



Muslims in North America

2011

EXCERPTS FROM "THE 500 MOST INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS IN THE WORLD"
2009 EDITION AND "MUSLIM HEROES" BLOG. THIS PACKET IS BY NO
MEANS A COMPLETE PORTRAYAL OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MUSLIMS
IN NORTH AMERICA, BUT IS INSTEAD A SAMPLING OF SOME OF THE
THINKERS, ARTISTS, ATHELETES AND ACTIVISTS WHO HAVE
CONTRIBUTED TOWARD ENHANCING OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE.

Topic IV

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Muslims in Politics

Keith Ellison

Keith Ellison has represented the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota in the U.S. House of Representatives since taking office on January 4, 2007. The Fifth Congressional District is the most vibrant and ethnically diverse district in Minnesota with a rich history and traditions. The Fifth District includes the City of Minneapolis and the surrounding suburbs.

Keith's philosophy is one of "generosity and inclusiveness." His roots as a community activist and his message of inclusivity through democratic participation resonate throughout the Fifth District. His priorities in Congress are: promoting peace, prosperity for working families, environmental sustainability, and civil and human rights.

Keith is a member of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (DFL). He previously served two terms representing Legislative District 58B in the Minnesota State House of Representatives, from 2003 to 2007.

Keith has authored legislation, now law, that protect consumers from the unfair lending practice known as "Universal Default" and gives protections to tenants facing eviction from homes they rent that are being foreclosed.

Keith was elected as co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus for the 112th Congress. Working together with other members of the Caucus, Keith helped shape historic Health Care Reform and Wall Street Reform, raise the federal minimum wage, start the process to end the War in Iraq, strengthen veterans' benefits, combat hate crimes, and create guarantees of pay equality for women.

Keith currently serves on the Financial Services Committee. The Financial Services Committee provides oversight for the nation's housing and financial services sector. He previously served on the House Judiciary Committee in the 110th Congress (2007-2008) and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in the 111th Congress (2009-2010).

Keith, now 47 years old, was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. He moved to Minnesota in 1987 to attend the University of Minnesota Law School, where he earned his law degree in 1990. Keith is the proud father of four children.

André Carson

Congressman André Carson is a 33-year-old native of Indianapolis, Indiana. Raised and mentored by his grandmother, Congresswoman Julia Carson, he served as a member of the Indianapolis City-

County Council before winning a Special Election on March 11, 2008 to become the Congressman for the 7th District of Indiana.

André was taught to value education. He is a graduate of Tech High School, where his passion for law enforcement first took hold. André went on to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Management from Concordia University-Wisconsin and a Masters in Business Management from Indiana Wesleyan University.

André's law enforcement background consists of nearly a full decade of public service. He has served as a Local Board Officer/Investigator for the Indiana State Excise Police for nine years, throughout Indiana. As our nation's growing concern for Homeland Security developed, André was detailed to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's Intelligence Fusion Center. There he worked in an anti-terrorism unit to provide Indianapolis and all of Indiana with the security measures necessary for our physical safety.

André believes that community involvement contributes greatly to the cultural advantage that makes Indianapolis a world-class city. He has spent much of his time working with organizations that share this commitment. As a member of the IndyParks Kennedy/King Park Advisory Board, André has been able to demonstrate his dedication to providing safe, clean and quality parks for our community. His commitment to Indianapolis neighborhoods has led André to also serve as a board member for the Citizens Neighborhood Coalition. The Citizens Neighborhood Coalition is an umbrella organization representing all neighborhood organizations within its boundaries of 10th Street on the south, 30th Street on the north, Pennsylvania Street on the west, and the Monon Trail on the east.

He and his wife Mariama, a professional educator in the Pike Township Schools, are the proud parents of their one year-old daughter, Salimah. They have lived in the Fall Creek Place neighborhood for five years.

Dalia Mogahed

In April 2009, Dalia Mogahed was appointed by President Obama to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. In this position, Ms. Mogahed advises the President about the opinions, values, perceptions, attitudes, and desires of more than 1 billion Muslims worldwide.

Prior to being appointed to a White House advisory position, Dalia Mogahed most recently served as a Senior Analyst at Gallup and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. In this role, she organized global research surveys to examine Muslims' beliefs regarding education, religion, democracy, culture, financial prosperity, and the media.

She also has directed the Muslim-West Facts Initiative, a partnership between Gallup and the Coexist Foundation to share findings of the Gallup World Poll with leaders in the Muslim World and the West.

With John Esposito, Ms. Mogahed is the coauthor of the book "Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think" (Gallup Press, March 2008). Purchase: Compare Prices

Dalia Mogahed has also published her analysis through articles in The Wall Street Journal, the Harvard International Review, the Middle East Policy journal, and many other journals.

Ms. Mogahed has an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering and a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Pittsburg.

Dalia Mogahed's family emigrated to the U.S. from Egypt when she was 5 years old. She is a naturalized U.S. citizen. Ms. Mogahed now lives in the Washington, DC area with her husband and two sons.

Farah Pandith

Farah Pandith was appointed Special Representative to Muslim Communities in June 2009. Her office is responsible for executing Secretary Clinton's vision for engagement with Muslims around the world on a people-to-people and organizational level. She reports directly to the Secretary of State.

Prior to this appointment, she was Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs. In this role she was focused on Muslim communities in Europe where she was responsible for policy oversight for integration, democracy, and Islam in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. She also worked on issues relating to countering violent Islamic extremism.

Before joining the Department of State, she served as the Director for Middle East Regional Initiatives for the National Security Council. She was responsible for coordinating U.S. policy on "Muslim World" Outreach and the Broader Middle East North Africa initiative. She reported directly to the Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Global Democracy Strategy. Special Representative Pandith served on the staff of the National Security Council from December 2004 to February 2007.

Ibrahim Hooper

Ibrahim Hooper is the National Communications Director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). He holds a bachelor's degree in history and a master's of art in journalism and mass communication.

Hooper has been with CAIR since its founding in 1994. As CAIR's spokesman he appears frequently on national and international television programs to offer an Islamic perspective on current events or debate controversial issues.

Nihad Awad

Nihad Awad is the Executive Director and co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest non-profit Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States.

He has been frequently interviewed on national and international media such as CNN, BBC World Service, PBS, C-SPAN, National Public Radio, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Voice of America and Al-Jazeera. CAIR news releases are disseminated to hundreds of thousands people worldwide on a daily basis.

After the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, Mr. Awad flew to Oklahoma to aid in the relief effort. He personally met with Governor Frank Keating and gave the governor a sizable donation for the victims' fund on behalf of the American Muslim community.

In 1997, Mr. Awad served on Vice President Al Gore's Civil Rights Advisory Panel to the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security.

In his professional capacity, Mr. Awad has also personally met with former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and current Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to discuss the needs of the American Muslim community.

Numerous law enforcement agencies and Fortune 500 companies—including Nike and DKNY—have benefited from CAIR educational seminars on Islamic traditions and culture. In addition to resolving employment discrimination issues involving American Muslims, Mr. Awad has also conducted over 100 public relations and media training seminars nationwide.

For the 2000 presidential election, Mr. Awad was a key figure in the American Muslim Political Coordinating Committee (AMPCC), an umbrella organization of the largest American Muslim organizations, which helped to create the first Muslim voting bloc for a presidential election.

Mr. Awad is a regular participant in the U.S. Department of State's "International Visitors Program", which welcomes foreign dignitaries, journalists and academics who are currently visiting the President of the United States.

A few days after September 11, 2001, Mr. Awad was one of the few American Muslim leaders invited by the White House to join President Bush in a press conference at the Islamic Center of Washington, the oldest mosque in Washington DC.

Mr. Awad has testified before both houses of the U.S. Congress, most recently at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on matters involving Muslims in America.

He has also spoken at prestigious educational institutions, including Harvard, Stanford and Johns Hopkins Universities. He was also a featured speaker at the 2002 Reuters Forum on global cooperation at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. In addition, he actively works with local and national interfaith leaders and organizations in the interest of promoting positive relations among people of diverse faith communities.

Mr. Awad is also featured in *Silent No More* by former United States Representative Paul Findley (R-IL), a book chronicling the history of the American Muslim community.

Zalmay Mamozy Khalilzad

Zalmay Mamozy Khalilzad is an American counselor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and president of Khalilzad Associates, an international business consulting firm based in Washington, DC. He was the United States Ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush. He has been involved with U.S. policy makers at the White House, State Department and Pentagon since the mid-1980s, and was the highest-ranking Muslim American in the Administration of U.S. President George W. Bush. Khalilzad's previous assignments in the Administration include U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq.

Rashad Hussain

Rashad Hussain was appointed the Deputy Associate Counsel to the President of the United States, Barack Obama, in January 2009. Mr. Hussain recently served as a Trial Attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice. Prior to that, he was as a Law Clerk to Damon J. Keith on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Earlier in his career, Mr. Hussain served as a legislative assistant on the House Judiciary Committee, where he reviewed legislation such as the USA Patriot Act. Mr. Hussain earned his bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, his Master's degree in Public Administration and in Arabic & Islamic Studies from Harvard University, and his J.D. from Yale Law School, where he served as an editor of the Yale Law Journal. Hussain's varied academic interests in international affairs, law, and security have been integral to his multifaceted approach to contemporary legal and public policy issues.

Muslim Educators and Activists

Shaikh Kabir Helminski

Shaikh Kabir Helminski is an accomplished author and a Shaikh, which literally means "elder" in the Arabic language. He is a Shaikh of the Mevledi Order of Sufism. The Mevlevi Order or the Mevleviye is a Sufi order founded in 1273 by Muhammad Balkhi Rumi's followers in particular Husamettin Celebi. Rumi was a 13th century Persian poet and theologian. This Sufi order is famous for its practice of whirling as a form of dhiki (remembrance of Allah). This practice is also known as Whirling Dervishes. Shaikh Kabir Helminski is the Co-Director of the Threshold Society, a non-profit organization that educates people about Sufism and spiritual psychology. Prior to this from 1980-99, he was the director of Threshold Books. Helminski has also translated a variety of important volumes of Sufi literature, including the works of Rumi. His books have been further translated into other languages.

Little is known about Kabir Helminski's early life. He is an accomplished scholar, possessing a M.A. in psychology and an honorary Ph.D. in literature. Kabir is a Shaikh of the Mevledi Order of Sufism. Kabir began his Mevlevi training as a student of the late Shaikh Suleyman Hayati Dede. In 1990, he was subsequently appointed a Shaikh by the late Dr. Celalettin Celebi of Istanbul, Turkey, head of the Mevlevi Tariqa (Order) and twenty-first generation descendant of Mevlâna Jalâluddîn Rumi. Under Kabir's direction The Threshold Society is working to apply traditional Sufi principles to the conditions of contemporary life. Kabir was director of Threshold Books from 1980 until 1999 and between 1994 and 2000, he traveled with the Whirling Dervishes of Turkey in order to spread the Mevlevi culture. Kabir also became an accomplished author, translating a lot of Sufi literature and writing two books, Sufism: Living Presence and The Knowing Heart. He was the first Muslim to deliver the Wit Lectures on spirituality at Harvard Divinity School. He now lives with his family in Santa Cruz, CA and focuses his time on various arts associated with Sufism.

