



Ilhan Omar

The former Refugee could become the First Muslim Somali American Elected to Congress, If she wins November's Election.

By: Aysha Qamar

Set to make history after winning a seat in Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District, Ilhan Omar is likely becoming the first Somali-American in Congress.

Two years ago Omar made news as the first Somali-American elected to a state legislature in Minnesota by defeating a 22-term Democratic incumbent.

Not only is Omar set to be the first Somali-American to ever hold national office but she would potentially be joining Palestinian-American



Rashida Tlaib, who won her Democratic primary in Michigan. "I can't wait to walk onto

the floor of United States Congress hand in hand with you. So incredibly proud of

you," Tlaib wrote on Twitter.

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Muslim American Leadership and Law Enforcement Agencies

By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Some Muslim Americans are very angry with law enforcement agencies especially FBI, consequently, they have taken a position boycotting any interaction or dialogue with its officials. Muslims are not unanimous on this yet, but some of their major organizations have taken this stand.

Is this a pragmatic deci-



sion and what message does it communicate to law enforcement agencies and the country as a whole?

Doubtlessly, since 9/11, Muslim Americans and Muslim, in general, have often been viewed by many politicians, and even some law enforcement agents as suspects.

The use of financial resources in monitoring Muslim organizations and centers is not uncommon in several states.

Often, the right-wing leaders have promoted the idea that Muslims cannot be trusted as their agenda is to promote the domination of

Cont. on page 14.

Katy Man And his WhatsApp crew Formed an army of helpers



By Monica Rhor

Shakeib Mashhood pushed out the first message on WhatsApp at 3:59 p.m. on Aug. 27, just as Hurricane Harvey whirled into Houston with torrential rains, thunderstorms and tor-

nadoes.

The director of Mashhood's mosque would lose his home in one of the twisters. Neighbors on the other side of a placid park at the end of his cul-de-sac in Katy

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Ozil and the case of racism in Europe



By: Nikolaos Barbaressos

“Whenever we win, I am German, when we lose, I am an immigrant” These were the words of Mesut Ozil in the aftermath of the criticism of his bad performance during the 2018 world cup in Russia.

As an avid soccer fan, and as someone who has watched Mesut Ozil throughout his career, I will attest that indeed Ozil’s performance was horrid, however, I will say the same for the

whole German team. The team lacked passion and the “play until the final second” mentality of the German national team we usually see, however singling out Ozil did not come as surprise.

Right around the beginning of this years’ World Cup, Romelu Lukaku the Belgian striker of Congolese roots authored an article where he expresses the same grievances as Ozil. Of course, these are two are not the only examples.

With the rise of xenophobia and Islamophobia in Europe this type of treatment by Europeans is expected. What is profound in the case of Ozil is the unprecedented attack he received by high ranking German soccer officials such national Germany team coach Oliver Bierhoff and the head of the German football federation.

Following these attacks, Ozil quit the national team and even then received criticism as he was called a coward by doing so.

For a soccer player, representing their country is the greatest honor he or she can receive during their playing career, and for a world champion such as Mesut Ozil who has represented Germany 97 times to quit at the age of 29 was not an easy decision. That is not cowardice; that was the bravest thing he could have done.

Despite the current political climate in the United States of

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Back to Islam



By: Muhammad Obis bin 'Abdullah

Praise be to Allah, the Eternal Refuge. I ask Him to bless our Noble Prophet Muhammad ?, his family and all who believe and thank Him for guiding me to the Straight Path, Islam, and for removing the veil from my eyes through His Mercy so that I could understand that He sent the glorious Qur'an. I have heard other reverts say that Islam was the last religion that they turned to in their search for the best way of living. That was also true for me.

My grandmother taught me most of what I knew about religion as a child. She was a devout Irish Catholic who instilled in me a deep love of Jesus, his mother Mary, and Saint Michael the Archangel – peace be upon them. My parents honored the religious tradition she loved by sending me to Christian schools, and I heard about Islam for the first time in my high school religious studies class. We were taught that there were five "great" religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. At my university, I was surprised to learn in a Judaic studies class that Muslims, like Christians, also believed that Jesus was born

miraculously of Mary, peace and blessings of God be upon them.

Islam disappeared from my mind for several years later until a Muslim in a bookstore next to a mosque in Seoul, South Korea, told me that a man's intention is part of his soul. Despite these early encounters with Islam, it did not yet become my way of life. Nonetheless, they were like illuminating seeds that would eventually take root in the landscape of my heart.

I took a job in Japan, still looking for the best way of living. In Kyoto, there were a multiplicity of shrines devoted to various spirits, but I turned again to what I knew, which meant to pray the rosary intensively. Catholics say the Hail Mary prayer one hundred times when they pray the rosary: "Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us ..." Before long, I began to wonder for the first time in my life, "How could God have a mother?"

As an American whose parents had grown up in the "Vietnam era," that country had long held a place in my consciousness, and I decided to travel there, to see if I could find the secret to life. To my surprise, I found that there were many Christian churches in

the south

Vietnam. I began attending Mass every day. The priests were humble, and devoted to poverty – they seemed to be living in the way Jesus ? had taught in the Gospels. I thought that the path that would be best suited for me would be to become a priest. But when I started to research how to become a priest, I found that part of the initiation ceremony involved lying face-down on the ground in front of a bishop. "If this is done for a human, then what is left for God?" I remember thinking.

Inspired by this idea at an orphanage in neighboring Cambodia, I began praying by lying face-down on the ground. Around that time, I was inspired to go to Saudi Arabia to learn about Islam. But in order to process the visa, it was necessary that I first return to the United States. When I returned to the States from Cambodia, one of the first things I did was buy an English Qur'an. I was reading the Psalms and the Bible, trying to make sense of it all. One thing I felt sure of was that my Christian practices were not affording me great protection from devils. Islam and Judaism had so much in common that I felt that either

of those religions must be the correct one.

