



COVID-19 Spurs Detroit African American Muslims Institutions in to Action

By: *Dr. Alisa Perkins,*
Western Michigan University

Historic Masjid Wali Muhammad, the Muslim Center Mosque and Community Center, and Dar Al-Rahma are three West Detroit institutions that have expanded their efforts to provide nourishing meals and essential pantry items to their neighbors and the wider community in recent months. COVID-19 has escalated needs, prompting these centers to intensify their long-running services or introduce new initiatives. These three primarily African-American centers stand out for their rigorous efforts among

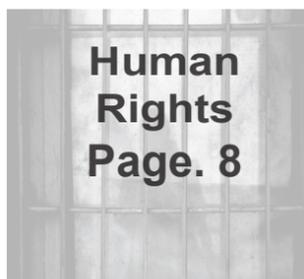
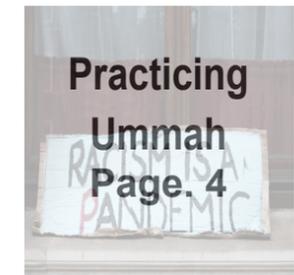


Photo credit: *Davine El-Amin*

the many Detroit-area Muslim institutions whose generosity and ingenuity have risen to meet the health, economic, and safety challenges introduced by COVID-19. On May 25, community

leader Zarinah El-Amin stopped her car in front of Historic Masjid Wali Muhammad (HMWM)

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Hagia Sofia Is The Decision in Line with the Divine Guidance?

By: *Dr. Aslam Abdullah*

In 2019, more than 3.7 million Muslims and non-Muslims visited Hagia Sofia, and Turkey earned millions of dollars from tourists. Why Turkey did change its status from a museum to a mosque?

From 537 E.E. till 1454 C.E, Hagia Sofia (literal-



ly means the wisdom of God) was under the control of various Christian denominations. In 1453, Sultan Muhammad won the war and decided to convert it into a mosque.

The Sultan purchased the Hagia Sofia from its trustees and paid the price from his personal account. He gave the structure in the endow-

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More Than a Million International Students Face Deportation Under ICE Policy



By: *Rohan Shah*

Update as of July 14, 2020: According to The Harvard Crimson, the

Trump administration has agreed to rescind its policy requiring interna-

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Kym Worthy for Wayne County Prosecutor

This is no time to experiment with untested and inexperienced leadership: Our choice for Wayne County Prosecutor is Kym Worthy

As our country reaches a crossroads over race, safety and the economy, it is extremely important that individuals who have the vision, passion and experience to navigate these tough times be in positions of power.

For Muslim Americans, we must have elected leaders who are not only empathetic to our community's fight to participate in the country's offerings, but those who are vigilant in ensuring our safety. A 2018 FBI report found that of the 1,617 victims of anti-religious hate crimes, 15 percent were Muslim.

For these reasons, the Muslim-Observer is pleased to **ENDORSE KYM WORTHY FOR WAYNE COUNTY PROSECUTOR.**

Prosecutor Worthy deserves to be reelected.

Experienced and innovative, she was leading justice reform before it was popularized.

Among her accomplishments:

- She was the first prosecutor in the United States to win a murder conviction of on-duty officers.
- She created a Conviction Integrity Unit to review cases of the wrongfully convicted, and that unit's work has led to 19 individuals being exonerated.
- Her office found, got processed, and secured financing to investigate 11,341 abandoned rape kits, an effort that has led to 215 convictions and the identification of 829 serial rapists.
- She has worked to create alternatives to sentencing that appropriately diverted more than 18,000 adults and young people from confinement.
- During the COVID-19 crisis, she has worked



with law enforcement, jail officials and judges to help reduce the jail population by 41 percent. In particular, Prosecutor Worthy has been extremely accessible and empathetic to the concerns of Muslim Americans, whether it be helping to address immigration challenges or going after individuals who target our commu-

nity.

Prosecutor Worthy wants to build on her accomplishments by providing support services to those who have been exonerated; by offering 24-hour warrant review; by continuing to grow police accountability through reform; by creating a community court, and by allowing for no-cash bail

for civil infractions, traffic offenses except drunk driving, ordinance violations and non-assaultive misdemeanors.

The next several years will be very tough for our state and our region's elected leaders in coping with limited resources, devising new ways to conduct business, and ensuring that our communities heal. Wayne County, for example, is projected to have a \$180-million deficit because of COVID-19. The prosecutor's office, with a \$44-million budget and a staff of 300, was underfunded and understaffed prior to this crisis. It will have to become even more adept going forward.

