, and presently he is the imam and director of the All-Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) Center, Sterling, VA.

Sam Ross teaches high school physics and comparative religion in Fairfax County, VA.

and Knower of all things.

The second bead, following fast upon the first, is developing *yaqeen* in His book, for as Allah tells us, "this is the book without doubt" (2:2). Only Allah can claim to have written such a book, for all human efforts would necessarily fail. Indeed, He even challenged humanity to do so: "Do they say: 'He fabricated the [Message]?' Nay, they have no faith! Let them then produce a recital like unto it, if they speak the truth!" (52:33-34).

We must strive to expand this certainty to its utmost reaches - the knowledge and conviction that *every* word in His book was deliberately chosen by Him, is positioned in the best of all possible ways, and carries wisdom. When we do, our lives are transformed. We will know that everything we read is true. We will benefit directly from His message, knowing that it was sent so "that He may forgive your sins and give you respite for a term appointed" (14:10). Our reading will be suffused with sweetness, softness, and enthusiasm.

The third bead is developing *yaqeen* in the Hereafter. This is an essential theme of the Qur'an. When we realize the Day's imminence, we restore a missing dimension to our lives, one that makes us want to obey. Consider the example of a speeding motorist: Many people speed while driving because they doubt that the police will

catch them. If they knew that the police would catch them, they would obey the speed limit. But Allah is not so limited; He is *al-'Alim*, the All Knowing, and "not a word does humanity utter but there is a vigilant guardian" (50:18). When we come to truly believe that He sees all and will hold us accountable, we act in steadfast obedience.

FOLLOWING THE PROPHET. The spiritual path takes us in the footsteps of its greatest practitioner, Prophet Muhammad, an expert in the art of *dhikr* and *du'a*, the one who taught us to say "*la ilaha illa Allah*." If we do this regularly, we will succeed. A quick survey of the Hadith literature reveals that his prayers were suffused with *dhikr* in both *ruku'* and *sajdah*. We must strive to incorporate these into our lives. When we do, we will initiate a chain reaction: achieving discipline over our tongues so that it will utter only praises of Him. Our hearts will be swayed, and our devotion to Allah will increase.

The Prophet also surrounded himself with people who had strong faith in Allah and who recalled His name often. There is a deep wisdom in this, for we all are social beings who are unconsciously influenced by those around us. Consider the people around you. Do they remember Allah often? Do they have a salubrious effect on your *'ibadah*? When Imam Malik's heart grew hard, he would visit Muhammad ibn al-Munkader. Do you have an Ibn al-Munkader in your life?

In these difficult times, when so much doubt prevails and when people actively misrepresent Islam, we must strive to achieve the highest levels of *yaqeen*, for we carry the honorable and noble message sent by Allah for humanity. Despite all allegations to the contrary, it remains a message of peace and tolerance that contains the seeds for a just society, one in which all live in respect for one another. In the box below, you will find a place to commence your journey. Please feel free to cut them out and perform them wherever you are.

May Allah guide us and help us increase our level of *yaqeen*.

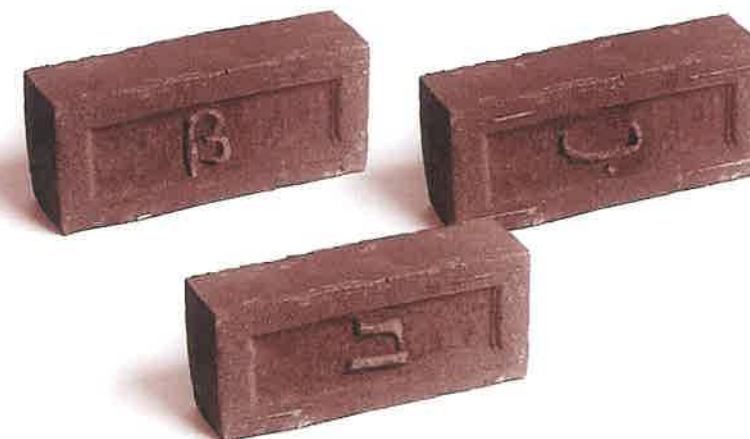
Exercises to Develop Your *yaqeen*:

- Contemplate verses 6:74-79 and look at your life's journey. In which areas do you have doubt or uncertainty? What causes them? Use Ibrahim's story as a model for your life.
- Remember the Hereafter and visit cemeteries.
- Perform *du'a* and *'istighfar* by seeking refuge in Allah; renouncing that which is causing doubt; saying "*Aamantu bi Allah wa Rasulih*" (I have believed in Allah and his Messenger); and reciting: "*Huwa al-Awwalu wa al-Aakhiru, wa adh-Dhaahiru wa al-Baatin, wa huwa bi kulli Shay'in 'Aleem* (He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden, and He knows all things" (57:3)).

We look forward to incorporating your feedback and questions into our future columns. Please send all emails to foodforthespirit@isna.net.

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Spotlight on Reform

Safi examines the profound sociopolitical changes taking place in Muslim societies and the forces driving them. He critically looks at the ideas and developmental strategies espoused by both the nationalist and Islamist movements, and attempts to capture the dynamic nature of contemporary Muslim society. While underscoring Islam's pivotal role in determining the direction of sociopolitical change, he stresses the need to pay more attention to the Islamic reformists' forward-looking agenda.

This alternative reading of Middle Eastern politics and political culture focuses on the dynamics of change and examines Islam's role in the emerging modern Middle East. Safi contends that by focusing on radical and traditionalist Islamic groups, Middle East specialists often overlook Islam's reformist and forward-looking manifestations, which, although marginalized, constitute the driving force behind the sociopolitical development of modern Muslim societies.

To capture the region's dynamics of progress, Safi examines the impact of the ideological struggle and intellectual debate between the forces of modernism and Islamic traditionalism on the transformation of mainstream society, and delineates the emerging sociopolitical outlooks and orientations locked in a fierce struggle for its heart and soul.

Giving insight into Middle Eastern political developments by focusing on secularism, democracy, and human rights, he stresses that these concepts can make sense only by relating them to historical experiences, moral variations, and entrenched worldviews. Given the marked difference in historical experiences between Western and Middle Eastern cultures, the same set of concepts invokes different meanings and reactions. The failure to recognize these historically bound cultural differences is at the root of the difficulties in explaining the region's culture and society.

Safi, after critically examining the current approach to studying the Middle East, attributes the lack of clarity in explaining its society and the failure to grasp its dynamics of social change to the static and ahistorical approach used by its researchers.

Although written for students and scholars, this book is equally accessible to readers generally acquainted with Middle Eastern issues and literature.

Witness to TERRORISM

Hanan Ashrawi and Peter Hansen, general commissioner of the UN Relief and Works Agency, introduce color photographs taken by Swedish journalist and photographer Grondahl that document the suffering of the Palestinian people forced to live in refugee camps after the theft of their land more than 50 years ago. The collection was originally displayed at the UN headquarters in New York and inaugurated by Secretary Kofi Annan.

All must view this painful document, because the theft was after all committed through a UN act.



In Hope and Despair: Life in the Palestinian Refugee Camps; Photographs by Mia Grondahl; 2003. Pp. 144. 130 color photographs. PB. \$34.50; The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo and New York.

Short Takes



Growing a Beard: In Light of the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Modern Science

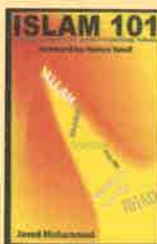
Gauhar Mushtaq
Ta-Ha Publishers,
London, UK; 2003.

Dr. Mushtaq offers a comprehensive account of the religious and scientific arguments in favor of growing a beard. This book, which is centered around the relevant Qur'anic verses and ahadith, is extremely well-written and researched. It comes at a time when the decision of letting the beard grow, or even keeping one's beard, has attained grave importance ... especially at a time when we hear rumored accounts of France trying to decide whether to ban beards, along with the hijab, as conspicuous proclamations of religious identity and therefore anti-secular.