Imam Mohamed Haggagid

Imam Mohamed Haggagid Ali is a Sudanese-born American who came to the United States in 1987. He attained his religious education in various Islamic disciplines as a Resident Scholar at Al-Medina Institute. Currently serving as the Executive Director of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), Imam Magid helped establish exemplary religious services for Muslim communities across the nation to emulate. He has much experience serving the nation-wide Muslim community as ISNA's East Zone representative and as ISNA Vice President prior to his election in September 2010 as ISNA President. Imam Magid has a long history of commitment to public service through organizations, such as The Peaceful Families Project, Annual Twinning of Mosques and Synagogues,

Fairfax Faith Communities in Action, Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington Assembly and the Buxton Interfaith Initiative.

Imam Magid strives to create and foster dialogue and increase understanding about Islam. Part of his work with the Buxton Interfaith Initiative included forging a partnership with Rabbi Robert Nosanchuk, then leader of the Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation in Reston. Both men were recognized by the Washingtonian as “2009’s Washingtonians of the Year” for building bridges between their faith communities. Imam Magid continues to provide good counsel for the Muslim community through his regular contributions to ISNA’s magazine, Islamic Horizon’s, as well as a speaker and leader of discussions on imminent issues facing the Muslim American community. He is also well known for his family counseling expertise. Imam Magid lives in Virginia with his wife and five young daughters.

Ilyasah Al-Shabazz

Ilyasah Al-Shabazz is an author, activist and lecturer dedicated to preserving the Shabazz Family legacy of service to humanity. Her father, martyred human rights activist Al-Shaheed Malik Al-Shabazz, widely known as Malcolm X, is revered as one of the most important human rights leaders of the United States. Malcolm X was only in his twenties when his eloquent and uncompromising stand for justice earned him a platform on the international stage, campaigning against institutionalized oppression. His examples of dignity, self-respect, and altruism continue to inspire millions from all backgrounds, ethnicity and nationalities to believe in equality, justice and freedom as attainable inalienable rights intended for all mankind. The Autobiography of Malcolm X has remained on the international best-seller’s list since its publication in 1965, and returned to #1 on the New York Times Best Seller list 30 years after its first publication.

Ilyasah Shabazz (pronounced ILL-YAH-SAH SHA-BOZZ) leads a life dedicated to four passions: 1) the continued growth and understanding of her family legacy; 2) developing educational programs which foster self-empowerment regardless of life experience; 3) expanding the role of government to teach individual responsibility for improving society; and 4) capitalizing on the arts & entertainment to encourage the understanding of history, culture, and self-expression.

Following in the footsteps of her parents, Ms. Shabazz is working to convey a message of self-empowerment to future generations. She is presently implementing The WAKE-UP Tour™, her exclusive program for empowering our Nation’s youth. She is corporation president and Board Member of The Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, Inc. at The Audubon, the place of her father’s martyrdom in 1965. Inspired by her father’s Legacy to embrace a rich heritage—and nurtured by her mother’s unending perseverance and strength, Ms. Shabazz is indeed a compassionate humanitarian, author, and lecturer.

In the field of Education, Ms. Shabazz was led to the post of Assistant Coordinator for the Office of Academic Affairs - City University of New York, where she organized training programs to encourage higher education for inner-city at-risk youth. Her most prized project includes an interactive youth publication entitled, "The Way We Feel." Ms. Shabazz has both tutored and mentored at various academic institutions and lock-up facilities. She holds a Master's of Science degree in Education & Human Resource Development and a Bachelors of Science degree in Biology.

In the area of Government, Ms. Shabazz served on the Executive Youth Board for the City of Mount Vernon, New York and is presently the Director of Arts & Culture. She further served as an official member of the United States Delegation that accompanied President Bill Clinton on the historic tour of South Africa in Johannesburg, Soweto, and Capetown. And, Ms. Shabazz was a member of the American Interfaith Leadership Delegation that toured Mali, West Africa to implement Malaria No More.

Hajja Ilyasah Al Shabazz has also retraced her father's footsteps to the Holy City of Mecca for the pilgrimage, and to the pyramids and Sphinx of Ghizeh (PRONOUNCED GHI - ZAY) in Cairo, Egypt. She further explored religious and historical sites in Jordan as a guest of Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Hussein. Extensive travels to Africa, the "Middle East", Europe, the West Indies and throughout the United States, inform Ms. Shabazz' unique brand of lecturing about world history and culture as she teaches capacity audiences on campuses across the United States.

With a diverse career in the Entertainment Industry, Ms. Shabazz has held many diverse positions. As Executive Producer she has just completed a lifestyle television pilot entitled, The Xperience. Ms. Shabazz also worked for 40 Acres + a Mule Filmworks during the filming of X as an assistant technical advisor and production assistant.

Siraj Wahhaj

Siraj Wahhaj (born as Jeffrey Kearsse) is an African-American Muslim convert to Islam and public speaker in North America. He's the Imam of Al-Taqwa mosque in Brooklyn, New York.

Born and raised in New York, he became a Sunday school teacher as a teenager, then later went to Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) where he studied Biology Education.

In the 1960s he became attracted to the Nation of Islam, then later left it for Sunni Islam. He changed his name to Wahhaj. He was chosen to study Islam at the Umm al-Qura University of Mecca in 1978. He also briefly taught a course in Islamic studies at Howard University. In 1981 he started his own mosque in a friend's apartment in Brooklyn. Although it originally started out with only 25 people, today it is a well-known mosque, Masjid ul-Taqwa, in New York City.

In 1988 he led his community in an anti-drug patrol in which they staked out drug houses in Bedford-Stuyvesant in the cold of winter for forty days and nights, forcing the closure of fifteen drug houses. This effort received high praise from the NYPD.

Siraj has been active in many Islamic organizations. He has been Vice President of the Islamic Society of North America since 1997 and has served on the Majlis Ash-Shura, a consultative council of Islamic scholars, since 1987. He is a member of the Board of Advisors for the American Muslim Council and has also served on the national board of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Siraj is a fairly prolific speaker in America. He makes many appearances at the major North American Muslim conventions, and numerous forums and lectures in New England. His English audio lectures are fairly popular among the Muslim community, with titles like "Allah's Word is Supreme," "Are You Ready To Die?" "Confusion of the Ummah," "Control Your Anger," "Easy Way To Paradise," and "Good or Bad Company: How to Judge." He has also appeared on several national television talk shows and interviews in America.

In 1991 Siraj offered an invocation (opening prayer) to the United States House of Representatives. He was the first Muslim to do so.

Hamza Yusuf

Hamza Yusuf was born in Washington State and raised in Northern California. In 1977, he became Muslim and subsequently traveled to the Muslim world and studied for ten years in the U. A. E. and Saudi Arabia, as well as North and West Africa. He received teaching licenses in various Islamic subjects from several well-known scholars in various countries.

After ten years of studies abroad, he returned to the USA and earned degrees in Religious Studies and Health Care. He has traveled all over the world giving talks on Islam. He also founded Zaytuna Institute, which has established an international reputation for presenting a classical picture of Islam in the West and which is dedicated to the revival of traditional study methods and the sciences of Islam. Hamza Yusuf is the first American lecturer to teach in Morocco's prestigious and oldest University, the Qarawiyyin in Fes.

Hamza Yusuf is a cofounder of Zaytuna College, located in Berkeley, California. He is an advisor to Stanford University's Program in Islamic Studies and the Center for Islamic Studies at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union. He also serves as a member of the board of advisors of George Russell's One Nation, a national philanthropic initiative that promotes pluralism and inclusion in America. In addition, he serves as vice-president for the Global Center for Guidance and Renewal, which was founded and is currently presided over by Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, one of the top jurists and masters of Islamic sciences in the world. Recently, Hamza Yusuf was ranked as "the Western world's most influential Islamic scholar" by The 500 Most Influential Muslims, edited by John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin, (2009).

Hamza Yusuf is one of the leading proponents of classical learning in Islam. He has promoted Islamic sciences and classical teaching methodologies throughout the world. He has also been a strong advocate for social justice, peace, and conviviality among peoples and places. For several

years, he has argued that the "them versus us" problem is fundamentally flawed, as he considers himself one of "them" as well as one of "us."

Hamza Yusuf has served as an advisor to many organizations, leaders, and heads of state. He has been an innovator in modern Islamic education, founding the highly imitated Deen Intensives, and with Shaykh Ibrahim Osi-Afa, he started the first Rihla program in England, which has been running for over fifteen years. Dozens of young Muslims who were influenced by his call to reviving traditional Islamic studies in the West went to the Muslim lands in the nineties and early part of the current decade to study, many of who are now teachers in their own right.

With Eissa Bougari, Hamza Yusuf initiated a media challenge to the Arab world that resulted in a highly successful cultural religious program that he hosted for three years and was one of the most watched programs in the Arab world during Ramadan. Cambridge Media Studies stated that this program had a profound influence on subsequent religious programming in the Arab world. He has also been interviewed on BBC several times and was the subject of a BBC documentary segment The Faces of Islam, ushering in the new millennium, as it aired at 11:30pm on Dec. 31st 1999.

Hamza Yusuf has been a passionate and outspoken critic of American foreign policy as well as Islamic extremist responses to those policies. He has drawn criticism from both the extreme right in the West and Muslim extremists in the East. Ed Hussain has written that Hamza Yusuf's teachings were instrumental to his abandoning extremism.

Hamza Yusuf has also authored several encyclopedia articles and research papers. His published books include The Burda (2003), Purification of the Heart (2004), The Content of Character (2004), The Creed of Imam al-Tahawi (2007), Agenda to Change our Condition (2007), and Walking on Water (2010). Forthcoming are The Prayer of the Oppressed, and The Helpful Guide.

He currently resides in Northern California with his wife and five children.

Zaid Shakir

Zaid Shakir is amongst the most respected and influential Islamic scholars in the West. As an American Muslim who came of age during the civil rights struggles, he has brought both sensitivity about race and poverty issues and scholarly discipline to his faith-based work.

Born in Berkeley, California, he accepted Islam in 1977 while serving in the United States Air Force. He obtained a BA with honors in International Relations at American University in Washington D.C. and later earned his MA in Political Science at Rutgers University. While at Rutgers, he led a successful campaign for disinvestment from South Africa, and co-founded a local Islamic center, Masjid al-Huda.

After a year of studying Arabic in Cairo, Egypt, he settled in New Haven, Connecticut and continued his community activism, co-founding Masjid al-Islam, the Tri-State Muslim Education Initiative, and the Connecticut Muslim Coordinating Committee. As Imam of Masjid al-Islam from 1988 to 1994 he spear-headed a community renewal and grassroots anti-drug effort, and also taught political science and Arabic at Southern Connecticut State University. He then left for Syria to pursue his studies in the traditional Islamic sciences.

For seven years in Syria, and briefly in Morocco, he immersed himself in an intense study of Arabic, Islamic law, Quranic studies, and spirituality with some of the top Muslim scholars of our age. In 2001, he graduated from Syria's prestigious Abu Noor University and returned to Connecticut, serving again as the Imam of Masjid al-Islam, and writing and speaking frequently on a host of issues. That same year, his translation from Arabic into English of *The Heirs of the Prophets* was published by Starlatch Press.

In 2003, he moved to Hayward, California to serve as a scholar-in-residence and lecturer at Zaytuna Institute, where he now teaches courses on Arabic, Islamic law, history, and Islamic spirituality. In 2005, Zaytuna Institute published *Scattered Pictures*, an anthology of diverse essays penned by Zaid Shakir.

He is a frequent speaker at local and national Muslim events and has emerged as one of the nation's top Islamic scholars and a voice of conscience for American Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Ingrid Mattson

Dr. Ingrid Mattson is Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, CT.