Such large challenges mean that this is no time to experiment with untested leadership. We need a proven leader at the head of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, and that leader is **KYM WORTHY.**



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'I felt belittled': Muslim woman alleges Starbucks barista wrote 'ISIS' on her cup

By: *Aysha Qamar*

Some Minneapolis Target employees seem to share one similarity with the city's police: discrimination based on identity. A Muslim-American advocacy organization is calling for a Target Starbucks employee and her manager in Minnesota to be fired after a 19-year-old Black Muslim woman alleges the employee purposely wrote "ISIS" on her Starbucks cup, WCOO/CNN reported. When confronted about the alleged action, the employee claimed she had not heard the woman's name correctly; the manager dismissed the incident as a common mistake and sided with the employee.

The woman identified as Aishah said she and her friend were at a Starbucks located inside a St. Paul, Minnesota, Target when an employee allegedly wrote something on her cup and hid it from view before she could finish giving the employee her name. Upon receiving the drink, Aishah saw "ISIS" written on the cup. "When I first received the drink, I was in shock that in a day and age that something like this could be written," Aishah said at a news conference Monday. "I felt humiliated. I felt enraged. I felt belittled." Aishah was sent away without an apology and given a replacement drink and a \$25 gift card. In a statement to the Sahan Journal, Target even claimed the young employee "has never heard of ISIS."

Aishah added that while both companies have faced similar situations in the past, no change has occurred: "This has happened to me and I fear that this will continue to happen to other Muslims because Starbucks and Target do not value Muslims." ISIS is a common acronym used to refer to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, a terrorist organization. Racists and Islamophobes have continuously used the term to refer to Muslims. Last year, a Philadelphia Starbucks came under fire after a Muslim customer named Aziz reported a barista wrote "ISIS" on his drink cups, and Starbucks called it a "regrettable mistake."

Aishah, a hijab-wearing Black woman, does not feel the term was written by mistake.



According to her, the employee did not even ask how to spell her name. "The word that was written on the drink is a word that shatters the Muslim reputation all around the world," Aishah said.

The alleged incident occurred on July 1. A spokesperson for the Target location said the company immediately apologized to Aishah for the "unfortunate mistake." However, as of Monday morning, Aishah told reporters that no one from Target had reached out to apologize.

"At Target, we want everyone who shops with us to feel welcomed, valued and respected and we strictly prohibit discrimination and harassment in any form," the company told Patch in a statement Monday. "We are very sorry for this guest's experience at our store and immediately apologized to her when she made our store leaders aware of the situation. We have investigated the matter and believe that it was not a deliberate act but an unfortunate mistake that could have been avoided with more clarification. We're taking appropriate actions with the team member, including additional training, to ensure this does not occur again."

The Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, CAIR-MN, is calling for both employees involved in the incident to be fired in addition to training for employees on discrimination. The national Muslim advocacy

organization said it plans to file discrimination charges with the U.S. Department of Human Rights. "This is not a simple mistake. No one puts the KKK on the cup of somebody's drink," Jaylani Hussein said, executive director of CAIR-MN.

"When we talk about this word ISIS and the weight that it has in the Muslim community, unfortunately with Islamophobia — the number one thing discriminatory identified is 'terrorist,'" Hussein said. "And the fact of the matter here is that using this word for us would be the same as a Black man today, being used the N-word, or anything else that would be offensive."

During the press conference Monday, Aishah noted that an incident like this not occurring again would be the real justice. Target CEO Brian Cornell said his company was committed to standing against racism in a statement made following the tragic death of George Floyd in May. CAIR is calling on both Cornell and Target to uphold that same commitment against Islamophobia and all forms of hate. "This unfortunate incident is particularly appalling in light of the local and national appeals for racial justice and the ongoing calls for meaningful steps towards lasting equity in the United States of America," said Alec Shaw, a civil rights attorney for CAIR-MN.

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Practicing Ummah is Anti-Racist

By: *Abed Awad*

Racism in America is systemic, deeply embedded, and real. Whiteness – an American social construct – is a state-of-racist-mind. While fiction, this state-of-racist-mind is evil and destructive. Unfortunately, this racism is endemic in America, including among Muslim American communities. It is long overdue for the Arab and South Asian Muslims to recognize how anti-black racism and bigotry defiles Islam. This month hundreds of mosques across America dedicated their Friday sermon to speaking out against racism in America, including racism in their own communities. Our path to stopping anti-black racism starts by meaningfully practicing the Islamic concept of ummah.