Muslim Refugees in the United States: A guide for Service Providers
Patricia S. Maloof
& Fariyal Ross-Sheriff; 2003. Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC.

Drs. Maloof and Ross-Sheriff, pointing out that approximately 15% of all refugees entering the U.S. since 1988 have been Muslims, offer service providers an easy to understand guide to Muslim beliefs and practices and stress that they must seek the co-operation of Muslim community and national organizations.



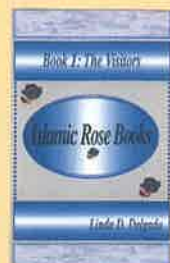
Islam 101
Javed Mohammed
Pyramid Connections,
Milpitas, CA.
2003, \$9.95
A simple, easy to understand guide for understanding Islam,

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf praises this book as "an excellent attempt at trying to bridge the widening gap between Muslims and others."



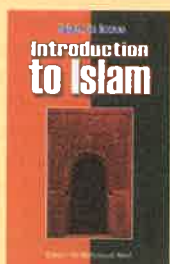
Behaving Properly Islamic Manners
Shaykh Abdul
Fattah Abu Ghudda
(trans.)
Awakening Books,
Milpitas, CA. 2001.

A useful guide of Islamic etiquette that offers dos and don'ts on all aspects of life and living.



Islamic Rose Books, 1-4
Linda D. Delgado
iUniverse, Inc., New
York. 2003. PB.
Delgado, a
retired police-
woman, offers a
unique intro-
duction to

Islam, Muslim life, and Islamic practices through her 4 Rose Books for children. Each book revolves around 9-year old Rose's first meeting with Muslim visitors from overseas. The books, designed as family entertainment, include recipes, poetry, interesting facts about places, and a glossary of Islamic terms. These books will be a welcome addition to school libraries.



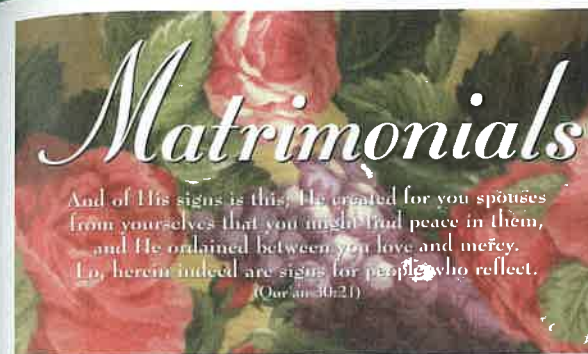
Islam in Focus: Introduction to Islam
Dr. Mahmood Akef,
ed. (trans.)
Safeer International
Printing, Cairo,
Egypt; 2003.

A brief, but comprehensive, guide to understanding Islam, its history, and essentials.



Man and the Universe: An Islamic Perspective
Mostafa
Al-Badawi
Wakeel Books,
Amman, Jordan.
2002, pp. \$14.95
Dr. Al-Badawi

presents the Islamic worldview, its timeless values, and its psychological insights into human nature. He then contrasts it with the Western worldview and suggests avenues of understanding.



SEEKING WIFE

B065 Mar/April 2004 * Sunni Syed Pakistani Muslim parents seek match for American born 26-year-old religious; 3rd year medical student son. He prefers a religious and Hijab-wearing wife. Please send photo and information to P.O. Box 205382, Sunset Sta., Brooklyn, NY 11220

B066 March/April 2004 * Good-looking Sunni Muslim 29, U.S. born MD, seeks well-educated professional cultured and sophisticated family-oriented girl from a respectable family. Resume and photo required. (NY)

B067 March/April 2004 * Seeking tall, fair, college-educated girl (or in college), age 22 to 25 years old, with good Islamic background for my son, age 29 years old, doing medical residency. (IL)

SEEKING HUSBAND

S061 March/April 2004 * Sunni Muslim Indian parents invite correspondence for their U.S. born and raised daughter, 25, medical student, from a medical doctor or professional, 26-28 years old. Please contact: 847-983-8358 (IL)

S0107 March/April 2004 * Sunni Muslim Indian parents invite correspondence for their U.S. born/raised daughter, 25, 1st year OB-GYN Resident, wears Hijab; from a medical family. (NJ)