Dr. Mattson earned her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago in 1999. Her research is focused on Islamic law and society; among her articles are studies on slavery, poverty and Islamic legal theory.

Dr. Mattson was born in Canada, where she studied Philosophy at the University of Waterloo, Ontario (B.A. '87). From 1987-1988 she lived in Pakistan where she worked with Afghan refugee women. In 2001 she was elected Vice-President of ISNA and in 2006 she was elected President of the organization. Dr. Mattson is the first convert to Islam and the first female to lead the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

Altaf Hussain

Altaf Husain is a native of Cleveland, Ohio, and his research interests include the integration of immigrant and refugee families, and especially Muslim adolescents, in the United States. Dr. Husain

is a former two-term national president of the Muslim Students Association (MSA National), a current executive committee member of the Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA), a faculty member of COMPASS - the state of the art management training program of MSA National, chair of the Leadership Development Committee of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the Peaceful Families Project - dedicated to the prevention of domestic violence. Dr. Husain lives in Northern Virginia with his wife Mona, and their two sons 'Omar and Ahmed.

Sherman A. (Abd al-Hakim) Jackson

A native of Philadelphia, Jackson received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in Oriental Studies –Islamic Near East in 1990. Presently, he is Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Visiting Professor of Law, and Professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Michigan. From 1987 to 1989, he served as Executive Director for the Center of Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) in Cairo, Egypt. He has taught at the University of Texas at Austin, Indiana University and Wayne State University, and recently declined a full-professorship at Stanford University. In addition to numerous articles on Islamic law, theology and history, he is author of “Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihâb al-Dîn al-Qarâfî” (E.J. Brill, 1996), “On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam: Abû Hâmîd al-Ghazâlî’s Faysal al-Tafriqa” (Oxford, 2002) and the controversial “Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection (Oxford, 2005).” He is both co-founder and primary instructor of the American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM), as well as a member of its Board of Trustees. Jackson is also a former member of the Fiqh Council of North America, past president of the Sharî’ah Scholars’ Association of North America (SSANA) and a past trustee of the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT). He is a sought-after speaker and has lectured throughout the US and in numerous countries abroad.

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is Chairman of Cordoba Initiative, having founded the organization in 2004.

In 1997, he founded the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA), the first Muslim organization committed to bringing American Muslims and non-Muslims together through programs in academia, policy, current affairs, and culture. As Imam of Masjid al-Farah, a mosque located twelve blocks from Ground Zero in New York City, he preaches a message of understanding between people of all creeds. Additionally, Imam Feisal sits on the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Center of New York and serves as an advisor to the Interfaith Center of New York.

Imam Feisal has appeared regularly at the Council on Foreign Relations and the World Economic Forum (Davos). He has been interviewed by and quoted in leading print media, including BBC, CNN,

New York Times, Washington Post, Frontline, and Foreign Policy.

Suhaib Webb

Shaykh Suhaib Webb is a contemporary American Muslim activist and speaker. After converting to Islam, Webb left his career as a DJ and studied at the University of Central Oklahoma, where he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Education. He also studied privately under a Senegalese Shaykh, learning enough Islam and Arabic to become a community leader in Oklahoma City, where he was hired as Imam at the Islamic Society of Greater Oklahoma City. He simultaneously started teaching at Mercy School, an Islamic K-12 school in Oklahoma City. In 2004, he departed with his wife and children to Cairo, where he currently studies at Al-Azhar University in the College of Shari`ah. Additionally, he is in charge of the English translation Department at Dar al-Ifta al-Masriyah and is currently training as a Mufti. Webb strongly advocates for an articulation of American Islam that is authentic, and has leaders that are acutely aware of the issues facing Muslim Americans.

Tariq Ramadan

Named by Time magazine as one of the 100 most important innovators of the 21st century, Tariq Ramadan occupies a unique place among leading Islamic thinkers. Representing a new generation of Islamic reformers, Dr. Ramadan advocates the exploration and application of Islamic traditions and values within a modern pluralistic context, calling on Western Muslims to embrace Western culture rather than reject it. A Swiss national, he is a well-respected professor of philosophy at the College of Geneva and Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Fribourg. In fall 2004 Ramadan was appointed Henry R. Luce Professor of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, USA.

Ramadan has written more than twenty books exploring the difficult issues of reinterpretation and reform within Islam itself and between the Islamic world and its neighbors around the globe. His books include *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2003), *Islam, the West, and the Challenges of Modernity* (The Islamic Foundation, 2000), *To Be a European Muslim* (The Islamic Foundation, 1998), and *Jihad, Violence, War and Peace in Islam* (in French only, Tawhid, 2002). He has also published a total of 700 contributions or articles in collective books, academic reviews, and magazines.

Ramadan serves as an expert in various commissions linked to the Brussels Parliament, and is a member of several working parties concerned with Islam in the world and on the continent:

Deutsches Orient Institute, British Council, Vienna Peace Summit, The Parliament of the World's Religions 2004 in Barcelona, and the "Laïcité et Islam" commission of the French Educational League.

Jamal Badawi

Jamal Badawi is "Professor Emeritus" at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, where he served as Professor of both Management and Religious Studies. During its May, 2008 Convocation, Saint Mary's University granted him an Honorary Doctorate of Civil law in recognition of his promotion of "a better understanding of Islam" and contribution "to civil society around the world" He completed his undergraduate studies in Cairo, Egypt and his Masters and Ph.D. degrees at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Dr. Badawi is the author of several works on Islam, including books, chapters in books and articles.

In addition to his participation in lectures, seminars and interfaith dialogues in North America, Dr. Badawi has been frequently invited as guest speaker on Islam in nearly 38 other countries.

He is a member of the Islamic Juridical [Fiqh] Council of North America, The European Council of Fatwa and Research and the International Union of Muslim Scholars. He has been serving as a volunteer Imam of the local Muslim community in the Halifax Regional Municipality since 1970.

Dr. Badawi is father of 5 children and grandfather of 17 [so far!]

Wael B. Hallaq

Wael B. Hallaq is a scholar of Islamic law and Islamic intellectual history. His teaching and research deal with the problematic epistemic ruptures generated by the onset of modernity and the socio-politico-historical forces subsumed by it; with the intellectual history of Orientalism and the repercussions of Orientalist paradigms in later scholarship and in Islamic legal studies as a whole; and with the synchronic and diachronic development of Islamic traditions of logic, legal theory, and substantive law and the interdependent systems within these traditions.

Hallaq's writings have explored the structural dynamics of legal change in pre-modern law, and have recently been examining the centrality of moral theory to understanding the history of Islamic law. His books include *Ibn Taymiyya Against the Greek Logicians* (1993); *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunni Usul al-fiqh* (1997); *Authority, Continuity and Change in Islamic Law* (2001); and *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2009). His latest work, *Shari'a: Theory, Practice,*

Transformations (2009) examines the doctrines and practices of Islamic law within the context of its history, from its beginnings in seventh-century Arabia, through its development and transformation under the Ottomans, and across lands as diverse as India, Africa and South-East Asia, to the present. Hallaq's work has been widely read, and translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Japanese, Indonesian and Hebrew.

Sheik Ahmad Kutty

Sheik Ahmad Kutty was born in the Indian state of Kerala in 1946. He arrived in Canada in the 1970s as a student and has since obtained Canadian citizenship.

Sheik Ahmad graduated in the traditional Islamic sciences and received the Ijazah (title) of al-Faqih fi al-deen (first rank) from Islamiya College Santapuram, a leading Islamic institution in south India.[1] He then obtained his Licentiate in Usul al-Ddeen (first rank) from the Islamic University of Madinah, Saudi Arabia. In 1973 he earned an M.A. in Islamic studies from the University of Toronto. From 1975 to 1980 he pursued his Doctoral studies in Shari'ah thought at McGill University.

He has served on the Fiqh Council of North America, the pre-eminent Islamic law body on the continent. He has served as Imam and resident scholar at various institutions in Montreal and Toronto, including Toronto's Jami Mosque and the [Islamic Foundation of Toronto]. He is currently resident scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto.

He is a prolific writer and has written a number of articles, books and journal articles. He is a regular scholar answering Islamic law questions on IslamOnline.

In addition to his participation in lectures, seminars and inter-faith dialogues in North America, Kutty is invited as a guest speaker in functions all over the world. Ahmad Kutty considered one of The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World.

Abdalla Idris Ali

Abdalla Idris Ali is a well-known American Muslim public speaker, successful fund-raiser and served as ISNA's President from 1992-1997. Additionally, Sheikh Abdalla co-organized the Canadian Islamic Banking Conferences for 1996 and 1997. He also serves as a member on the Board of Trustees for the Islamic Teaching Center (ITC) and North American Islamic Trust (NAIT). Additionally, he is also on the Board of Advisors of the American Muslim Council (AMC) and past-Board member of the Council of Islamic Schools in North America. As an ISNA School principal, he developed and implemented Islamic and Arabic Studies curricula for elementary and junior high students. He has written various articles in Islamic Horizons and is a member of the ATP Editorial Board. His expertise is in the area of Islamic education in North America.

Muhammad AlShareef

Shaykh Muhammad Alshareef is the Founder and President of AlMaghrib Institute. His parents raised him on the motto that “nothing is impossible” and that is what he has lived by. AlShareef was born in 1975 to Egyptian parents and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. In his youth, he memorized the Qur'an and later graduated after six years attending the Islamic University of Madinah, class of 1999. Al-Maghrib Institute seminars have been conducted across the USA and Canada in fourteen cities, and is the largest Islamic university-level educational system in North America. It is in the United Kingdom now too.

While he continues to teach, AlShareef now devotes much of his time to managing AlMaghrib Institute and EmanRush Audio. He has also founded EmanRush Audio and Khutbah.com, and actively keeps in touch with the online community at the AlMaghrib Forums.

He is also the founder of DiscoverU, an Islam-based personal development institute. With websites like www.DiscoverULife.com, seminars like his DiscoverU Lifecoaching certification, or online webinars, Sh Muhammad uses the technology available to benefit his audience.

Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah

Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah (Wymann-Landgraf) is an American Muslim, born in 1948 to a Protestant family in Columbus, Nebraska. He grew up in Athens, Georgia, where both parents taught at the University of Georgia. Dr. Abd-Allah did his undergraduate work at the University of Missouri with dual majors in History and English Literature. In 1969, he won a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and entrance to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York to pursue a Ph.D. program in English literature. Shortly after coming to Cornell, Dr. Abd-Allah read The Autobiography of Malcolm X, which inspired him to embrace Islam in early 1970. In 1972, he altered his field of study and transferred to the University of Chicago, where he studied Arabic and Islamic Studies under Dr. Fazlur Rahman. Dr. Abd-Allah received his doctorate with honors in 1978 for a dissertation on the origins of Islamic Law, Malik's Concept of 'Amal in the Light of Maliki Legal Theory. From 1977 until 1982, he taught at the Universities of Windsor (Ontario), Temple, and Michigan. In 1982, he left America to teach Arabic in Spain. Two years later, he was appointed to the Department of Islamic Studies at King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, where he taught (in Arabic) Islamic studies and comparative religions until 2000.

During his years abroad, Dr. Abd-Allah had the privilege of studying with a number of traditional Islamic scholars. He returned to Chicago in August 2000 to work as chair and scholar-in-residence of the newly founded Nawawi Foundation, a non-profit educational foundation. In conjunction with this position, he is now teaching and lecturing in and around Chicago and various parts of the

United States and Canada, while conducting research and writing in Islamic studies and related fields.