The rise of western colonialism and the fall of the Ottoman Empire paved the way to 'Muslim' nation-states to be born on 'ethnic nationalist' lines, which was viewed as a natural evolution for Muslims to finally join 'modernity'. The modern nation-state dissolved the spirit of the ummah, supplanting universal unity with post-colonial nationalism. The concept of the ummah has much to teach us about ending racism. Revisiting the central role of the ummah in creating a sense of an inclusive multiracial community can help combat racism in Muslim American communities.

Belonging to the ummah was based on the absolute belief in the oneness of God and that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the carrier of this monotheistic divine message. Faith has always and continues to be the common bond holding the ummah together – not race or ethnicity. Spirituality, not skin tone, was the definitive marker of belonging. The Islamic civilization thrived and prospered because of this intercultural fertilization of all races and ethnicities united and anchored in the oneness of God.



Blacks or Africans were an integral part of the ummah – both in its creation and its intellectual underpinnings.

Blackness is indigenous to Islam

'Umm Ayman is my mother after my [biological] mother', said the Prophet. The infant Muhammed suckled his sustenance from Umm Ayman, his black wet nurse. Not surprising, according to Islamic law, if a child suckles five times from a woman, the woman becomes like his mother. After hearing her child's divine message, Umm Ayman was one of the earliest converts to Islam.

The first family to accept Islam was Sumayya b. Khayy's family. Her husband Y'sir b. 'mir and her son 'Amm'r b. Y'sir all embraced Islam as a family. The first formal Muslim call to prayer was the ringing voice of Bilal b. Rabah. Mahja' was the first believer martyred at the battle of Badr. Usama b. Zaid was the beloved to the Prophet (hubb rasulillah). All of them were black.

When the Arab people savagely persecuted the Muslims, the Prophet sent his followers to seek refuge with an African King. The Prophet did not send his persecuted followers to Rome, Egypt, Persia, India or China. He sent them to Africa, the other home for Muslims.

With this multiracial upbringing and community, it is not a surprise that the Prophet's

Farwell Sermon directly addressed Islam's anti-racism message: "All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood."

Luqman in the Quran, who Allah endowed with wisdom, was Nubian. Ali b. Abi Talib said that 'Ash' b. al-ukhd' d in the Quran were Abyssinian believers. One of the world's greatest kings mentioned in surah al-Kahf, Dhul-Qarnain, according to Quran commentators, was black too.

Many of the early Muslim scholars were of black extraction. Ata' b. Abi Rab'h was a prominent Quran and hadith expert, who was the Muf-ti of Mecca in the 8th Century. Other examples

include Yazid b. Habib, the scholar's scholar (sheikh al-Fuqha) in Egypt and prominent Hanafi scholars Jamal Al Din al-Zayla'i and Fakhr al Zayla'i. Let's not forget Ahmad Baba (d. 1627). Probably, the greatest Muslim scholar to ever emerge from Timbuktu, he was renowned as a jurist, grammarian, theologian, political writer, and historian, writing over 40 works during his lifetime.

Al-J'??i? (d. 869) one of the most important literary figures and master of the Arabic language in Islamic history was half black. The ninth Im'm in the Twelver Shi'i tradition Muhammad b. 'Al? al-Jaw'd al-Husayn? (d. 835) was of black extraction. Ab? al-Fay? b. Ibr'h'm al-Mi'r? (d. 859), one of the most prominent early mystics in the Islamic world was from Nubia.

Many great Muslim military commanders were black. In the tenth century, Ab? al-Misk Kaf'r (d. 968) a military

commander and later sultan of the Ikhshidid dynasty ruled territory encompassing modern-day Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Another military conqueror, Sonni Al? (d.1492) founded the Songhai Empire in West Africa.

These are but a few examples from millions of prominent and transformative black Muslim scholars, military leaders and intellectuals from the past. The present is just as prominent, rich and plentiful. What is Islam in America without brother Malcolm X, Muhammed Ali and Kareem Abdul-Jaber? Can we understand the Muslim American spiritual awakening without Imam Zaid Shakir and Imam Siraj Wahaj? Again, black is indigenous to Islam from its birth to its present – in the United States and beyond.

The greatness of Islam and the Islamic Civilization was that it created an inclusive ummah that accepted anyone who recited a simple yet most sacred oath that made us equal brothers and sisters irrespective of race or ethnicity: l? ?il?ha ?ill? ll?hu wa mu?ammadun ras?lul-All?h. Muslim Americans should honor their sacred oath and bond that rejects racism as a matter of divine directive and commit themselves to purge the anti-Black racism that mars our communities. This is the mandate of our faith.