In Chicago, my father – may Allah have mercy on him – undertook to help me in my spiritual quest by taking me around to venues of various religions to let me find what was right. One day, we went to a Jewish neighborhood in north Skokie. He bought me a wool shawl with verses of the Torah on it called a tallit that Jews wear during prayer. All the tassels were white. None of them was blue, even though God commanded that in the Torah. I learned that most tallitot are made without the blue strand because the Rabbis cannot decide how the blue dye should be made. I got a blue pen and colored one of the tassels blue, to conform with the Torah. Although he was not a Jew or Muslim, he later brought me to a mosque, on 1/1/1433. A sign in the window said: "Don't talk to strangers."

I went out for pizza with some visitors to Chicago. I had been thinking of giving up eating pork, and midway through our meal, I realized that the sausage in the local pizza might contain pork. That evening I said to Allah, "I will never eat pork again." When I

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THE STATUS OF THE POOR IN THE UMMAH

by Faraz Omar (Editor Saudi Gazette)

“O, Prophet of Allah! The rich among us have taken away all the rewards,” complained the poor Companions. “They pray as we pray, they fast as we fast, but they also give wealth in charity (while we have no wealth to spend).” (Refer Imam Nawawi’s 40 Hadith for the full narration.)

THE poor among the Ummah deserve a special mention because they are more often than not overlooked, their interests disregarded and their voices ignored. Throughout human history, they have always been the first to believe in the Messengers of Allah, and they will enter Jannah 500 years before everyone else.

During Ramadan last year, at the initiative of a friend, we stood at a traffic signal giving away dates, water and laban just before Iftar time for commuting people who may not have a chance otherwise to break their fast with food. We distributed all the food packs without realizing we had kept none for ourselves, which left us with no other option than breaking our fast at a masjid nearby. The adhan was called while we were heading to the masjid.

We joined the “banquet” of a people who would seldom – if ever – join ours. They were those whose names would never find place in the sprawling invitations we give out for our lavish feasts. Yes, they were all there – the African children and the Asian laborers.

Yet they welcomed us with a smile and made space for us. They shared their Iftar, which was no more than some dates, a piece of bread that they broke into half for us, and some drinks. Being used to excess, we couldn’t imagine how the already small meal would be sufficient for them if they divided between us.

The African children,



stereotyped for crimes and what not, were wonderful. A boy turned to me and passed on his can of soft drink. What should I do? I refused. “Children they are after all, who not just love, but crave for sweet drinks,” I thought. He pushed the can towards me and gestured he would share his friend’s.

These are people who we don’t even say our salaams to. The Black women scavengers are seen all around the country. They stop with their trolleys and children at the time of Salah and pray on pavements. Nevertheless, we pass them by as if they don’t exist, as if they are excluded from the obligation of saying salaams to our fellow Muslims.

How much did I learn from that incident? I don’t know. Which lesson was the most important – being content with little; giving preference to others over ourselves; or genuine hospitality? I don’t know. I was reminded of a narration in Al-Bukhari: A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Poverty has struck me.”

The Prophet asked his wives if they had anything to feed the man. They had none. So an Ansari man came forward to host the man. He took him home and told his wife, “Entertain the guest of Allah’s Messenger generously.” She said, “By Allah! We

have nothing except the meal for my children.” He replied, “Put your children to sleep if they ask for supper. Turn off the lamps. We go to bed hungry tonight.” The lights were put off so the guest wouldn’t know the hosts had nothing to eat, but were merely pretending to eat in their empty plates. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said the next morning that Allah “laughed at the action of so-and-so and his wife” and then revealed the verse, “and they give them preference over themselves even though they were in need of that.” (Qur’an, 59:9)

Life carried on and the incident was soon buried

in the sands of time till something similar took place this Ramadan. This time we were in the Prophet’s Mosque, waiting for the time of Iftar. As is the usual practice, locals of Madina compete with each other to serve the fasting people. The sufra was spread early, and the people were taking their spots – the places from where they would serve.

The hosts of the sufra where I was seated were a father and four sons, the eldest of whom looked no more than twelve. As yoghurt, bread, dates and water were being dished out, one of the boys would stand by the passageway inviting the influx of worshipers to break the fast at his sufra. He had many competitors to worry about. When people walked past him without paying any attention, he started to cling on to their arms with his tiny hands, pleading them to be his guests.

What desire to serve! How could any number of words describe that sight, or describe the emotions that would erupt from such a sight?

My hosts did not appear rich. Their clothes were simple. The father’s thobe was, according to the standards of elite,

dirty. The family appeared to be even larger, and their income modest. Yet they were here spending their valuable money to feed others, so they could please their Lord and earn some reward.

There we were, sitting with fine, pressed clothes, eating shamelessly, and being pleased with the “how-good-we-are” thought. Such incidents really show who the real miskeen are. We have built up fortunes of kings, but give charity less than a pauper would. The truly rich are not those who have more cash, they are those who have big hearts filled with lots of generosity.

With all the education, culture and enlightenment, if we have not come up to the level of underprivileged Muslims in character then there’s some fundamental flaw in the methodology of our learning.

If the Prophet ﷺ ‘alayhi wa sallam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were alive today, the rich would really be complaining, “O, Prophet of Allah! The poor among us have taken away all the rewards!”

This article was published in the Saudi Gazette.



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Muslim Woman Unethically Searched By TSA

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has called for an investigation into the conduct of Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Custom and Border Protection (CBP) officers and for the release of relevant records in a case for Zainab Merchant.

by Aysa Qamar

The 27-year-old Muslim woman was forced to show her menstrual pad during a search at a Boston airport.

During a security pat-down, an officer began to touch Merchant's genital area, and suggested that it was required for them to take a "deeper look."

Merchant, who felt more comfortable to keep the search public, explained that she was wearing a menstrual pad. Despite expressing she wanted to stay in front of the view of others, TSA officers refused and said that if she did not comply state troopers would intervene.