Yasir Qadhi

Yasir Qadhi is a lecturer and Islamic orator who has authored several books about Islam. He is a popular speaker in many Muslim circles in the United States, Canada, England and Australia. He is one of the few people who has combined traditional seminary training with Western education.

He was born in Houston, Texas, went to high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and worked for Dow Chemical on a short stint.

He then decided to pursue an education in Islamic studies, and left for the Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia. There, he completed a second Bachelor's degree, specializing in Hadith studies, and then went on to complete M.A. in Technology. Presently, he is completing his Ph.D. in Islamic studies at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.

Apart from his studies, he is an active Instructor and Dean of Academics at the Al-Maghrib Institute. He appears on a number of Islamic satellite channels (Islam Channel in England, Al-Huda Channel in Saudi Arabia and Al-Fajr Channels in Egypt), where he teaches theology, Seerah, Tajweed, and other topics. He gives regular Friday sermons and lectures.

Abdallah Adhami

Shaykh Abdallah Adhami was born in Washington D.C. from the noble lineage of the family of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He began his studies of shari'ah at the tender age of 8 years old. He has earned scholarly licenses from many eminent scholars from Damascus, Egypt and Morocco and is also a certified narrator of hadith. Sheikh Adhami also holds a degree in architecture from the Pratt Institute in New York City and has several years of international corporate experience in the area of organizational development and executive training. Sheikh Adhami has been serving the spiritual needs of the North American Muslim community for over 20 years. He is also the founder and chairman of Sakeenah, a nonprofit educational foundation in New York City.

Aisha al-Adawiya

Aisha al-Adawiya is the founder of Women in Islam, Inc., an organization of Muslim women which focuses on human rights and social justice. Ms. al-Adawiya organizes and participates in

conferences, symposia and other forums on Islam, Gender Equity, Conflict Resolution, Cross-Cultural Understanding, and Peace Building. She also represents Muslim women's Non-Governmental Organizations at United Nations forums. Ms. Al-Adawiya coordinates Islamic input for the Preservation of the Black Religious Heritage Documentation Project of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. She also serves as a consultant to numerous interfaith organizations and documentary projects on the Muslim American experience. Additionally, she serves on the boards of numerous organizations related to the interests of the global Islamic community. Ms. al-Adawiya is a guest host and producer of Tahrir, WBAI Pacifica Radio in New York City.

Ms. al-Adawiya is also current president of KARAMAH: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights. KARAMAH is a charitable, educational organization that focuses on the domestic and global issues of human rights for Muslim women, and is dedicated to promoting dignity for all human beings through education and legal outreach.

Mokhtar Maghraoui

Mokhtar Maghraoui received his Islamic education in Algeria before coming to the U.S. and received his PhD in electrical engineering from Syracuse University. He has served as an imam in the state of New York and is a Central Shura Member of the Islamic Circle of North America and a member of the Scholars Council of North America. He is a former member of the Fiqh Council of North America and is an active participant of interfaith dialogue with Jewish and Christian communities in the capital district of New York State.

Muneer Fareed

Dr. Fareed was an associate professor of Islamic studies in the Department of Near Eastern and Asian Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. His fields of interest include Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal reform and Islam in the modern world. To his credit, he has several journal articles, a monograph entitled "Legal Reform in the Muslim World", and translations of classics of the Islamic world, including the Síra Nabawiyya of Ibn Kathir, The Muqaddima of Ibn Saláh, and 'l-Itqán fi 'Ulúm 'l-Qur'an of Suyúti. He received a diploma in Arabic Language and Literature from King Abdul Aziz University in Mecca, and the Ijáza in Classical Islamic Studies from Dár al-`Ulúm, Deoband, and a doctorate in Islamic Studies from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Since the 1980s he has served the American Muslim community in various capacities, including imam and scholar-in-residence for the Muslim community in metropolitan Detroit.

Sulayman Nyang

Dr. Sulayman Nyang is a Professor of African Studies at Howard University in Washington, D.C. He also serves as co-director of Muslims in the American Public Square, a research project funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. Dr. Nyang has served on the boards of the African Studies Association, the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies and the Association of Muslim Social Scientists. From 1975 to 1978 he served as Deputy Ambassador and Head of Chancery of the Gambia Embassy in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Professor Nyang has written extensively on Islamic, African and Middle Eastern affairs. His best known works are *Islam, Christianity and African Identity* (1984), *A Line in the Sand: Saudi Arabia's Role in the Gulf War* (1995), co-authored with Evan Heindricks, *Religious Plurality in Africa*, co-edited with Jacob Olupona, and *Islam in the United States of America* (1999). Professor Nyang has been a regular Faculty member of the Dar al Islam Teachers Institutes for many years.

Jeffrey Lang

Dr. Jeffrey Lang is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Kansas. He is an American convert to Islam and former atheist. He is the author of two bestselling works: "Struggling to Surrender" and "Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America". His most recent book is entitled "Losing My Religion: A Call For Help".

Abdullah Hakim Quick

Abdullah Hakim Quick was born in the United States of America and accepted Islam in Canada in 1970. He pursued his study of Islam at the Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia where he graduated and received an Ijaza from the College of Da'wah and Islamic Sciences in 1979. He later completed a Master's Degree and a Doctorate in African History at the University of Toronto in Canada. His thesis was an analysis of the early life of Sheikh 'Uthman Dan Fodio, a great West African Scholar, Mujaahid and social activist. Shaykh Abdullah has served as Imam, teacher and counselor in the USA, Canada and the West Indies. For three years he contributed to the religious page of Canada's leading newspaper. He has traveled to over 51 countries on lecture, research and educational tours. Presently he is a senior lecturer on the history of Islam in Africa at The International Peace University South Africa in Cape Town and a member of the Muslim Judicial Council, Cape Town, South Africa. Shaykh Abdullah is also the Director of the Discover Islam Centre (Cape Town) and Ameer of the Dawah Coordinating Forum of South Africa. Today's world is in need of innovative rethinking based on original, authentic sources. Dr Abdullah Hakim provides an example of this new, progressive thinking.

Munir El-Kassem

Munir El-Kassem was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1955 and was educated at Al-Maqasid Islamic Institute. He was the top student to be admitted in the Premedicine program at the American University of Beirut. Following his migration to Canada, he continued his studies at the University of Western Ontario earning a Master's Degree in Medical Genetics thereafter joining the University of Toronto to graduate as a dental surgeon in 1986. After spending 15 years in general practice, he joined the University of Western Ontario as an assistant professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry. Since his arrival in Canada in 1976, Dr. El-Kassem has been very actively involved in Islamic da'wah. He has visited a large number of Muslim communities across Canada and the United States. He has also participated in interfaith dialogue and appeared on numerous radio and TV programs. He is also the author of many Islamic books and a regular contributor to the London Free Press, writing on a variety of issues from an Islamic perspective. Munir El-Kassem is currently a visiting Imam at a number of Islamic Centers across Ontario, Canada. He is also the Muslim Chaplain at the University of Western Ontario. He is married and blessed with five daughters and one son.

Nouman Ali Khan

Nouman is the founder and CEO of Bayyinah, as well as the lead instructor for a number of Bayyinah courses including the 'Fundamentals of Classical Arabic' and 'Divine Speech'. His first exposure to Arabic study was in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where he completed his elementary education. He continued Arabic grammar study in Pakistan, where he received a scholarship for ranking among the top 10 scores in the national Arabic studies board examinations in 1993. But his serious training in Arabic began in the United States in 1999 under Dr. Abdus-Samie, founder and formal principal of Quran College, Faisalabad, Pakistan who happened to be touring the US for intensive lectures in Tafsir and Arabic studies. Under Dr. Abdus-Samie, Nouman developed a keen methodical understanding of Arabic grammar. He further benefited from Dr. Abdus-Samie by internalizing his unique teaching methods and later translating his work into English for the benefit of his own students. Nouman served as professor of Arabic at Nassau Community College until '06 and has taught Modern Standard and Classical Arabic at various venues for nearly 7 years with over 10,000 students nationwide. Currently he has dedicated himself to a seven-year-long project, of conducting a linguistic & literary focus Qur'anic Tafseer series in English.

Yusuf Estes

Sheik Yusuf Estes was born in the midwest United States 1944 to a religious Christian family. They moved to Houston, Texas in 1949 where he grew in the Disciples of Christ and was baptized into the church in 1956. Over the years he completed his studies in music and became a music teacher, well known entertainer and businessman and finally a music minister calling people to the Lord with his music and Bible.

During his business career he built up a chain of music stores and even had his own television series called the "Estes Music Jamboree". He and his father owned businesses and worked together in spreading religion and politics, all at the same time. They both served together on the Texas Governor's Conference for Business Leaders during the early 1980's. Sheik Yusuf also owned expensive homes, cars and boats and at one point he even owned airplanes and had become a dealer for Cessna Aircraft. Although he had great wealth, Sheik Yusuf continued to seek the Lord while calling people to Jesus and Christian salvation.

His first encounter with a Muslim occurred in 1991 when his father introduced him to a man from Egypt. When he discovered the man was a Muslim he began immediately trying to convert him to Jesus and join the church. However, the Muslim brought about a new understanding about the world's fastest growing religion and a real awakening to true Islam. While trying to convert the Muslim to Christianity Sheik Yusuf learned an important lesson about life, religion and God Almighty: You do not guide the one you love, but it is only God Almighty Who Guides to His Way, whomever He Wills.

After three months of debates and dialogs with the Egyptian he watched as a Catholic priest friend of his, Father Peter Jacobs, accepted Islam and became a Muslim near Dallas, Texas. Then he, his father, his wife and children all became Muslims.

Since then he has been studying Islam, Arabic language and the Quran while working day and night to present the correct message of Islam both to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. His research has taken him to many religious institutions and scholars around the world, including: Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Bahrain, Turkey, Australia, England, Ireland, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Trinidad, Tobago, Dutch Antilles, Barbados, India, Qatar and the list goes on.

He has been called upon by the United States Bureau of Prisons to present Islam as Muslim Chaplain to inmates in Federal Institutions all around America until his retirement.

James Yee

James J. Yee is a former US Army Chaplain and graduate of West Point who served as the Muslim Chaplain for the U.S. prison camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba that would become controversial for its treatment of detainees designated as "enemy combatants" by the U.S. government. While ministering to prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Captain Yee advised camp commanders on detainee

religious practices and objected to the cruel and degrading abuses to which the prisoners were subjected.

After being officially recognized twice for outstanding performance, Captain Yee was arrested and imprisoned in a Naval brig for 76 days in September 2003 while being falsely accused of spying, espionage, and aiding the alleged Taliban and Al-Qaeda prisoners. He was held in solitary confinement and subjected to the same sensory deprivation techniques that were being used against the prisoners in Cuba that he had been ministering to.

After months of government investigation, all criminal charges were dropped. With his record wiped clean, Chaplain Yee was reinstated to full duty at Fort Lewis, Washington. He tendered his resignation from the U.S. Army and received an Honorable Discharge on January 7, 2005. Upon separation he was awarded with a second Army Commendation medal for "exceptionally meritorious service."

Faraz Rabbani

Faraz Rabbani is a researcher and teacher of the Islamic sciences, specializing in Islamic Law. He is the Educational Director of Seekers Guidance (<http://www.SeekersGuidance.org/>), where he also teaches and answers questions. He is partner and legal advisor with StraightWay Ethical Advisory, and has a number of published books and articles.