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Tennessee paper apologizes, promises to investigate ad claiming 'Islam' was going to bomb Nashville

By: Marissa Higgins

A significant newspaper in Nashville, Tennessee, The Tennessean, said it is investigating a horrifying, Islamophobic paid ad that predicts a terrorist attack in Nashville on July 18, 2020, as reported by Time. The editor of the paper said the ad, which ran on Sunday, "should have never been published." The ad, which is from the fringe group Future For America, takes up an entire page. Notably, however, there's actually another ad that's similar; the first one is from Wednesday, and said it aimed to warn residents of the prophecy so they may "make a decision intelligently." However, the first ad doesn't explicitly mention Islam. The ad from Sunday went viral online as people were understandably confused and disgusted by it.

The ad claims that in the interests of "Islam,"

This morning, the Nashville @Tennessean the largest newspaper in the state published a full-page ad from a far-right client warning Islam is going to detonate a nuclear device in Nashville, Tennessee. It's accompanied by photos of Donald Trump and Pope Francis.

pic.twitter.com/9vwUbteSlh

Alex Martin Smith (@asmiff) June 21, 2020

a nuclear device will detonate in Nashville. Pope Francis, as well as Donald Trump, are both in photos included in the ad. The ad claims that Trump "typified many biblical leaders" and refers to him as the "final President of the USA." The ad claims it is based on "Bible prophecy." The ad reads in part:

"Islam is the issue that pushes the world into a one-world government as the world attempts to address the escalating warfare brought by the Islamic religion."

Vice President and Editor Michael Anastasi described the ad as "horrific" and "utterly indefensible in all circumstances." He went on

to say that the ad "has hurt members of our community and our own employees and that saddens me beyond belief. It is inconsistent with everything The Tennessean as an institution stands and has stood for." He also said The Tennessean's sales department and news department function independently.

The ad has reportedly been pulled from future editions.

The ad is clearly anti-Muslim and filled to the brim with Islamophobia. As Daily Kos has previously covered, we know that hate crimes in the age of Trump's presidency are not just growing in number, but are becoming both more violent and more personal. As my colleague, Aysha Qamar, has covered, one woman in Oregon was charged with a hate crime after allegedly grabbing a hijab off of a student's head.

Check out some incredible Muslim women you might not have heard of in this awesome roundup, as well as a wonderful personal essay about Ramadan, also from Aysha.

First published on Daily Kos

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Dr. Najma Khan, a Prominent Chicago Physician passed away.

By TMO Staff

A South Asian Muslim woman became one of the first female physicians and part of the first wave of immigrants from Asia to the US in 1967. An ethical humanitarian who served thousands and influenced even more!

Chicago, USA – Najma Khan was the second of eleven children born in Hyderabad, India, in 1931. Even as a child, she had a strong sense of purpose and was inspired to do great things against all the odds. Initially, she was unable to attend school due to cultural norms for girls at that time, but she lobbied her conservative father until he gave in. She was excited to learn but had to start as in first grade at the age of 9. Unfazed, she quickly picked up English, worked hard, and skipped multiple classes each year. Eventually, she graduated high school early at the age of 15.

She then had aspirations to do something unheard of among Indian women of her era. At 19, she enrolled in Medical School at the prestigious Osmania University. A few years later, in 1957, she completed a specialized residency and received the school's first OB-GYN



diploma, one of the few awarded in all of India.

As a practicing physician, she was determined to do the best work possible. In the late 1950s, three of her dynamic brothers pursued graduate work abroad in the US, UK, and Canada. This created a lot of extra room in the family home, and she had a plan on how to use it. A humanitarian at heart, she and another doctor friend and a pharmacist, set up a free medical clinic to volunteer their time and provide medical services. The young social entrepreneurs opened the doors for those in abject poverty.

Her son, Sayeed Khan, recalled stories they heard while growing up. "Our relatives would tell us about 'lines around the block' of India's miserable waiting to see her for medical care. For her, being a doctor was primarily a way to serve humanity."

Najma Khan married in 1961. A few years later, America embarked upon a fundamental change in foreign policy when the landmark "US Immigration Act of 1965" was passed to address a shortage of doctors and engineers. Najma and her husband, a chemical engineer, were part

of the first wave of the "Asian Brain Drain" when immigrating to the US in 1967. Living on a university campus on the East Coast, her husband pursued his Ph.D., and she studied for her medical board exams, while also raising three very young children. She received an offer for a medical residency in Chicago in 1970, and soon, the young family made the windy city their new home.

Life was challenging for new immigrants with virtually no family, community, or support system. It got tougher when Najma was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1972. She underwent successful surgery and treatment, but the diagnosis was five years maximum to live. She was a fighter and lived every day to the fullest while helping establish many relatives in both India and America over several decades. Meanwhile, she turned those five years into almost 50!