Merchant was allegedly pressured into following two TSA officers to a private office and forbidden from calling her lawyer. Here, Merchant told the Huffington Post, she was asked to pull down her pants and underwear.

Airport officials then refused to identify themselves and provide badge numbers when Merchant requested, to deter her from filing a complaint.

According to Merchant, the TSA officers covered their badges with their hands and walked away.

The horrific incident was only one of the numerous incidents of profiling and excessive searches Merchant said she had experienced in the last two years.



Since September 2016, she has undergone a series of what the ACLU cites as "intrusive, humiliating searches — often in ways that appear duplicative and unnecessary — every time she has sought to board an airplane or reenter the United States."

According to the Huffington Post, the complaint, signed by Hugh Handeyside, a senior staff attorney at the ACLU handling Merchant's case, details at least 10 times she was subjected to excessive searches by airport officials upon entering an airport, at a gate in front of other passengers and even during layovers.

Border officials have also wrongfully questioned Merchant on her religious beliefs, thoughts of

ISIS and United States government policies.

"It's important for the public to understand, it's important for the government to understand that when you do this to someone repeatedly, when you single them out, when you rifle through their belongings in front of everybody and when you do that again at the gate in front of passengers they are about to travel with, you are exacting a real psychological mental toll," Handeyside said. "You're putting these people through highly stigmatizing experiences."

Merchant is hopeful justice

will be served and her name is cleared from any alleged security list. "I hope that they hear us loud and clear," Merchant told reporters. "I'm not going to stop fighting for my rights. This is affecting us on a daily basis now. I'm not going to stop. I'm not going to give up, no matter what happens. I just want them to give us answers as to why this is happening and what I can do to rectify it, because I haven't done anything wrong. Just give us some answers."

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Militarizing Space: If We Don't, They Will

By Haroon Imtiaz

The Trump administration recently announced a plan to establish a new branch of the United States Armed Forces. This branch, according to Vice President Mike Pence, will be called the "Space Force," and will serve to protect U.S. national security from up above.

Pence's latest remarks showcase another absurdity to be launched by the current administration. Not only will such a plan be an astronomical waste of dollars, but will also elevate the likelihood of major-power conflict in the future.

This much is clear, or even self-explanatory from my perspective. However, it is simply not the case with the Trump administration and the Pentagon, who would strenuously object.



They would say, "If we don't, they will."

The "they" would most likely be a reference to one of the other major powers such as China or Russia, both of whom—according to Pence—are already in the business of militarizing space.

Such rhetoric would be unsurprising to me, and would only serve as an

affirmation that American national security doctrine is largely guided by fear of competitors and adversaries.

In addition, it is not hard to tell that many of our elected officials and military leaders are highly invested in preventing our adversaries from gaining a leg up on our country, be it militarily or economically. This em-

phasis of theirs on repelling our adversaries often comes at the expense of the general population at home and abroad.

But such considerations are often extraneous in the minds of U.S. military elites and foreign policy officials. Many of them think in terms of what the American political theorist George Kennan called "straight

power concepts." This meaning that they solely devote their efforts to devising schemes by which the U.S. can maintain its military, political, and economic supremacy. Sadly enough, these efforts leave no room for thoughts of freedom, democracy, and human rights. They leave no thought for our constitutional ideals. They leave no thought for domestic and international law. And if they do, that is coincidental.

Such is the Kennan doctrine.

It leaves us only with a plan for eternal warfare. And this is the doctrine that the Trump administration and the Pentagon revere. They have come to believe in the Orwellian dictum that war is peace, and are now trying to sell it to us as others have done so in the past.

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TMO's Exclusive Interview with Rashida Tlaib



TMO's Aftab Borke's exclusive interview with Rashida Tlaib

What does it mean to you personally now that you know you will be in Congress?

"Personally, it hasn't sunken in for me. I think people around me that know me the best, that have known me forever still are like 'You are gonna be a Congresswoman.' and I'm like yeah, still not that I dismiss, I am so humbled and inspired by my district that is majority non-Muslim majority non-Arab, this is where I grew up and always felt like I didn't have to hide who I am and I didn't throughout this campaign so when I won it's such a powerful message for the world for this country during a time that has been pretty

dark for us pretty painful to watch our neighbors from all backgrounds get attacked..."

What would you tell people from all different backgrounds looking at you as the first Muslim woman in Congress?

"Just that you know, this is a possibility, they should see hope. During a Trump era in our country, they don't have to live here to feel the pain of having the most powerful leader in the world, Donald Trump, who says- who dehumanizes Muslims, who dehumanizes Arabs, dehumanizes women- that someone like me can run for office in a predominately

White-African American district and win and walk the halls of Congress even though he's trying to ban us and from coming into the United States.

People have power. This people-driven campaign won against hate, won against this big movement of White Supremacy that we have in the United States and their heads should be lifted up higher knowing that we do have the power to change the world and the change the outcome of the direction we are going. We do not have to be coming from wealthy families or wait for someone else to do it, we can do it ourselves."

What is your number one focus in Congress?

"I could tell you as soon as I get there I want to work on my Justice for All proposal. It's a Justice for All Civil Rights Act."

Regarding Donald Trump- and asking him if he read the Constitution and the energy you had when he came to Detroit when you join Congress will that energy still remain working with the White House?

"You'll see a lot of moral courage that you saw in that young girl standing up a few years ago. He was a candidate at the time and a lot of people don't realize it wasn't just me it was 12 other women... It was a coalition of incredible women from all across Michigan

who wanted to be heard and wanted to push back against the ugliness he was bringing forward especially against women."

What advice would you tell the younger generation of girls

"I just want them to know you don't have to change who you are. You can be exactly who you are and run and lead movements and organize your communities, even if they don't look like you, have the same faith or ethnicity, know that if you do it from a place of love it is going to change the world, even if it's the small world you live in. Be you and you will have so much fun and be empowered."