S0139 March/April 2004 * Pakistani parents invite correspondence from a professional for their tall, slim and fair JD daughter working for a prestigious NY law firm. Please write to: ynighat@yahoo.com (NY)

S0141 Mar/April 2004 * Sunni Muslim Indian parents seeking prompt correspondence from 30-35 years old established professional for their beautiful, highly intelligent, 30 year old professional daughter. (GA)

S0206 Mar/April 2004 * Pakistani Sunni parents invite correspondence from U.S. born/raised professional gentleman, 27-29 years old, from NJ and surrounding states, for their medical-resident daughter. Contact mamirza2@comcast.net. (NJ)

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RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Manage the center in completion including day to day operations.
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5. Organizing counseling program for different youth issues
6. Streamline and coordinate all major events i.e. Trips, Volunteer activities, Community work, Sport events, Eid, annual dinners, etc.
7. Coordinating with the Mosque and Islamic Schools for activities
8. Enforcing policies and decisions of the board and the Executive committee
9. Human Resources management and development.
10. Responsible for maintaining the budget for the center.
11. Applying for grants for the center.
12. Report directly to the Executive committee of the Mosque Foundation.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. B.S. in Administration or Management
2. B.S. in Youth Services or Social Service
3. Experience in operations management.
4. Experience in non profit organizations
5. Experience in grants writing
6. Experience in youth issues including: identity, abuse, gangs, drugs, school, and gender relations.
7. Good communicating skills with youth.
8. Develop successful and attractive programs for the youth
9. Reasonable Islamic knowledge and good reputation.
10. Culturally sensitive.
11. Reliable, accountable, and self-motivated.
12. Motivating personality and leadership qualities.
13. Flexible in daily working hours.

Operations Manager of Mosque Foundation

Mosque Foundation of Chicago is seeking an Operations Manager.

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13. Manage the center in completion including day to day operations.
14. Responsible for all logistics of activities and functions that occur in the center.
15. Buildings/Site management.
16. Organize all files and computer systems for the center.
17. Streamline and coordinate all major events i.e. Eid, annual dinners, etc.
18. Handle daily requests and follow up and coordinate with executive committee decisions.
19. Enforcing policies and decisions of the board and the Executive committee
20. Human Resources management and development.
21. Responsible for maintaining the budget for the center.
22. Report directly to the Executive committee of the Mosque Foundation.

QUALIFICATIONS:

14. At least a B. S. in Administration or Management
15. 3 years experience in operations management.
16. Experience in non profit organizations
17. Reasonable Islamic knowledge and good reputation.
18. English and Arabic speaking.
19. Culturally sensitive.
20. Reliable, accountable, and self-motivated.
21. Motivating personality and leadership qualities.
22. Flexible in daily working hours.

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ISNA Commitment to a Mission



"The action most loved by Allah is the one done regularly."

The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) serves the diverse needs of Muslims in North America, and provides a unified platform of expression of Islam in all areas of life from da'wah to education to community development.

ISNA strives to serve Islam and Muslims today and laying foundations for the future in partnership with you. Prophet Muhammad (salla Allah 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "When a human being dies his deeds end except in 3 things: sadaqah jariyah (ever flowing charity), knowledge that will be benefited from, and a righteous child who prays for him/her."

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- ISNA is working with communities, helping raise funds for their activities and projects.
- ISNA Conventions are attended by over 35,000 people.
- ISNA's flagship bimonthly publication Islamic Horizons magazine goes to 60,000 homes, libraries, and institutions.
- ISNA is reaching out to all areas; da'wah in prisons and among Latino Americans; helping the development of Islamic schools; training of imams; and community development.

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(Please include a void check or a copy of your void check)

☐ Credit/Debit Card:

Name on Credit Card: _____ Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

☐ I hereby authorize ISNA to deduct the amount chosen above from my credit/debit card on the 5th of each month.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Occupation: _____ Spouse's Name: _____

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Fax: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Attn: Dr Kazi F. Hussain

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