As a physician, she worked for the city and had a private practice. She did considerable Pro Bono work in some of the most underserved neighborhoods in Chicago and her growing Muslim community of Chicago over four decades. Najma

and her husband were pillars of the community, and her family was an integral part of Chicago's Muslim Community Center (MCC) during its early years.

Her eldest son, Hasan, a highly respected physician who ran a medical center, passed away in June 2019. One year later, Dr. Najma Khan died peacefully in her home on June 15, surrounded by loved ones. She was 88.

Dr. Najma Khan's wisdom, kindness, unquestionable ethics, and good intention made her the one everyone trusted. Her perseverance through adversity while always doing what's right earned her an inspiration to many. Her legacy lives on in many thousands of lives she touched directly and indirectly while making the world a better place.

If you want to write for TMO, Please email: editor@muslimobserver.com

Feature: Dr. Maher Hathout- A Visionary and Progressive Muslim American

By: Mohammad Yacoob

Dr. Maher Hathout, President of the Islamic Center of Southern California, Los Angeles, was a visionary and progressive thinking person. When Pope Paul John II visited Los Angeles in September 1987, he invited Dr. Hathout for an inter-faith meeting between the Pope and leaders from four non-Christian religions. In that meeting, Dr. Hathout delivered a short speech, urging mutual understanding and respect among the various religions. The most powerful remark made by Dr. Maher Hathout came when he said, "These are trying times for religious people because half of



the world denies God and most of the other half disobeys Him."

Robert H. Schuller, Pastor of the Crystal Cathedral of Garden Grove in Southern California, said he especially enjoyed the remarks of Los Angeles Islamic leader

Maher Hathout.

Dr. Maher Hathout, a modest, humble, American leader, was a practicing Muslim. He refused to accept fragmented approaches to Islam based on region, territory, or division. Instead, he called for unity based

on respect and tolerance among various religious factions in Islamic communities in the U.S., urging them to abandon the ways Muslims tackled challenges in the past. He believed leaders in history eliminated and discarded workable and available approaches to Muslim problems. He was familiar with some of the practices.

He observed that in some quarters, Muslims continue to make decisions in rather small, random, and haphazard ways, rendering it difficult, if not impossible, to create lasting solutions. He believed those approaches prevented us from envisioning and raising awareness for the

development of a viable Muslim community. Instead, he insisted on finding solutions based on mundane and contemporary criteria, within the framework of Islam, that would allow for better interactions with other communities.

Dr. Maher Hathout's farsightedness and good sense helped him understand the pulse of other communities after meeting with the Pope, which led to the founding of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) in 1988.

Working to move our planet in the direction of peace with truth and justice, he told the truth to the leaders in

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Human Rights: Dr. Kafeel; A Prisoner Of Conscience

By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Every Friday, The Muslim Observer will focus on human rights violations regardless of who the victims or perpetrators are. This week we are focussing on a Prisoner of conscience, Dr. Kafeel languishing in an Indian prison for the last several months. Our coverage will include Rohingyas, Palestinians, Ughyrs, and other persecuted communities in the world. Look for updates on human rights every Friday.

Millions languish in India's prison for bailable offense or no offense. Seventy percent of these inmates are Muslims and Dalits (People whom Hinduism describes as profane and inferior). Hundreds and thousands of them face routine torture, and many end up in cemeteries and cremation grounds as dead free from the pains of life. A religiously drive political elite that believes in racism and controls the judiciary and legislative and executive branches in India determines who gets bail and who does not, who lives in prison, and who gets freedom from life.

The judicial system is quick to grant bail to an upper-caste criminal accused of killing eight law enforcement officers but



slow in taking up innocent detainees cases.

Dr. Kafeel Khan is one such detainee. Two years ago, he was on duty at an Eastern Uttar Pradesh Hospital when the oxygen supply failed, causing multiple infant deaths. He tried to replenish the oxygen cylinders to save as many lives as possible. Instead of acknowledging his services, the Hindutva government charged him with the deaths of children. The government imprisoned him, but the court could not find any evidence of the charges.

The government arrested him again for speaking against it. He is now languishing in jail without any bail. India's medical community is silent, political parties are

quiet, and the judiciary is indifferent. India's human rights groups are inactive in pursuing his case. Even his community organizations are reluctant to take up his cause at a national level. He is in prison because he is a Muslim. The government of Uttar Pradesh is Islamophobic and determine to reduce Muslims as second class citizens.