Rashida Tlaib with TMO's staff

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American Muslims Represent Most Diverse US Group



By: TMO Staff

Islam is not only the fastest growing religion in the world but one of the most diverse.

Muslims represent one of the most diverse populations not only globally but in the United States.

Attire, culture, values- with the diversity amongst American Muslims in race, color, culture and ethnicity, no one group of people can be easily identified as Muslim. Muslims come in all shapes and sizes.

Islam is a fast growing religion with many converts and cultures adding to the diversity and beauty of it.

According to the Pew Research Center, while the global population is expected to grow 32 percent by 2060, the number

of those who identify as Muslims is expected to grow by 70 percent.

Muslims are the youngest major religious group in the world with a median age of 24. With Muslims representing a



high youth population, Muslims are constantly impacting and influencing future generations.

American Muslims are

not only ethnically and culturally diverse but also ideologically diverse. Studies show at least 30 percent identify as liberal and about 20 percent identify as conservative.

Despite their political

majority communities or persons in Republican ideology.

According to studies, in the 2016 presidential election, 78 percent of Muslim American voters said they voted for Hillary Clinton, which is a much lower share than the 92 percent who said they voted for Barack Obama in 2008. Many Muslims refrained to vote in 2016 believing both candidates held anti-Muslim viewpoints.

While awareness of the diversity of Islam is increasing day by day, violence against Muslims still continues.

A study published by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in April reported 300 recorded cases of hate crimes against Muslims in 2017, a rise of 15

percent on the previous year.

Yet, hope remains.

Photo series such as "Muslims of America" and other projects are increasingly becoming popular to depict the diversity and combat stereotypes associated with American Muslims.

According to reports, one most likely is to "hate" a Muslim if they have not met one.

We can only hope that more people begin to learn about Islam and interact with Muslims, to realize we are all American despite the experiences, history and features we may carry.

Our religion should not be associated with a label built on ignorance and we as American Muslims

Flavorful Avocado Rolls



Last week we've discussed several health concerns that arise with popular dishes served in restaurants as award-winning appetizers. They might be tasty, crunchy, and bursting with flavor, but they come along with detrimental health consequences. If these appetizers are deep-fried,

they're most likely fried in genetically engineered oils, such as soybean, canola, vegetable, or corn.

Even worse, they may be fried in hydrogenated oil, one of the worst choices for your cardiovascular health. Moreover, one must be careful that the restaurant does not fry the vegetarian-filled ap-

petizers in the same frying oil as ones containing pork. For that, it's best to make these avocado rolls at home.

Not only will you guarantee it's not fried with pork-filled appetizers, but you will be more aware of the quality and nutritional value of the ingredients as well. Enjoy these avocado rolls on their own or aside your favorite grilled salmon for dinner.

Ingredients:

- 1 pack spring rolls (look for one with clean ingredients)
- 6 avocados
- 2 tomatoes
- 2 medium red onions

- 1 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- ½ teaspoon black peppercorn
- 1 tablespoon dried dill
- 1 teaspoon garlic, ground
- ½ teaspoon ground mustard seed
- ¼ teaspoon red cayenne pepper
- organic cold-pressed avocado oil (for brushing)

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Chop the onions and

tomatoes into small pieces and place in a large mixing bowl. Chop the parsley; add to the bowl.

2. Chop the avocados into cubes and add to the bowl. Add the oil and spices. Mix until well-incorporated.

3. Fill each spring roll and roll (see packaging directions for assistance); place on a baking sheet, single-layered. Repeat with all the spring rolls. Brush all of the rolls with the avocado oil. Bake for about 15-20 minutes, or until they are browned and crispy. Slice in half and sprinkle with additional chopped parsley for a presentable look, or enjoy as is.