Faraz Rabbani obtained Bachelors in Economics & Commerce from the University of Toronto in 1997. Subsequently, he spent ten years studying and teaching Islamic sciences in Damascus, Amman and Karachi under leading Islamic scholars including Shaykh Adib Kallas, Shaykh Hassan al-Hindi, Shaykh Muhammad Jumuah, Shaykh Akram Abd al-Wahhab, Shaykh Nuh Keller, and Mufti Mahmud Ashraf Usmani. He currently lives and teaches in Toronto, Canada, with his wife and three children.

Khalid Latif

Khalid Latif is Executive Director and Chaplain (Imam) for the Islamic Center at New York University (NYU).

In 2005, Imam Latif was appointed the first Muslim chaplain at NYU. At NYU, Khalid initiated his vision for a pluralistic American Muslim community, rooted on campus and reaching out to the city. In 2006, Imam Latif was appointed the first Muslim chaplain at Princeton University. In 2007, Imam Latif's position was fully institutionalized at New York University, and so he committed himself to that institution and the building of a Muslim life institution. Today's Islamic Center is a leader

among American Muslim organizations, uniquely shaped to contribute to the future of Muslim practice in the West.

Imam Latif's exceptional dedication and ability to cross faith and cultural boundaries on a daily basis brought him recognition throughout the city, so much so that in 2007, Mayor Michael Bloomberg nominated Imam Latif to become the youngest chaplain in history of the New York City Police Department. He was 24. Since then, Imam Latif has dedicated himself to America's largest Police Department, and has developed tremendously valuable skills as a spokesperson for co-existence, mutual understanding and productive relationships between cultures, communities and religions.

At NYU, Imam Latif has not only managed to build a strong Muslim institution at NYU, but he has offered his experience and awareness to the U.S. State Department, various institutions, corporations, mosques and other communities in the United States, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and Egypt. He is a highly sought-after speaker, offering to diverse audiences his unique blend of motivational speaking, leadership insights, spiritual development and religious awareness. He has been invited to speak at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California-Berkeley, Columbia University, Princeton University and Harvard. Imam Latif has been quoted or otherwise featured on numerous media outlets including BBC, NPR, CNN, the New York Times, Newsweek, Time Magazine, BET and GEO TV. Amongst many awards and distinctions for leadership and community service over the last few years, Imam Latif was most recently named one of 500 most influential Muslims in the world in 2009 by Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed Bin Talaal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre.

Yahiya Emerick

Yahiya Emerick is a former vice-principal at an Islamic school, President of the Islamic Foundation of North America, and a Muslim author. He has written several articles and works of fiction that have been published in North America and abroad.

Emerick was born into an American Protestant Christian family, and converted to Islam in 1989 while a freshman at Michigan State University.[1] He later obtained a graduate degree in history.

Emerick has served as a Muslim lecturer, educator and prayer leader, but his greatest fame has come as an author. He founded Amirah Publishing in 1992, in order to further his goal of publishing American-oriented literature on Islam. Emerick's Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam has been distributed worldwide by Alpha books, while his juvenile fiction books have been rated amongst the very first examples of the Islamic fiction genre.[2] One of Emerick's books has been adopted into the curriculum of Al-Azhar University in Egypt, the world's oldest college and its foremost Islamic Institute. From 1998 until 2008 his books were all published by Noorart Inc.

Salman Khan

Salman Khan (Sal) is the founder and faculty of the not-for-profit Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org) – a library of over 1,200 videos and practice software with the modest goal of providing a world-class education to anyone, anywhere, for free. He's a former hedge fund analyst who was a former techie before that.

Salman Khan (Sal) founded the Khan Academy with the hope of using technology to foster new learning models. He is currently the portfolio manager of a fund based in Menlo Park, CA. Prior to this, Sal was one of the initial employees at MVC Venture Capital. He has also worked as a Technical Architect at Scient Corporation and as a Senior Product Manager at Oracle Corporation.

Sal received his MBA from Harvard Business School where he was president of the student body. He also holds a Masters in electrical engineering and computer science, a BS in electrical engineering and computer science, and a BS in mathematics from MIT where he was president of the Class of 1998. While at MIT, Sal was the recipient of the Eloranta Fellowship which he used to develop web-based math software for children with ADHD. He was also an MCAT instructor for the Princeton Review and volunteered teaching gifted 4th and 7th graders at the Devotion School in Brookline, MA.

Asma Mirza

Asma Yaqub Mirza is an American born Muslim, living in Virginia, who recently earned her MBA from the University of Maryland. At the age of 26, Ms. Asma is the youngest person ever elected to a leadership position with ISNA. Ms. Asma currently works as a strategy consultant and has a track record of successful leadership in her roles as founder of the MSA Legacy Fund and as a founding member of the "Campaign Civil Rights" at Georgetown University, where she received her BSBA in Business Management. Ms. Asma has actively supported the positive growth of ISNA as the 2007-2009 MSA National President and a previous committee member on the ISNA Majlis Youth Committee, Annual Convention Program Committee, Secretary General Search Committee (2007-2010) and as an ISNA convention and conference speaker.

Tarek El-Messidi

Tarek El-Messidi was raised in Knoxville, Tennessee where he served two years as the local MSA President. In 2001, shortly after 9/11, he co-founded the first-ever Ramadan Fast-a-thon and

coordinated the publication of a 45-page Fast-a-thon Organizing Manual. This manual, publicized by MSA National, enabled the annual charity to spread to 300 campuses worldwide raising over \$1 million over the past 9 years to fight hunger.

Tarek went on to study Islam at various Deen Intensive programs and in Jordan for one year; he then returned to Tennessee to earn an MBA. While pursuing his MBA, he served as president of the Muslim Community of Knoxville.

In 2010, he founded CelebrateMercy which aims to educate both Muslims and non-Muslims on the life and character of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). In less than a year, its webcasts have reached thousands of viewers from over 80 countries, recruiting over 1,000 global volunteers and 10,000 Facebook fans.

He now works at Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, Ohio and runs Malsi Marketing, providing marketing consulting for businesses and non-profits. Additionally, he currently serves on the Boards of SeekersGuidance and Clifton Mosque while volunteering with Zaytuna College.

Zahra Billoo

Promoting justice and understanding in the world is what Zahra Billoo strives to achieve in her role as the CAIR San Francisco Bay Area (CAIR-SFBA) chapter's Executive Director. But, her commitment to social justice and the community began long before while she was still a college student. She has been a devoted labor rights advocate for years; she started as an intern for a local chapter of the California Faculty Association, a labor union for California State University (CSU) faculty members. Zahra has also worked as Field Organizer for the Service Employees International Union, and was awarded Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship to work with the National Employment Law Project.

Zahra graduated Cum Laude from California State University, Long Beach with a B.S. in Human Resources Management and B.A. in Political Science. She completed her law degree at the University of California, Hastings College of Law. Zahra joined CAIR in Aug. 2009 and was admitted to the California Bar in Dec. 2009. Her work with CAIR has been covered in local and national media outlets including KTVU, NBC, CNN, MSNBC, the Christian Science Monitor, and NPR.

Asma Hanif

Sister Asma Hanif is a mother, community health activist, a professor, student and entrepreneur. In 2005 she was elected as the first female Chairperson of the Coordinating Council Muslim Organizations, (CCMO) of DC/MD/VA.

She has been a practicing Muslim for over 25 years, graduated from Howard University, and the Medical University of South Carolina. She is a Certified Nurse Midwife, Naturopathic Physician, Clinical Herbologist and Natural Childbirth Instructor. She teaches workshops on “How To Prevent Breast Cancer Through Diet and Self-Breast Exams”, “Fertility Awareness – How To Achieve or Avoid Pregnancy”, “Maintaining Vaginal Health Naturally”, as well as authored a rape prevention pamphlet entitled, “What A Woman Doesn’t Know Can Hurt Her”. In 1995, she established Al-Nisaa, Holistic Health, Education and Social Services Center, a faith-based practice, in order to provide health services for underserved and uninsured women and children. She believes that every man, woman and child has a right to receive quality care in a dignified manner, and to be assisted in the achievement of optimal health and well-being, regardless of race, creed, or socio-economic level.

Salman Ravala

Salman Ravala is an Attorney and the Founding Director of Dollar-A-Day Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships, mentoring, leadership, and career and professional development resources to young Muslim-Americans. A former visiting legal scholar at the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Mr. Ravala most recently served as the Ariane de Rothschild fellow for Dialogue and Social Entrepreneurship at Columbia University, and has won numerous community service awards including the American Red Cross Distinguished Service Award as well as the President’s Call To Service Award. His long term vision is to decrease the illiteracy rate in Muslim majority countries as well as throughout America as he believes that education leads to change, hope, progress and opportunity.

Muhammad Alexander Russell Webb

Muhammad Alexander Russell Webb was an American journalist, newspaper owner, and former Consul-General of the U.S.A. in the Philippines. Mohammed Webb was born on November 9, 1846 in Hudson, New York to Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Nelson Webb. A.N. Webb was a leading journalist of his day and perhaps influenced his son's later journalistic exploits.

While working for the Missouri Republican, he was appointed (in September, 1887) by President Cleveland to be Consular Representative to the Philippines at the U.S. office at Manila. According to the editor of his book *The Three Lectures*, he had given up any concept of religion at least fifteen years before that point. He started his life as a Presbyterian but found it dull and restraining. As early as 1881 he started a search for his true faith by reading in books from a well-stocked library of over 13,000 volumes that he had access to. He started his study with Buddhism and finding it lacking, he began to study Islam. In 1888, he formally declared himself to be a Muslim.

Webb was the main representative for Islam at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. On September 20th and 21st, 1893, he gave two speeches. His speeches were entitled: "The Influence of Islam Upon Social Conditions" and "The Spirit of Islam" and were published in the large two volume proceedings of the Parliament called "The First World's Parliament of Religions" (1894).

For the rest of his life he was the main spokesman for Islam in America. On Broadway, in Manhattan, he founded a short-lived masjid. The reasons for the termination of this Masjid are unknown, but it could be due to a lack of financial support from India.

From 1898 to the time of his death on October 1, 1916, he lived in Rutherford, New Jersey. He died at the age of seventy and was buried in Hillside Cemetery on the outskirts of Rutherford. After his death his efforts were largely forgotten. There continued to exist a vague coming to Islam in the African American community and there exists some lines in the writings of the first American Islamic Nationalist, Noble Drew Ali, showing that if he hadn't met Webb at least he had heard of his efforts.

Malcolm X

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. His mother, Louise Norton Little, was a homemaker occupied with the family's eight children. His father, Earl Little, was an outspoken Baptist minister and avid supporter of Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey. Earl's civil rights activism prompted death threats from the white supremacist organization Black Legion, forcing the family to relocate twice before Malcolm's fourth birthday.

Regardless of the Little's efforts to elude the Legion, in 1929 their Lansing, Michigan home was burned to the ground. Two years later, Earl's body was found lying across the town's trolley tracks. Police ruled both incidents as accidents, but the Little's were certain that members of the Black Legion were responsible. Louise suffered emotional breakdown several years after the death of her husband and was committed to a mental institution. Her children were split up amongst various foster homes and orphanages.

Growing up

Malcolm was a smart, focused student. He graduated from junior high at the top of his class. However, when a favorite teacher told Malcolm his dream of becoming a lawyer was "no realistic goal for a nigger," Malcolm lost interest in school. He dropped out, spent some time in Boston, Massachusetts working various odd jobs, and then traveled to Harlem, New York where he committed petty crimes. By 1942 Malcolm was coordinating various narcotics, prostitution and gambling rings. , you had make some noise."