Dr. Kafeel is the victim of the government-sponsored religious hatred and bigotry. Dr. Kafeel recently wrote a letter from prison, where he describes the horrible living conditions in detail. Here are a few excerpts:

"I don't know why this punishment. I don't know when I will see my children, my wife, my

mother, and my brothers and sister," The condition inside the jail is 'hellish.' He is in a prison that has a capacity of 500 prisoners but hosts 1,600.

He explains "With just one attached toilet, 125-150 inmates, the smell of their sweat and urine mixed with unbearable heat due to electricity cuts makes life hell over here: A living hell indeed," The food provided in the jail is not eatable.

Drawing a picture of the overcrowded jail, he wrote, "The entire barrack seems like fish market infused with all kinds of smells including someone coughing, sneezing, farting, urinating or sweating. Some people snore, some fight, some scratch them-

selves".

"I try to read but cannot concentrate. It sometimes feels that I might fall due to dizziness caused by that suffocation. So I keep on drinking water."

His arrest is a message to all Muslims and Dalits that if they criticize the government and question the Hindutva leaders, they will lose their freedom and their lives. It is a clear violation of the Indian constitution, international law, and fundamental human rights. Human rights activists in the US must take up his cause to make people aware of this prisoner of conscience and bigotry of the Hindutva groups.

Thousands of Hindutva supporters are in the US influencing public opinion in favor of the Modi government, the architect of the anti-Muslim and Dalit policies in India. They send millions of dollars to organizations in India that spread hatred against Muslims and Dalits. While they enjoy freedom and liberty in the US, they support policies that deny the same to Muslims and Dalits in India. Dr. Kafeel's case is a human rights case, and all those who support his continued detention must be exposed

Cont. from page 6 Dr. Maher Hathout

Washington, including the visiting President of Egypt, Husni Mubarak, in the year 2000 meeting at the White House in Washington. He provided information about Islam to shape an understanding of Islam in America; confronted those who personally attacked him about his convictions and Islamic values with words that surprised many people in the U.S. and forced his detractors and others to think, by his utterances— a rare commodity among leaders.

Dr. Maher Hathout was, first and foremost, a thinker who cared about the next generation of Muslims. He developed ways to improve Islam's image in the United

States by initiating a working relationship with young Muslims, listening to their questioning spirit, accepting their courage, and urged them to embrace their American Muslim identity. To achieve this, he established and became a senior advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council — which is now being managed by young Muslims. He was also the spokesman for the Islamic Center of Southern California. His activities with the Muslim community and the Interfaith Network made him one of the most influential American Muslims. He was the first Muslim chairman of the Los Angeles Interfaith Council.

In July 2006, Dr. Maher Hathout received a prestigious human rights

award from the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. But some Jewish organizations vehemently opposed his selection for his political views. He had criticized Israel as an apartheid state and had supported freedom fighters in the Middle East. The interfaith leaders supported Dr. Hathout and praised him as a model of tolerance and moderation. To show their reliable support, several leaders representing Catholic, Episcopal, Jewish, and other religious communities, along with other Muslim organizations, gathered in September 2006 at the Islamic Center of Southern California.

"I am very proud of my record," he said. He acknowledged calling Is-

rael an apartheid regime. (Battle Lines Form Over Award for L.A. Muslim, September 09, 2006 | Teresa Watanabe | Los Angeles Times Staff Writer)

In the third week of September 2006, the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission voted to reaffirm its selection of Maher Hathout for a human relations award ending a bitter two-week battle. After hearing the news, Dr. Maher Hathout said, "the vote was a victory for free speech, inclusiveness, and rejection of the tactics of intimidation." (L.A. Panel Reaffirms Muslim's Award September 19, 2006, | Teresa Watanabe | Los Angeles Times Staff Writer)

Maher Hathout passed away on January 03,

2015.

A public memorial service was held in Los Angeles to memorialize him on Jan. 10. Many religious leaders honored him as the Muslim voice of Southern California. Los Angeles police Deputy Chief Michael Downing presented a flag to the Hathout family during the memorial service.

Mohammad Yacoob, former Vice Chairman of the Islamic Center of Southern California, Los Angeles, is a retired industrial engineer and an engineering proposals analyst who lives in Los Angeles, California