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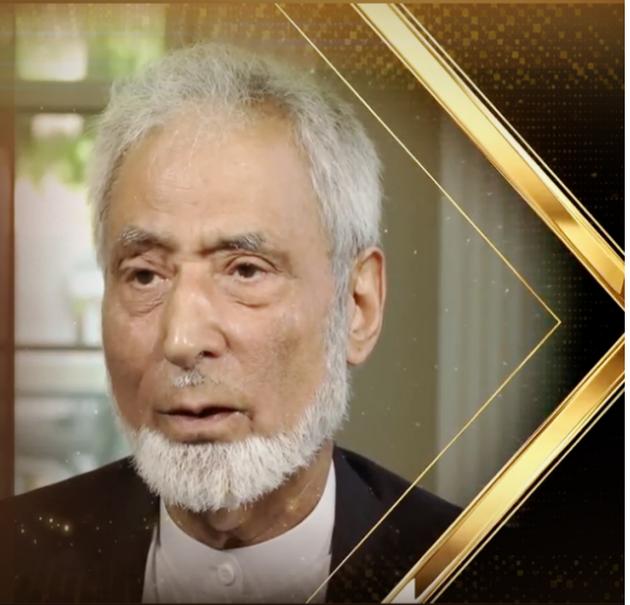
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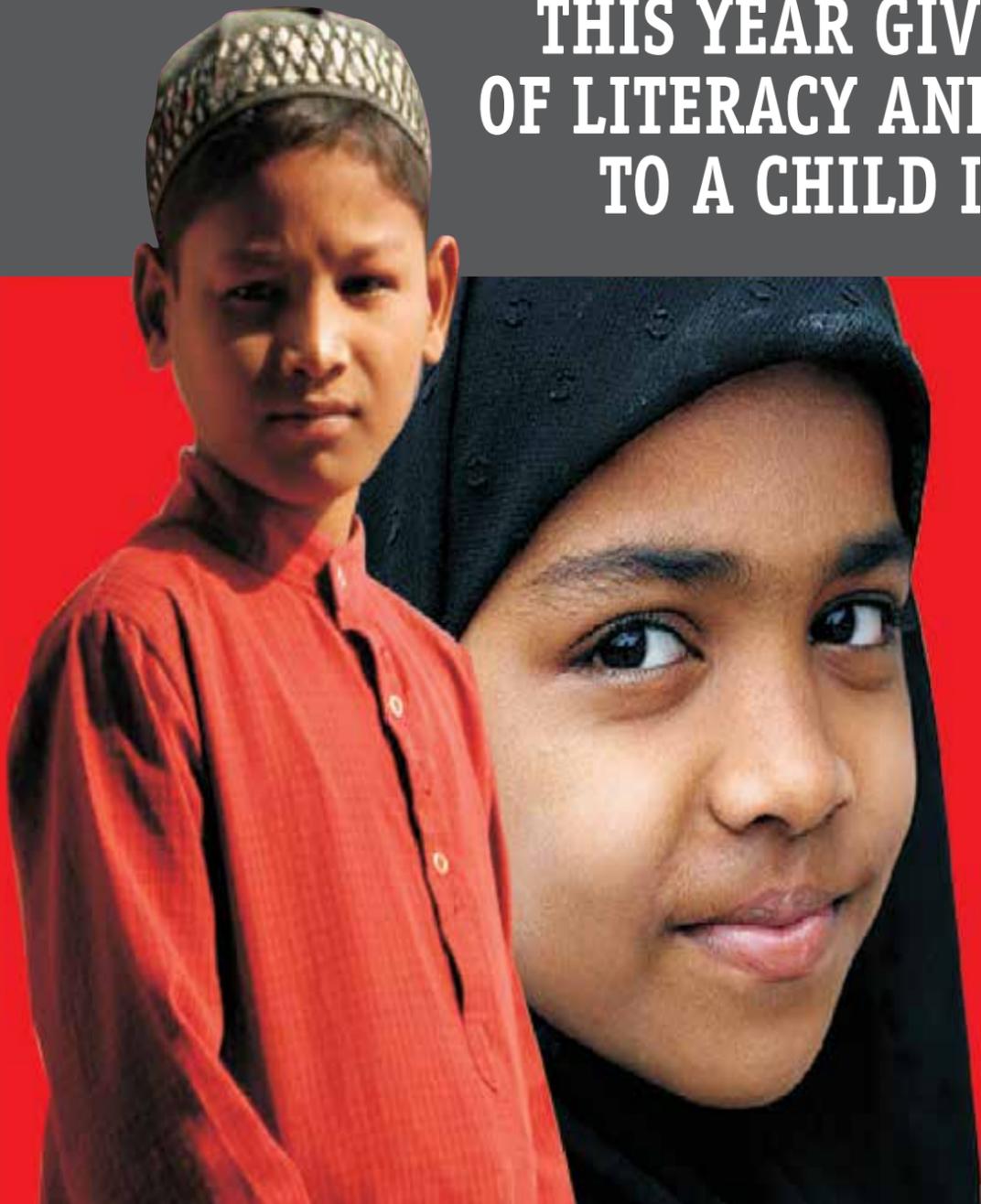
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Local Al-Maghrib Seminar Attracts Student from Alaska

By: TMO Staff

Shaykh Yaser Birjas came back to Michigan, this time for a seminar covering the reliever of sadness and worry, the blueprint to life, and the guidance to mankind: The Qur'an. His latest seminar in Michigan, Heavenly Hues: Thematic Tafseer; truly touched the hearts and minds of the students. More than sixteen travelers came from across the globe, the furthest all the way from Alaska. It was a beautiful gathering that formed smiles, tears, and a load of motivation to make the Qur'an apart of one's life.

The weekend-long seminar was hosted by Qabeelah Ittihaad Michigan, Al-Maghrib's chapter of Southeast Michigan, which was founded in 2005. Respect, integrity, manners, optimism, and helpfulness are all qualities of Qabeelah Ittihaad volunteers.

As of today, the Qabeelah has hosted more than 73 seminars and one-day seminars. Their mission is to help their communities by providing them with opportunities to seek Islamic knowledge in a fun, engaging, and extraordinary way.

It's more than just sitting in a classroom and taking notes- bonds are built, memories are made, and seeds of friendship are planted. They've had more than four students complete the Al-Maghrib degree audit to its entirety, two of which are now Al-Maghrib instructors themselves. The Qabeelah hosts seminars on various topics, covering Qur'anic Tafseer, pillars of faith, beautiful patience, Fiqh of marriage, modesty and clothing, ethics and manners in Islam, history, and many more heart-warming courses. Other than hosting seminars several times a year, Qabeelah Ittihaad's volunteers get together to put their knowledge into action: they give back to their community.

Of the many projects conducted, they've made almost 300 personal hygiene packages, brought hot food to a homeless shelter, helped pack clothing for the needy,



and much more. They work as a team, strive as a team, and experience the incredible fruit of their efforts as a team, alike.

The class began on Friday discussing why we today have lost connection with the Qur'an today. Shaykh Yaser conducted a class activity, in which all students got into large groups. Each group then compiled the top five reasons they believe they're disconnected with the Qur'an. Those included social media, lack of motivation, distractions, language barrier, and time. Shaykh Yaser went through all the points and broke the barrier of the excuses.

Shaykh Yaser also gave an incredible analogy of how the Qur'an truly is our guideline to live. If you recall the excitement of opening your new set of Legos or dream toy is at a peak. Yet, you don't instantly know how to use it and need to go back to the instruction manual. Unquestionably, to Allah (swt) is the best of examples. Allah (swt) made the Qur'an our blueprint to life. If we want to prosper in our spirituality, finances, physical health, relationships, and most importantly, in the Akhirah, we must utilize This Book.