Eventually Malcolm and his buddy, Malcolm "Shorty" Jarvis, moved back to Boston. In 1946 they were arrested and convicted on burglary charges, and Malcolm was sentenced to 10 years in prison. (He was paroled after serving seven years.) Recalling his days in school, he used the time to further his education. It was during this period of self-enlightenment that Malcolm's brother Reginald would visit and discuss his recent conversion to the Muslim religion. Reginald belonged to the religious organization the Nation of Islam (NOI).

Intrigued, Malcolm began to study the teachings of NOI leader Elijah Muhammad. Muhammad taught that white society actively worked to keep African-Americans from empowering themselves and achieving political, economic and social success. Among other goals, the NOI fought for a state of their own, separate from one inhabited by white people. By the time he was paroled in 1952, Malcolm was a devoted follower with the new surname "X." (He considered "Little" a slave name and chose the "X" to signify his lost tribal name.)

A born leader

Intelligent and articulate, Malcolm was appointed as a minister and national spokesman for the Nation of Islam. Elijah Muhammad also charged him with establishing new mosques in cities such as Detroit, Michigan and Harlem, New York. Malcolm utilized newspaper columns, as well as radio and television to communicate the NOI's message across the United States. His charisma, drive and conviction attracted an astounding number of new members. Malcolm was largely credited with increasing membership in the NOI from 500 in 1952 to 30,000 in 1963.

The crowds and controversy surrounding Malcolm made him a media magnet. He was featured in a week-long television special with Mike Wallace in 1959, called "The Hate That Hate Produced." The program explored the fundamentals of the NOI, and tracked Malcolm's emergence as one of its most important leaders. After the special, Malcolm was faced with the uncomfortable reality that his fame had eclipsed that of his mentor Elijah Muhammad.

Racial tensions ran increasingly high during the early 1960s. In addition to the media, Malcolm's vivid personality had captured the government's attention. As membership in the NOI continued to grow, FBI agents infiltrated the organization (one even acted as Malcolm's bodyguard) and secretly placed bugs, wiretaps, cameras and other surveillance equipment to monitor the group's activities.

A test of faith

Malcolm's faith was dealt a crushing blow at the height of the civil rights movement in 1963. He learned that his mentor and leader, Elijah Muhammad, was secretly having relations with as many as six women within the Nation of Islam organization. As if that were not enough, Malcolm found out that some of these relationships had resulted in children.

Since joining the NOI, Malcolm had strictly adhered to the teachings of Muhammad - which included remaining celibate until his marriage to Betty Shabazz in 1958. Malcolm refused Muhammad's request to help cover up the affairs and subsequent children. He was deeply hurt by the deception of Muhammad, whom he had considered a living prophet. Malcolm also felt guilty about the masses

he had led to join the NOI, which he now felt was a fraudulent organization built on too many lies to ignore.

Shortly after his shocking discovery, Malcolm received criticism for a comment he made regarding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. "[Kennedy] never foresaw that the chickens would come home to roost so soon," said Malcolm. After the statement, Elijah Muhammad "silenced" Malcolm for 90 days. Malcolm, however, suspected he was silenced for another reason. In March 1964 Malcolm terminated his relationship with the NOI. Unable to look past Muhammad's deception, Malcolm decided to found his own religious organization, the Muslim Mosque, Inc.

A new awakening

That same year, Malcolm went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The trip proved life altering. For the first time, Malcolm shared his thoughts and beliefs with different cultures, and found the response to be overwhelmingly positive. When he returned, Malcolm said he had met "blonde-haired, blue-eyed men I could call my brothers." He returned to the United States with a new outlook on integration and a new hope for the future. This time when Malcolm spoke, instead of just preaching to African-Americans, he had a message for all races.

After Malcolm resigned his position in the Nation of Islam and renounced Elijah Muhammad, relations between the two had become increasingly volatile. FBI informants working undercover in the NOI warned officials that Malcolm had been marked for assassination. (One undercover officer had even been ordered to help plant a bomb in Malcolm's car).

After repeated attempts on his life, Malcolm rarely traveled anywhere without bodyguards. On February 14, 1965 the home where Malcolm, Betty and their four daughters lived in East Elmhurst, New York was firebombed. Luckily, the family escaped physical injury.

The legacy of "X"

One week later, however, Malcolm's enemies were successful in their ruthless attempt. At a speaking engagement in the Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom on February 21, 1965 three gunmen rushed Malcolm onstage. They shot him 15 times at close range. The 39-year-old was pronounced dead on arrival at New York's Columbia Presbyterian Hospital.

Fifteen hundred people attended Malcolm's funeral in Harlem on February 27, 1965 at the Faith Temple Church of God in Christ (now Child's Memorial Temple Church of God in Christ). After the ceremony, friends took the shovels away from the waiting gravediggers and buried Malcolm themselves.

Later that year, Betty gave birth to their twin daughters.

Malcolm's assassins, Talmadge Hayer, Norman 3X Butler and Thomas 15X Johnson were convicted of first-degree murder in March 1966. The three men were all members of the Nation of Islam.

The legacy of Malcolm X has moved through generations as the subject of numerous documentaries, books and movies. A tremendous resurgence of interest occurred in 1992 when director Spike Lee

released the acclaimed movie, Malcolm X. The film received Oscar nominations for Best Actor (Denzel Washington) and Best Costume Design.

Malcolm X is buried at the Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York.

Muslims in Arts & Culture

Kareem Salama

Kareem Salama, literally translated Generous Peace, was named by his mother. He was born and raised in a small town at the edge of Green Country in Oklahoma. Kareem grew up to be the Renaissance man his mother and father wanted him to be. He holds a degree in chemical engineering and a graduate degree in law. He has memorized classical western poetry and classical Arabic poetry. He enjoys boxing and riding horses. But perhaps most interestingly this son of Egyptian immigrants is a singer/songwriter with a country and pop flare.

Dawud Wharnsby Ali

Born and raised in Canada, Dawud Wharnsby began writing poetry, composing music and performing on stage while in his mid-teens. Two decades later, his recording career yields a string of over fifteen albums, including the internationally popular CD's "The Poets and the Prophet" and "Out Seeing the Fields". Dawud's writings of English language nasheed were among the first of their kind written and distributed professionally around the world. His anthology, "For Whom The Troubadour Sings" includes the lyrics to all of his songs written between 1998 and 2008. As a voice for the socially-conscious and spiritually-minded, Dawud's work has inspired a generation of educators, artists, poets and musicians. Though he continues to write, record and tour internationally, in recent years Dawud has become a strong advocate of Simple Living and more actively involved with educational initiatives promoting artistic expression as a means to achieve positive social change. He is the founder of Arts Initiative Enter Into Peace, encouraging a grass-roots approach to music production and distribution ~ where artists maintain full control of their music catalogs and recorded work.

As a result of his global efforts in community bridge-building, Dawud Wharnsby (also an avid hiker and lover of the outdoors) was declared an Ambassador of Scouting by the UK Scout Association as of June 2010.

Dawud and his family reside seasonally between their homes in Pakistan, Canada and the United States.

Native Deen

Native Deen is a fusion hip-hop band consisting of three African American Muslims. Joshua Salaam, Naeem Muhammad and Abdul-Malik Ahmad came together to form Native Deen in the year 2000. Previously solo artists, they decided to embark upon a professional career in the industry and use their music to highlight issues surrounding Muslim living in America.

The trio, have been inspiring millions of Muslims and non-Muslims of all ages and ethnicities from around the world. They have toured over 60 cities in America, Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Europe promoting their first album "Deen You Know" and helping Muslim be proud of their beliefs. They are currently putting the finishing touches to their new album "Not Afraid to Stand Alone" which should be released late November 2007.

Dean Obeidallah

Dean Obeidallah (Arabic: **دِينُ اَبْدَالِه**) is an Arab-American/Italian-American comedian, who was born in Lodi, New Jersey, and grew up in nearby Paramus.[1]. His father was born in Battir, Palestine- a small village near Bethlehem; his mother's parents were born in Sicily. He is part of a small but growing number of Middle Eastern-American comedians who have increasingly received media attention in the past few years, as they use comedy to both entertain and dispel negative stereotypes of Middle Eastern-Americans.

Like African-American comedians in the 1960s and 70s, Obeidallah and other Arab-American comics have been compared to the groundbreaking comedians who have used comedy to raise political and social issues in an effort to change them as noted by The Baltimore Sun's David Zurawik:

"Just as comic Lenny Bruce battled the stifling conformity of the 1950s or Dick Gregory and Richard Pryor challenged racism in the '60s and '70s, these performers now are challenging mainstream notions about their ethnic, religious and racial groups."

In 2005, Obeidallah received the first "Spirit of Bill Hicks" award, named in honor of comedian Bill Hicks for "thought provoking comedy" from the NY Underground Comedy Festival and the Hicks' family. He co-produced with the Emmy Award winning comedy writer and best-selling author Max Brooks a new show entitled The Watch List for Comedy Central's Internet channel. This was the

first show ever produced by a major American entertainment company to showcase all Middle Eastern-American performers. Obeidallah has also appeared on Comedy Central on the critically acclaimed "Axis of Evil" Comedy special.

Umm Zakiyyah

Umm Zakiyyah was born in 1975 in Long Island, New York, to parents who grew up Christian and converted to Islam after spending years in the Nation of Islam under the late Elijah Muhammad. Umm Zakiyyah spent most of her childhood in Indianapolis, Indiana, where she wrote articles for local newspapers and essays and poetry for college publications nationwide. In college, as a student at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, she wrote articles for the school's newspaper and received various awards for her leadership and academic achievements.

2001 marked the release of her first novel, *If I Should Speak*, which immediately received international attention, and quickly became a bestseller in stores throughout the United States. The novel further earned national and international acclaim from professors and writers, as well as from magazines and newspapers.

One of the most noteworthy reviews of this novel came from Dr. Robert D. Crane, advisor to former U.S. President Nixon, who said of Umm Zakiyyah's first book: "I could not put it down...I was fascinated not only by the plot of the novel, but especially by the brilliance of the writing itself. As a life-long, professional writer and editor, I can say that I have never encountered Umm Zakiyyah's equal in portraying the nuances of encounters between persons at all levels from the most superficial to the most profound. She is a clear example of a person who has natural talent. A person can be trained to write well, but no amount of training can bring a person without superb, natural talent to captivate the reader as she does and exert a permanent intellectual and emotional impact."

Professor K. Bryant of Howard University said of Umm Zakiyyah's *If I Should Speak*, "The novel belongs to...a genre worthy of scholarly study."

"*If I Should Speak*" was further elected for university studies in multicultural literature at colleges such as Indiana University, Bloomington; Howard University; and the University of D.C. It was further featured in the publication *Multicultural Perspectives* through Saint Cloud State University and University of Saint Thomas affiliation.

In 2008, she was awarded the Muslim Girls Unity Conference Distinguished Authors Award.

Umm Zakiyyah has authored four novels: *If I Should Speak*, *A Voice*, *Footsteps*, and *Realities of Submission*; and she has published several short stories and articles online.

Currently, Umm Zakiyyah is an American education consultant in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Baba Ali

Baba Ali (born Ali Ardekani) is the co-founder (along with Mahdi Ahmad) of UmmahFilms, a Muslim film company that has produced a web series including the "Reminder" series and "Ask Baba Ali" series. Though of Muslim heritage He was originally irreligious, but had practiced wiccan, and accepted Islam, after studying many religions.