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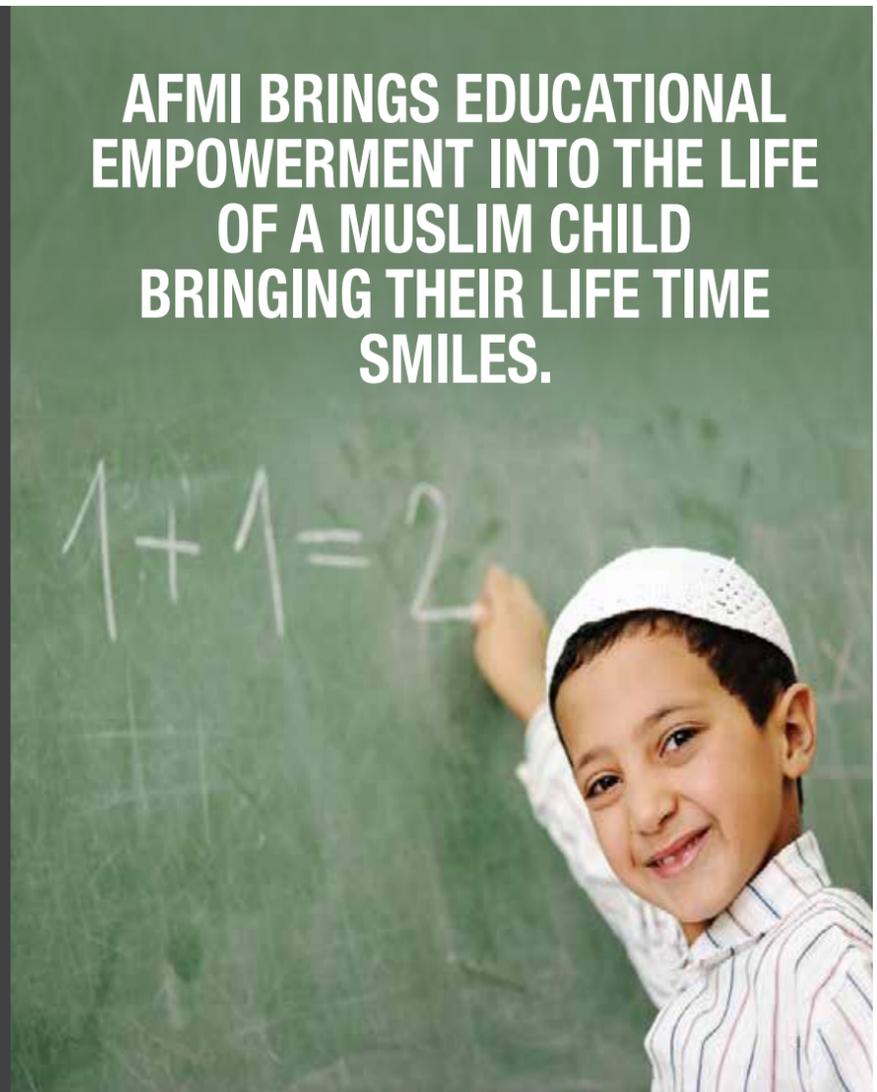


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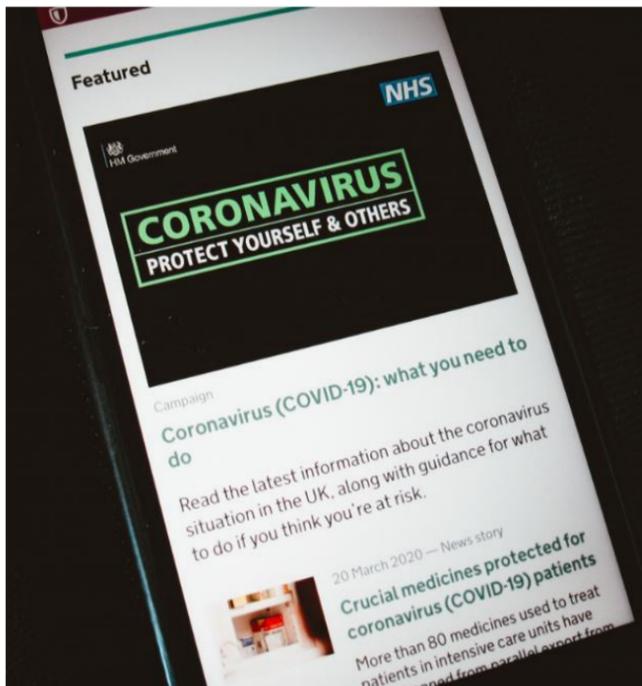
Op Ed: Its the leadership that caused the spread of COVID-19

By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Hold Trump, Republicans, and Christian evangelicals responsible for the spread of Corona-virus. They mocked face masks; they called it a political stunt; they denied its existence. They forced the opening up of states. They delayed testing, and they ignored science. They were all focused on Trump's re-election. However, the rising numbers of dead people have forced Americans to face the brutal reality. Now, 76 percent fear that someone they know might be infected. Last week nine out of ten wore masks in states run by Democrats, while 4 out of 10 were still in a denial mode in Republican-run places.