Not just read it with a mesmerizing tone. Not just memorize it. We must comprehend. Reflect. Ponder. And act upon it. We must bury ourselves in it if we want to truly succeed. Shaykh Yaser Birjas also touched based on the concept of loving wealth, and how it's merely human nature. There's nothing wrong with being wealthy, given that your

means are halal, and what you spend it on is halal.

Additionally, he shared principles from the Qur'an to increase your rizq (provision), including having taqwa (God-consciousness), seeking forgiveness (istighfar), being amongst Al-Mutadiqueen (those who give in charity), and being grateful to the myriad blessings that you have. It's a promise of Allah (swt) that when you give in charity, you will be compensated with more. It goes back to your testimony of faith and having

yaqeen that He (swt) will increase you.

Keep in mind, perhaps your "physically" dollars are not increasing, but the barakah in your wealth is, tremendously. "It goes back to giving when you don't have much," Shaykh Yaser emphasized.

One traveler was extremely excited when they were all called up at the closure of the seminar for gift bags. He later messaged the Ameer with his appreciation and feedback: "Jazakum Allah khairan to you and the team for your ihsan

with the class this weekend. When you pulled out the mugs for the travelers all I could say was masha Allah, as I felt like you all really strove to have ihsan. May Allah accept and reward from everyone. Barak Allah feekum. Please keep up the great work!"

It was an incredible seminar filled with profound lessons, funny stories, and heartwarming motivation to open up the Divine Book. For more information about Qabeelah Ittihaad visit www.almaghrib.org/Michigan

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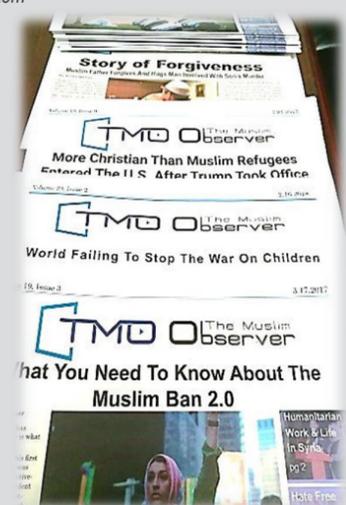
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**Cont. from page 3.
Back to Islam**

woke up in the morning, there were words in my mind ringing like a bell: "Today I have made you a Muslim."

I didn't exactly know what a "Muslim" was, so I looked in the dictionary. It said that the word "Muslim" meant "One who surrenders to God." It came from the word "Salaam," which meant, "peace." So being a Muslim meant having peace because you surrendered to God. On the internet, I found that becoming Muslim meant making the shahadah. Not knowing any better, I typed out the shahadah and had the document certified by a public notary. Even though I had never prayed in a mosque, I

considered myself a Muslim. But as I later found out, the religion had not yet fully taken root in my life.

The Muslims of Saudi Arabia made me feel that I had finally come to meet people who followed the right religion, and my heart feels at peace. They were more patient than the people I knew back at home. Their commitment to their religion, praying five times a day, was greater than any I had ever known. They were courteous, devout, chaste, and they smelled nice. It made me happy because, in some other cultures I knew, people prized fornication and drunkenness. In some places, people didn't consider you a man until you had committed fornica-

tion.

I had been feeling followed by the Satan. But after I read that Ayat al Kursi protects from devils, I began to say it after every prayer. The feelings of persecution stopped. That to me was a clear sign.

One of my colleagues showed me some basics of the religion. I was amazed to discover wu'du (ablution) – I couldn't believe I hadn't ever performed it before. People brought me all kinds of books about Islam. I was amazed to hear the Qur'an recited in a beautiful way, like the ancient poems *The Odyssey* and *Beowulf* – not read in flat monotone like the Gospels I used to hear in church. I was amazed to discover the prayer

– bowing, and prostration. In church, we had only knelt. I felt that I had found the blessed path that I had spent my whole life searching for.

He eventually brought me to a da'wah center in Riyadh to speak with a scholar, and when he told me that Jesus could be called God's "son" in a metaphorical sense, it increased my confidence in Islam and I made the shahadah in that office. Then he said we would go to the mosque and make the shahadah again, and we did. To my amazement, many people came up to me to hug me, and many of them had tears in their eyes or on their faces. I was amazed – "Why are they so happy?" I wondered. The Sheikh told me to go home and to

make ghusl, and when I did, something incredible happened.

After I exited the shower in my hotel, I went to my bed and picked up the English Qur'an I had brought from the States. When I opened it and looked at the page, I felt something like an invisible cloth, or veil fall from my eyes, and at the same moment, I understood that the Qur'an was actually sent by Allah and that it was not composed by Prophet Muhammad ?.

Glory be to Allah, the Holy, the Sublime, the King, who has no partner and does not share his authority with anyone. May He bless us, forgive us, and give us what is good in this world and the next.

Eid Means Lamb Mansaf

by Noor H. Salem

The blessed days of Dhul Hijjah just came to an end, as Eid Al-Adha was celebrated internationally. You may now have an excess amount of lamb in the freezer due to sheep slaughtering on Eid.

There's no better way to use that lamb than to make homemade mansaf, a popular Palestinian dish that will make any taste bud jump with joy. Authentic mansaf is made using jmeed, a dried yogurt extremely high in fat and sodium. This mansaf recipe is slightly twisted from the original version. Using organic plain yogurt along with the jmeed will still give a delicious taste to mansaf, while making it a lighter yogurt lower in sodium and saturated fat.

Clearly, the star of the dish is the lamb, cooked to perfection and tenderness and bursting with the flavor of a unique combination of spices. When making your Eid sacrifice, put an effort in searching for a local farmer that raises them sustainably, and does not bulk them with corn or grain feed. Grass-fed lamb is very high in omega-3 fatty acids, selenium, and Vitamin B12 which are all linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. Grass-



fed lamb has a lot more nutrient quality than conventionally fed lamb. In fact, it has 25% more omega-3 fatty acids.