A worker in the IT field by profession in California, Ardekani quickly rose to prominence within the online Muslim community with Ummah films that claim Islam is the best religion in the West and discuss various Islamic topics. Using humor, Baba Ali's work has found its way to television on the Islam Channel (Broadcast in the UK) and he has become a frequent guest at various Muslim conferences and events (Including the ICNA-MAS convention and Evening of Inspiration). His efforts have been featured in The New York Times and USA Today. Baba Ali recently launched his latest project, Half Our Deen, to help Muslims get married. He is currently writing the screenplay for a full length film. His films have grown widely popular on YouTube, gaining over 8 million views.

Ali has also designed two board games, Mecca to Medina (a game about trading and negotiating, invented by Ali as an Islamic-themed game that can be played by all religions) and Kalimaat.

Azhar Usman

CNN called him "America's Funniest Muslim," though he finds the title a bit much. "Comedy is so subjective," he protests, and Azhar Usman happens to know a thing or two about protest. He is a Chicago-based standup comedian and the co-founder of the wildly popular "Allah Made Me Funny—The Official Muslim Comedy Tour." He produced a documentary-concert film based on the Tour, which was released in select U.S. movie theaters in late 2008, quickly becoming one of the top-20 highest grossing standup comedy concert films of all time. Formally trained as an attorney, Azhar has been touring as a full-time comedian since 2004 and has performed in over twenty countries, on five continents, in multiple languages (English, Urdu/Hindi, Spanish, and Arabic). A global comedic phenomenon in a cosmopolitan age, Azhar Usman considers himself a "Citizen of the World" (also the name of his television project under development).

Azhar is an artist and an activist and continues to serve as a co-founding board member of The Nawawi Foundation, an Illinois non-profit dedicated to contemporary Islamic research (www.nawawi.org). He also serves as an Arts and Culture advisor to the Inner-city Muslim Action Network (IMAN) in Chicago (www.imancentral.org). He holds degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Minnesota Law School.

Michael Wolfe

Michael Wolfe was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, educated at Wesleyan University (Classics, 1968), and lives in Northern California. Michael Wolfe is a poet, author, and the President and Executive Producer of Unity Productions Foundation. He is also a frequent lecturer on Islamic issues at universities across the United States including Harvard, Georgetown, Stanford, SUNY Buffalo, and Princeton. He holds a degree in Classics from Wesleyan University.

Wolfe was a MacDowell Colony resident in poetry in 1968. He received an Amy Lowell Traveling Poets Scholarship in 1970, which was renewed for two further years. During this time he traveled and wrote in North and West Africa. His first books of poetry *How Love Gets Around* and *World Your Own*, fiction *Invisible Weapons*, and travel *In Morocco* derive from this period. In the 1980s, he returned to North Africa several more times and as a Muslim convert performed his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1990.

Wolfe's first works on Islam were a pair of books from Grove Press on the pilgrimage to Mecca: *The Hadj* (1993), a first-person travel account, and *One Thousand Roads to Mecca* (1997), an anthology of 10 centuries of travelers writing about the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. Shortly after 11 September 2001, he edited a collection of essays by American Muslims called *Taking Back Islam: American Muslims Reclaim Their Faith*. *Taking Back Islam* won the 2003 annual Wilbur Award for 'Best Book of the year on a Religious Theme.' In 2010, Blue Press Books published a chapbook of poems by Wolfe entitled *Paradise: Reading Notes*.

In April 1997, Wolfe hosted a televised account of the Hajj from Mecca for Ted Koppel's "Nightline" on ABC. The program was nominated for Peabody, Emmy, George Polk, and National Press Club Awards. It won the annual Media Award from the Muslim Public Affairs Council. In February 2003, Wolfe worked with CNN International television news reporter Zain Verjee to produce a new half-hour documentary on the Hajj. Wolfe has been featured on hundreds of regional and national radio talk shows.

In 1999, Wolfe helped found an educational media foundation focused on promoting peace through the media, Unity Productions Foundation (UPF). In 2002, UPF produced its first full-length film, called *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*, a two-hour television documentary on the life and times of the Prophet Muhammad. The film, which Wolfe co-created, co-produced, and co-executive edited, received a national broadcast on PBS and subsequent international broadcasts on National Geographic International. It was awarded a Cine Special Jury Award for Best Professional Documentary in its category of People and Places.

In 1990, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca and subsequently wrote two books on the subject.

He is currently Co-Executive Producer and President of Unity Productions Foundation, a nonprofit media company that produces documentary films.

Fazlur Rahman

Fazlur Rahman Khan (April 3, 1929 - March 27, 1982), born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was a Bangladeshi-American architect and structural engineer. He is a central figure behind the "Second Chicago School" of architecture, and is regarded as the "father of tubular design for high-rises". Khan, "more than any other individual, ushered in a renaissance in skyscraper construction during the second half of the twentieth century. "He is also considered to be the "Einstein of structural engineering" and "the greatest structural engineer of the second half of the 20th century" for his innovative use of structural systems that remain fundamental to modern skyscraper construction.[4] His most famous buildings are the John Hancock Center and the Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower), which was the world's tallest building for several decades.

Ayman Mohyeldin

Ayman Mohyeldin was a producer with CNN based in Baghdad for two years where he covered the immediate aftermath of the US-led invasion of Iraq. While there, he reported on the daily struggle of ordinary Iraqis and embedded with the US military to report on the Iraqi insurgency.

He was among the few international journalists allowed to observe and report on the US handover of Saddam Hussein to an Iraqi judge.

He has also produced exclusive reports from Libya where he was the first journalist to enter one of Libya's nuclear research facilities. In Saudi Arabia during the Hajj, Ayman reported live on the stampede that killed over 200 pilgrims in Mecca.

Ayman began his journalism career working for the American network NBC in Washington where he covered the inauguration of US President George Bush, the September 11 attacks and the war in Afghanistan. His work on a CNN documentary about daily life in Iraq was nominated for a highly prestigious American Emmy award.

Qasim “Q” Basir

Qasim “Q” Basir has been taking the movie industry by storm for years now, but it wasn’t always about the movies. He was planning on a career in law until he flew through the window of a car during a traffic accident in 2002. He said that while recovering from his injuries, "I decided I needed to do what I loved, and make a difference while doing so." That was making movies.

After completing his first project, 1Nation 2Worlds, he began doing just that. He took the film to Colleges and Universities all over the country, challenging students and professors to open discussions on the important issue of race. "I feel like ignorance is one of the most significant issues hindering our society today," says Qasim. His next film, award winning short "Glimpse," dealt with a different subject but had the same idea, erasing ignorance. But this time, as it deals with Muslims in

America. Next Qasim went on to create a short film series aimed at supporting Presidential candidate Barack Obama. The series, The Inspiration of Barack: "Yes We Can" Film Series, is a compilation of seven short films all dealing with different people who become inspired by Obama to take essential steps forward in their lives. Similar to 1Nation 2Worlds, he took the series to theaters around the country, urging attendees to get involved with the Obama campaign. "My whole purpose is to help change the world. Obama getting in office will be a huge step in that direction." Because of his work on this series, Qasim recently received the "Inspirational Filmmaker of the Year" award from the Memphis Black Writers Film Festival. The series can now be found in Blockbuster video & iTunes.com.

More recently, Qasim has refocused his attention to his next feature film "MOOZ-lum", starring Evan Ross, Nia Long, Danny Glover, Roger Guenveur Smith, Summer Bishil & Dorian Missick.

Ms. Latifah

Born in Los Angeles, California, Latifah was always ready to perform. As a child, her mother would make up songs for her to sing at family reunions, making sure she wasn't afraid of the spotlight. As she got older, she found other passions that led her to put down the microphone and pick up some sticks. Latifah played the drums for Redan High School's marching band, in Stone Mountain, Georgia. She then parlayed her talent into a band scholarship to attend Clark Atlanta University. Latifah can sing, rap, and write poetry. She has been writing music since she was ten years old. After deciding to showcase her talent, she has been performing regularly around Atlanta's hot spots. "I perform because there are few young, African-American women that are not conforming to society's expectations. I want to be the one to prove that you can be yourself and still get support." Latifah wants her words to be felt and not just heard. Her first album, entitled "They Call Me Crazy", is a compilation of spoken word, hip-hop, r&b, and neo-soul flavor. "Radio" is her first recorded song that was inspired by a radio morning show who exclaimed they would never play poetry on the air. Latifah is determined to change their minds.

Jawed Karim

Co-founder of the YouTube website, Jawed Karim was born in East Germany in 1979, and soon moved to West Germany and thence to the United States. He attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but left prior to graduating to become an employee at internet company PayPal (he later completed his coursework by mail and earned his bachelor's degree in computer science in 2004).

As its founders have pointed out, a number of startup companies have originated with employees of PayPal. YouTube was one of them -- it was while working at PayPal that Karim met Chad Hurley and Steve Chen, and the three put together an office in a garage, funded by venture capital from the firm Sequoia Capital. Throughout 2006, when the site got on its feet, YouTube was one of the fastest-

growing and most popular websites, allowing browsers to view or upload short video clips ranging from home videos to excerpts of sitcoms or movies -- but especially including "viral videos," the sorts of videos that internet users have been sharing with each other for a decade. The site's demographics are solidly adolescent, a group that has the most time for watching video after video, no matter how brief.

While it has been targeted repeatedly by copyright infringement lawsuits, sometimes by copyright holders who do not seem aware that YouTube allows users to put content up but does not put it up them, YouTube has nevertheless thrived. Google purchased the company in late 2006 for \$1.65 billion in stock, making the founders multimillionaires. The company has announced the incredibly ambitious goal of hosting every music video every made, by early 2009. There are plans for sharing ad revenue with active uploaders, the people providing the content that draws users to the site.

Karim has recently founded Youniversity Ventures, a venture fund aimed at helping university students launch their business ideas.

Tariq Farid

(President/CEO, Edible Arrangements)

Edible Arrangements is the industry leader of high quality, artistically designed fresh fruit arrangements. The 2009 recipient of the International Franchise Association's 'Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Mr. Farid is responsible for setting the company's strategic direction and for the licensing of new franchises across the United States and internationally.

Mr. Farid launched the first Edible Arrangements® store in 1999 in East Haven, Connecticut, inspired by the convergence of three trends: Americans' growing consumption of fresh fruit, the robust growth in the specialty food market and the increasing dollars Americans were spending on gifts. For the past four years, Edible Arrangements® has been named one of America's fastest-growing privately held businesses in America by Inc. magazine and one of the top franchise systems in Entrepreneur Annual Franchise 500® magazine.

Amir Sulaiman

Amir Sulaiman is a writer, activist, and educator has been a prominent figure on the spoken word scene for several years now. His poems transcend cultural and religious boundaries and speak of the ailments of all humanity. Twice featured on HBO's Def Jam Poetry, his powerful call for socio-political consciousness and change has left audiences and critics alike in awe whenever he performs.

Sahar Ishtiaque Ullah

Sahar Ishtiaque Ullah is the writer, co-founder and sometimes director for the Hijabi Monologues project. Born and raised in South Florida, Sahar received her BA from the University of Miami, majoring in English, Religious Studies and Political Science and her MA in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago. She then went on to study at the American University in Cairo for two years as a CASA I and II Fellow, supplementing her studies by exploring Cairo and other cities within the region. In addition to speaking Arabic, she can hold an unrefined conversation in Bengali and not-so-secretly wishes to recover the Spanish she learned to love in public school. For over ten years, she organized study circles for Muslim teenagers, women and children from whom she learned the priceless value of “I don’t know” and lived experiences.