Yes, the diet of the livestock you consume can greatly impact the percentage of vitamins and minerals in the meat on your plate. The bone broth in this recipe is reserved and then added to the yogurt, incredibly boosting the flavor and nutritional value alike. While it's underappreciated, bone broth is full of minerals essential for your body. Of the many benefits, it aids in relieving arthritis pain, indigestion, leaky gut, and it strengthens your immune system. It is also a wonderful remedy for the common cold or flu.

Grandma had it right with chicken noodle soup, which consists mainly of homemade bone broth. A client previously asked if bone

broth had to be made using the bones. Do note, the key minerals and vitamins come from the bones.

The original bone broth isn't made in a pressure cooker, but the good news is that you save time and don't deplete your food of nutrients by using one. It is in fact incredibly convenient, especially for a time-consuming dish like mansaf. The parsley atop mansaf is more than just garnish; it's full of Vitamin K, iron, folate, fiber, and Vitamin C. The almonds and pine nuts increase your intake of healthy fats while adding protein, a perfect crunch, and a look pleasing to the eye.

Try this mouthwatering mansaf recipe to use up your Eid lamb, and you'll look forward to Eid Al Adha every year.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups organic plain

yogurt

- ½ jmeed ball (dried yogurt)

- 2 cups water

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch (certified organic and non-GMO)

- 2 tablespoons turmeric, ground

- 3 tablespoons Himalayan Pink Salt

- 3 cups basmati rice, soaked

- 10 pounds organic grass-fed lamb chunks, pressure cooked (10 cloves, 4 bay leaves, 2 cinnamon sticks, 1 tablespoon Himalayan Pink Salt, 7 cardamom pods, and 4 black peppercorns)

- 10 layers ishraq bread, torn with hands into large chunks

(Ishraq bread is a very thin bread made of whole wheat flour. You can replace it with any bread of your convenience)

- 3 bunches organic fresh parsley, chopped

- 1 cup of raw blanched slivered almonds and raw pine nuts (roasted in a skillet with organic cold-pressed avocado oil or extra virgin olive oil)

Directions:

1. In a pressure cooker, cook lamb, seven cups water, and spices for about 45 minutes. Strain; reserve the broth.

2. Place yogurt, cornstarch, water and salt in your blender. Pulse into very smooth.

3. Put the yogurt in a large pot, add turmeric; whisk. Cook on high and whisk without stopping until it comes to a boil. Remove from heat; add about half the lamb broth and some meat chunks. Stir; set aside.

4. Cook the rice in about six cups water with one teaspoon salt on high-heat for 10-15 minutes or until rice begins to show above the water. Place on low heat. Leave covered for about 5-10 minutes. Remove; set aside.

5. Place the bread in a large flat serving platter and soak evenly with cooked yogurt. Put a layer of rice on top. Top the rice with additional yogurt. Top with the lamb chunks; garnish with parsley and roasted nuts. Serve immediately for optimum taste! Enjoy.

Cont. from page 1.
Ilhan Omar

Together they could both be the first two Muslim women in Congress.

Representative Keith Ellison left the seat to run for state attorney general, winning his primary for the job as well.

"Tonight, we are celebrating because we engaged and empowered our community and we won," Omar said in a statement after results were announced.

"Our campaign staff, our volunteers, and the people of the Fifth Congressional District are the

inspiration we need to get up every day and fight for a democracy that guarantees a more just and equitable society."

Mother of three, 36-year-old Omar is the youngest of seven children.

At 8-years-old, she fled Somalia with her family due to the country's ongoing civil war, spending four years in a refugee camp in Mombasa, Kenya.

Omar came to the United States at the age of 12, settling in Minnesota and learning English by watching American television.

"In my last race, I talked about

what my win would have meant for that 8-year-old girl in that refugee camp," Omar said in her speech. "And today, I still think about her and I think about the kind of hope and optimism all of those 8-year-olds around the country and around the world get from seeing your beautiful faces elect and believe in someone like me."

According to her campaign website, Omar is a progressive Democrat advocating for the institution of a living wage, access to affordable housing and healthcare, debt forgiveness for those struggling to pay student

loans, and the abolishment of ICE and protection of DACA.

The majority of the Muslim community is overwhelmed and excited about this news and hope to see her in office.

A record number of Muslim Americans, reported at least 90, are running for office in this year's midterm elections.

Omar's win represents a victory for not only Muslims and Somalians but refugees, immigrants, women and all people of color.

Cont. from page 1.
Law Enforcement

Islam in the country through clandestine activities.

Obviously, most of these are perceptions. But the absence of Muslim Americans from active dialogue and discussion with law enforcement agencies is a major factor in their continuation. Others who have different agenda have somehow influenced law enforcement agencies to accept their views, however biased, they are towards Islam and Muslims and since Muslims are not there to clarify these perceptions, the one-sided view prevails.

Muslims in the united states is not a monolith group. They are split in hundreds of ethnic communities with different experiences and conditions African Americans who make up the largest segment of Muslim Americans have totally different attitude towards law enforcement agencies while Muslims from Afghanistan, Iran, Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia or North Africa who came here as refugees to live a dignified life have different attitude towards such agencies. Muslims from the Middle East who came here at the beginning of the 20th century in places like Detroit have a different perspective while Muslims who came here from South Asia in the 60s mainly as students have different experiences.

These groups have not yet collated to develop a national agenda and perspective, hence each organization dominated by a particular ethnic group adopts a perspective based on its understanding.

Also to be noted is the fact that

many prominent Muslim American leaders, especially of immigrant backgrounds, were active supporters of organizations such as Ikhwan ul Muslimeen, or Jamat Islam etc. Similarly, many African Americans were once the members of the Nation of Islam that had a specific view on race relations. Many who became Muslims recently have aligned with those ideological groups that are politically influenced by despotic regimes in the Middle East promoting a very strict understanding of Islam with no openness towards non-Muslims.