Boonaa Mohammed

Dubbed the “voice of a generation,” Boonaa Mohammed is a critically acclaimed award winning writer and performer with accolades including a playwright residency at Theatre Passe Muraille, a short story published in a Penguin Canada anthology called “Piece by Piece” and various slam poetry titles including winner of the 2007 CBC Poetry Face-Off “Best New Artist” award. As an Artist he has toured and traveled across the world and frequently conducts writing workshops and seminars, sharing his experience and expertise in social justice based story telling with mainly youth from all walks of life.

Hamza Pérez

Puerto Rican-American rapper Hamza Pérez pulled himself out of drug dealing and street life 12 years ago and became a Muslim. Now he’s moved to Pittsburgh’s tough North Side to start a new religious community, rebuild his shattered family and take his message of faith to other young people through hard-hitting hip-hop music. But when the FBI raids his mosque, Hamza must confront the realities of the post-9/11 world, and himself. New Muslim Cool takes viewers on Hamza’s ride through streets, slums and jail cells — following his spiritual journey to some surprising places in an America that never stops changing.

Tayyibah Taylor

Tayyibah Taylor is the founding editor-in-chief and publisher of Azizah Magazine, the voice of Muslim American women and recipient of a 2009 New American Media National Ethnic Journalism Award. Ms. Taylor has also contributed to PINK Magazine, The Review & Expositor, Aramco Magazine and other publications. She has presented lectures on Islam and Muslim women at national and international conferences, including the Duke University’s Marketing Muslim Women Conference, the Fulbright Symposium in Perth, Australia, the Harvard Divinity School’s Islam in

America Conference, the International Islamic University of Malaysia's Islam and Muslims in the 21st Century Conference, and the Lecture Series at the women's college of Shariah and Law of the International Islamic University of Islamabad, Pakistan.

Ms. Taylor received the 2005 Media Award from the Concerned Black Clergy of Atlanta, the 2003 Honoring Women in the Media Award from the Muslim Women's League and the 2002 Hagar Achievement through Sacrifice Award from Sisters United in Human Service. She attended the 2008 Leadership Institute for Women Journalists, and is a graduate of Leadership Atlanta (Class 2005) and the Diversity Leadership Academy (Atlanta Class 2003).

Born on the island of Trinidad, Ms. Taylor grew up in Canada, studying biology and philosophy at the University of Toronto. She also attended classes at King Abdul-Aziz University for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. She has traveled to 31 countries, including five interfaith pilgrimages to Europe and the Middle East and also in the capacity of a public diplomacy envoy.

Muslims in Sports

Muhammad Ali

Boxer, philanthropist, social activist. Born Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr. on January 17, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky. Once one of the top American boxers, Muhammad Ali has shown that he is not afraid of any fight—inside or outside the ring. Growing up in the segregated South, Ali experienced firsthand the prejudice and discrimination that African-Americans faced during this era.

At the age of 12, Ali discovered his talent for boxing through an odd twist of fate. His bike was stolen, and Ali told a police officer, Joe Martin, that he wanted to beat up the thief. "Well, you better learn how to fight before you start challenging people," Martin reportedly told him at the time. In addition to being a police officer, Martin also trained young boxers at a local gym.

Ali started working with Martin to learn how to box, and soon began his boxing career. In his first amateur bout in 1954, he won the fight by split decision. Ali went on to win the 1956 Golden Gloves Championship for novices in the light heavyweight class. Three years later, he won the Golden Gloves Tournament of Champions and the Amateur Athletic Union's national title for the light-heavyweight division.

In 1960, Ali won a spot on the U.S. Olympic Boxing Team. He traveled to Rome, Italy, to compete. At 6 feet 3 inches tall, Ali was an imposing figure in the ring. He was known for his footwork, and for possessing a powerful jab. After winning his first three bouts, Ali then defeated Zbigniew Pietrzkowski from Poland to win the gold medal.

After his Olympic victory, Ali was heralded as an American hero. He soon turned professional with the backing of the Louisville Sponsoring Group. During the 1960s Ali seemed unstoppable, winning all of his bouts with majority of them being by knockouts. He took out British heavyweight champion Henry Cooper in 1963 and then knocked out Sonny Liston in 1964 to become the heavyweight champion of the world.

Often referring to himself as "the greatest," Ali was not afraid to sing his own praises. He was known for boasting about his skills before a fight and for his colorful descriptions and phrases. In one of his more famously quoted descriptions, Ali told reporters that he could "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee" in the boxing ring.

This bold public persona belied what was happening in Ali's personal life, however. He was doing some spiritual searching and decided to join the black Muslim group, the Nation of Islam, in 1964. At first he called himself Cassius X, but then settled into the name Muhammad Ali. Two years later, Ali started a different kind of fight when he refused to acknowledge his military service after being drafted. He said that he was a practicing Muslim minister, and that his religious beliefs prevented him from fighting in the Vietnam War.

In 1967, Ali put his personal values ahead of his career. The U.S. Department of Justice pursued a legal case against Ali, denying his claim for conscientious objector status. He was found guilty of refusing to be inducted into the military, but Ali later cleared his name after a lengthy court battle. Professionally, however, Ali did not fare as well. The boxing association took away his title and suspended him from the sport for three and a half years.

Returning to the ring in 1970, Ali won his first bout after his forced hiatus. He knocked out Jerry Quarry in October in Atlanta. The following year, Ali took on Joe Frazier in what has been called the "Fight of the Century." Frazier and Ali went for 15 rounds before Frazier dropped Ali to the ground, scoring a knockout. Ali later beat Frazier in a 1974 rematch.

Another legendary Ali fight took place in 1974. Billed as the "Rumble in the Jungle," the bout was organized by promoter Don King and held in Kinshasa, Zaire. Ali fought the reigning heavyweight champion George Foreman. For once, Ali was seen as the underdog to his younger, powerful opponent. Ali silenced his critics by defeating Foreman and once again becoming the heavyweight champion of the world.

Perhaps one of his toughest bouts took place in 1975 when he battled longtime rival Joe Frazier in the "Thrilla in Manila" fight. Held in Quezon City, Philippines, the match lasted for more than 14 rounds with each fighter giving it their all. Ali emerged victorious in the end.

By the late 1970s, Ali's career had started to decline. He was defeated by Leon Spinks in 1978 and was knocked out by Larry Holmes in 1980. In 1981, Ali fought his last bout, losing his heavyweight title to Trevor Berbick. He announced his retirement from boxing the next day.

In his retirement, Ali has devoted much of his time to philanthropy. He announced that he has Parkinson's disease in 1984, a degenerative neurological condition, and has been involved in raising funds for the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Over the years, Ali has also supported the Special Olympics and the Make a Wish Foundation among other organizations.

Muhammad Ali has traveled to numerous countries, including Mexico and Morocco, to help out those in need. In 1998, he was chosen to be a United Nations Messenger of Peace because of his work in developing countries.

In 2005, Ali received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush. He also opened the Muhammad Ali Center in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, that same year. "I am an ordinary man who worked hard to develop the talent I was given," he said. "I believed in myself and I believe in the goodness of others," said Ali. "Many fans wanted to build a museum to acknowledge my achievements. I wanted more than a building to house my memorabilia. I wanted a place that would inspire people to be the best that they could be at whatever they chose to do, and to encourage them to be respectful of one another."

Despite the progression of his disease, Ali remains active in public life. He embodies the true meaning of a champion with his tireless dedication to the causes he believes in. He was on hand to celebrate the inauguration of the first African-American president in January 2009 when Barack

Obama was sworn-in. Soon after the inauguration, Ali received the President's Award from the NAACP for his public service efforts.

As he has done every year since its inception, Ali hosted the 15th Annual Celebrity Fight Night Awards in Phoenix in March 2009. The event benefited the Celebrity Fight Night Foundation and the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center.

Ali has been married to his fourth wife, Yolanda, since 1986. The couple has one son, Asaad, and Ali has several children from previous relationships, including daughter Laila who followed in his footsteps for a time as a professional boxer.

Kareem Abdul Jabbar

When Kareem Abdul-Jabbar left the game in 1989 at age 42, no NBA player had ever scored more points, blocked more shots, won more Most Valuable Player Awards, played in more All-Star Games or logged more seasons. His list of personal and team accomplishments is perhaps the most awesome in league history: Rookie of the Year, member of six NBA championship teams, six-time NBA MVP, two-time NBA Finals MVP, 19-time All-Star, two-time scoring champion, and a member of the NBA 35th and 50th Anniversary All-Time Teams. He also owned eight playoff records and seven All-Star records. No player achieved as much individual and team success as did Abdul-Jabbar.

Before the 1971-72 season Alcindor converted from Catholicism to Islam and took the name Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, which means "noble, powerful servant." He was certainly a noble, powerful player, enjoying stellar years with Milwaukee. In 1971-72 he repeated as scoring champion (34.8 ppg) and NBA Most Valuable Player, and the Bucks repeated as division leaders for the second of four straight years. In 1973-74 Abdul-Jabbar won his third MVP Award in only his fifth year in the league and placed among the NBA's top five in four categories: scoring (27.0 ppg, third), rebounding (14.5 rpg, fourth), blocked shots (283, second) and field-goal percentage (.539, second).

Since retiring, Abdul-Jabbar has authored several books, worked in the entertainment business and served as a "basketball ambassador," working in various capacities such as a coach and broadcaster as well as helped to fight hunger and illiteracy. In 1995 Abdul-Jabbar was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Bilqis Abdul-Qadir

Bilqis Abdul-Qadir is the first Massachusetts high school basketball player -- boy or girl -- to score more than 3,000 points in a career.

Born Nov. 11, 1990 in Springfield, Mass., her brother, Yusuf Abdul-Ali also played college basketball at Bentley College, helping his team to the NCAA Division II Final Four two different times. She plans on majoring in pre-med at Memphis with an interest in cardiac surgery.

Hakeem Abdul Olajuwon

Hakeem Abdul Olajuwon is a former professional basketball player in the United States and best known for his years with the NBA's Houston Rockets.

Hakeem Olajuwon was born Akeem Abdul Olajuwon in Lagos, Nigeria on January 21, 1963. As a child, Hakeem was a soccer and handball player, which helped him become agile and balanced as a basketball player. His first basketball game was at the age of 15 when he entered a local tournament. From that moment, basketball was the game of his heart.

When he came of age, Hakeem Olajuwon emigrated from Nigeria to play basketball for the University of Houston. While in college, his university teams competed in three NCAA Tournaments, but never won the championship game. However, in 1983 even though his team lost the championship, he won the NCAA Tournament Player of the Year award. Hakeem Olajuwon became the top NBA prospect in the summer of 1984 and was the number one draft pick of the Houston Rockets. He was chosen over competitors Michael Jordan and Charles Barkley.

With the Houston Rockets, Hakeem Olajuwon was part of two championship teams (1994 and 1995). After the 1993 basketball season, he became a naturalized citizen of the United States which made him eligible to join the Olympic Team in 1996. That team won the Olympic Gold Medal in Basketball. In 2001, Hakeem Olajuwon was traded to the Toronto Raptors. This was his final season as a basketball player. He is regarded as one of the five greatest centers to ever play the game.

Hakeem Olajuwon married his current wife Dalia Asafi in 1996. The two live with their family primarily in Jordan, where he practices the Muslim faith. His family also keeps a home in Houston, Texas where Hakeem Olajuwon is a renowned real estate mogul.

In 2006, he opened his first "Big Man" camp, which teaches young basketball players good techniques for being a force on the court. He runs the camp for free.