Law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to figure out who is who in the Muslim community. Their research and intelligence gathering resources are poor. They do not have many agents who speak the languages of the immigrants. They do not have expertise in the cultures of such communities. They also lack a clear understanding of the diversity within the Muslim community in interpreting the religious texts.

Also, the law enforcement officials are recruited from the society in general. Not every member of the society is exposed to religious diversity or an objective understanding of diverse belief systems. Many bring their stereotypical images of others with them in their work and no matter what is the level of professionalism, the images of the past often linger on.

Law enforcement agencies are not political. They are run on national resources. They are bound by the constitution and hence they are by law defenders of law and every law-abiding

citizen. However, if communities are close and not interacting and having a dialogue with them, there is no way that a better understanding can evolve.

In the absence of Muslims from the dialogue with law enforcement agencies, other special groups have filled in information about Muslims that is often inaccurate and wrong.

The only way to correct that is that Muslims engage in an open dialogue with law enforcement agencies to learn their functions and to tell them about the community. Law enforcement agencies work on the basis of reasonable tips they get from public or their contacts and unless they reach to the bottom of such tips, they continue to pursue. Muslims can be a source to clarify assumptions, accusations, and assertions without fearing that this would put them in jeopardy.

Similarity, law enforcement agencies also should show respect to Muslims the same way they show respect to other segments of American society. That means that they should not view the entire community as a monolith group engaged in some conspiracy against the US. When they hear such accusations against Muslim individuals, they should investigate that individual thoroughly and seek Muslim help to bring the case to a closure.

Law enforcement agencies have a general perception that most religious organizations are not transparent in their financial dealings. It's not only about Muslims but it involves all. In religious organizations, a lot of cash dealing is involved. and no

matter how careful one is,, there is no system that tracks every cash transaction. The idea that cash can find itself in undesirable hands cannot be ruled out. Obviously, the only people who can satisfactorily explain things related to cash are those who handle them. This is just one issue, there are many more.

Often people with special interests may want to influence the congregation with their ideas that may be a deterrent to public Only those people who are part of the congregation know about that. If law enforcement agencies are tipped about such thing, they would investigate and if those who are part of the group are not there to respond, a lot of assumptions would be made and that might not be accurate. We saw that recently with the Russian interference in our elections. Even though no one has investigated it yet, but the involvement by the Russians in our elections through religious groups cannot be eliminated.

It is imperative that rather than reacting in anger, Muslim leadership looks at the issue of having a dialogue with law enforcement agencies in a pragmatic manner and openly develop a perspective that serves the interests of the country and the community.

Isolation is not the solution. It would exacerbate misgivings and create confusion. It is better than the Muslim leadership review its stance towards law enforcement agencies and extend the hand of interaction for better relations.

Cont. from page 2. Ozil

America and the rise of xenophobia, one thing that is remarkable for this nation is that most people are accepting of people from different backgrounds and they see them as Americans. At the same time, these immigrants who feel American are also able to embrace their ethnic and or

religious routes without feeling as someone is after them.

The United States Men's soccer team is full of players from various ethnicities, Christian Public is of Croatian descent, Timothy Weah is the son of Liberian soccer legend George Weah, however first and foremost these kids are American, whether the men's U.S. team wins or loses.

No one scapegoats them.

Europeans must look to that example and learn to accept diversity during the good and the bad times. Diversity makes a nation stronger. France, a prime example, the young French soccer team which just won the World Cup in Russia is made up from mostly first-generation immigrants who feel French but at

the same time want to embrace their roots however some don't due to the European mentality of the "other"

Only together we are stronger, is time the Europeans embrace their diversity and yes Mesut Ozil might respect and embrace his Turkish and Islamic roots, but at the same time he is as German as Toni Kross.

*Cont. from page 1.
Katy Man*

would be trapped in flooded houses. Rescue helicopters would descend on a grassy hill just down the street.

In two days, the National Guard would come knocking, urging Mashhood and his family to evacuate, warning that the sandbags, plastic trash bags and wooden planks he had piled by the front door would be useless against the water rushing through the streets of the Grand Lakes subdivision.

But Mashhood did not yet know that. He just wanted to make sure his friends were safe.

“How are you all doing?” the 49-year-old wrote that Sunday afternoon in a message sent to about 20 others. “Inshallah we will together help each other.”

Within hours, responses came flying in: cries for help from families surrounded by rising floodwaters; offers of shelter from others willing to host evacuees; and calls for supplies, donations and meals for those in need.

Within days, the circle widened from 20 to 50 to more than 100, from friends to acquaintances to strangers.

At homes ravaged by Harvey, Mashhood’s WhatsApp crew



Shakeib Mashhood, center, set up a WhatsApp group to help people affected by Hurricane Harvey, with friends and neighbors Muhammad Waseem Anwer, left, Farrukh Shahzad, second from left, Syed Sarwar, second from right, and Saleem Ghori, right, who joined the group chat. less

worked alongside volunteers from Christian churches, Hindu temples and Mormon groups, ripping out mold-infested walls, carting dank and sodden furniture to curbs, making countless Home Depot runs for dehumidifiers and fans.

It was all new to Mashhood, a manager at Accenture who immigrated from India more than 20 years ago. He had never

before run a rescue operation, never rehabbed houses, never organized a network like this.

Yet, somehow it all worked. By the time the immediate crisis from Harvey was over, 17 houses had been cleaned out, 50 displaced families matched with shelters, dozens of others fed and comforted.

And Mashhood, who says he shares credit with many others,

including his wife Salma Khan, Farrukh Shazad, Muhammad Waseem Anwer, Saleem Ghori and Syed Sarwar, marvels at the way hardship united the community.

Many in the WhatsApp group had never met before the storm. Now they call themselves “Harvey friends.”

This piece was published in the Houston Chronicle.



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