Sadly, so many people lost their lives because of negligence on the part of the President, his party, and his church. Tragically, science that governs all rules of capitalism was nowhere in this situation.

The President ignored the recommendations of the Covid-19 task force. His party ridiculed doctors. Many of them received death threats from his supporters. Some of his supporters invaded public places with their guns and rifles intimidating



those wearing masks. Still, many called restrictions in social movement an act against God.

China, where the virus originated, has about 90,000 cases with approximately 4500 deaths. The US has over 2.5 million cases with 127,000 deaths; Brazil has 1.3 million cases with 56,000 casualties, Russia and India have a combined 1.2 million cases with over 24,000 deaths and the United Kingdom until June 26th had recorded over a quarter of a million infected people with 45,000 deaths.

The typical pattern in all these countries was the role of religious, finan-

cial, and political leadership in neglecting the disease. In the US and UK, the elected leaders denied the possibility of its spread. Both Trump and Johnson ridiculed the concerns of scientific concerns. Both called it a political stunt.

In Brazil, the President called it a minor flue and advised people not to worry about it. In Russia, the leader assured the people that the country was ready to deal with it. In India, the religious and political leaders convinced the people that over three million deities of Hinduism were out there to save the country from Coronavirus. Its

public officials advised people to drink cow urine and consume cow dung. They held open cow urine drinking parties. The religious leadership insisted on holding large religious gatherings without maintaining social distancing or asking the people to wear masks. The financial and political leaders terminated the employment of millions and forced the labor to return to their homes without any transportation. Two major factors contributed to the spread of the virus in India. The Modi-Trump rally that took place in Ahmedabad on February 24 and the stunt of clapping for nine minutes to ward off the evil of the virus, Both these events exposed millions to the virus.

It was negligence on the part of the five nations' leaders that have approximately 50 percent of the virus cases. Viruses and diseases occur routinely. It is the response of the leaders that determine their extent and damage. Tragically, the major democracies in the world failed to provide leadership in containing the disease.

On the contrary, countries like Germany and New Zealand contained

the virus and effectively brought the number of infected people to a minimum.

The people in the five most affected countries are paying a heavy price. Their worst is yet to come because they continue to follow disastrous policies. Financial experts estimate more than \$10 trillion loss in their economies in the next few years.

The disease will continue to play havoc unless a reliable and tested vaccine is available. But the consequences will be larger felt by generations yet to come.

All this because of an arrogant, incapable, and myopic leadership.

The best way to teach politicians a lesson for their partisan politics is to oust those who played havoc with the lives of people. Oust them in the coming elections. People need to rise above racism, religions, and partisan politics to remove virtual killers from positions of power. In world war II, the world lost millions because of one dictator. In this Covid-19 crisis, the five largest democracies' leaders have caused the worst human-made disaster of this century.

Progressives Take Early Leads in Congressional Primary Races

By Yousuf Ali

On June 27, several states held important congressional primary elections on both the statewide and district levels to decide who would represent the major parties in the general elections for these races in November. Although we do not have final results yet, there are early results in key races that indicates that progressive democrats have taken a strong and decisive lead over their establishment counterparts.

The reason final results are not available is that there has been a surge in absentee voting because of the coronavirus pandemic and the desire of



many to maintain social distance while exercising their constitutional rights to decide their representatives and leaders.

One key race in which this happened was in the Democratic primary in which incumbent congressman Eliot Engel

was competing against Jamal Bowman.

Despite not having the absentee results yet, Jamaal Bowman appears

to have a decisive lead in the race so far and is on track to end the decades-long career of Eliot Engel.

According to The Washington Post, "Bowman has declared victory, though the race has not officially been called as mail-in ballots are still being counted, and he holds a big lead. He aligns with the more liberal wing of the Democratic Party". Many see this as a victor for the progressive wing of the democratic party because Bowman was endorsed by several key progressive figures such as Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez,

Cont on page 14.

Afghan Translator Who Saved U.S. Soldiers Finally Celebrates 4th of July As An American Citizen

Reposted from the Good News Network

An Afghan translator who spent 9 years risking his life to assist U.S. forces in Afghanistan has just celebrated his first Fourth of July as a U.S. citizen.

Although his duties as a translator never required it, Janis Shinwari saved the lives of several U.S. soldiers—and one of them decided to return the favor, by offering to bring Janis and his family to the U.S.

If he would have stayed in Afghanistan, the translator “wouldn’t be alive today,” he told CNN Heroes in 2018.

Janis was aiding U.S. forces over a decade ago because he wanted his country liberated from the terror of Taliban rule. Although he knew he was risking his life, he did what he thought was right for his country.

In 2008, Capt. Matt

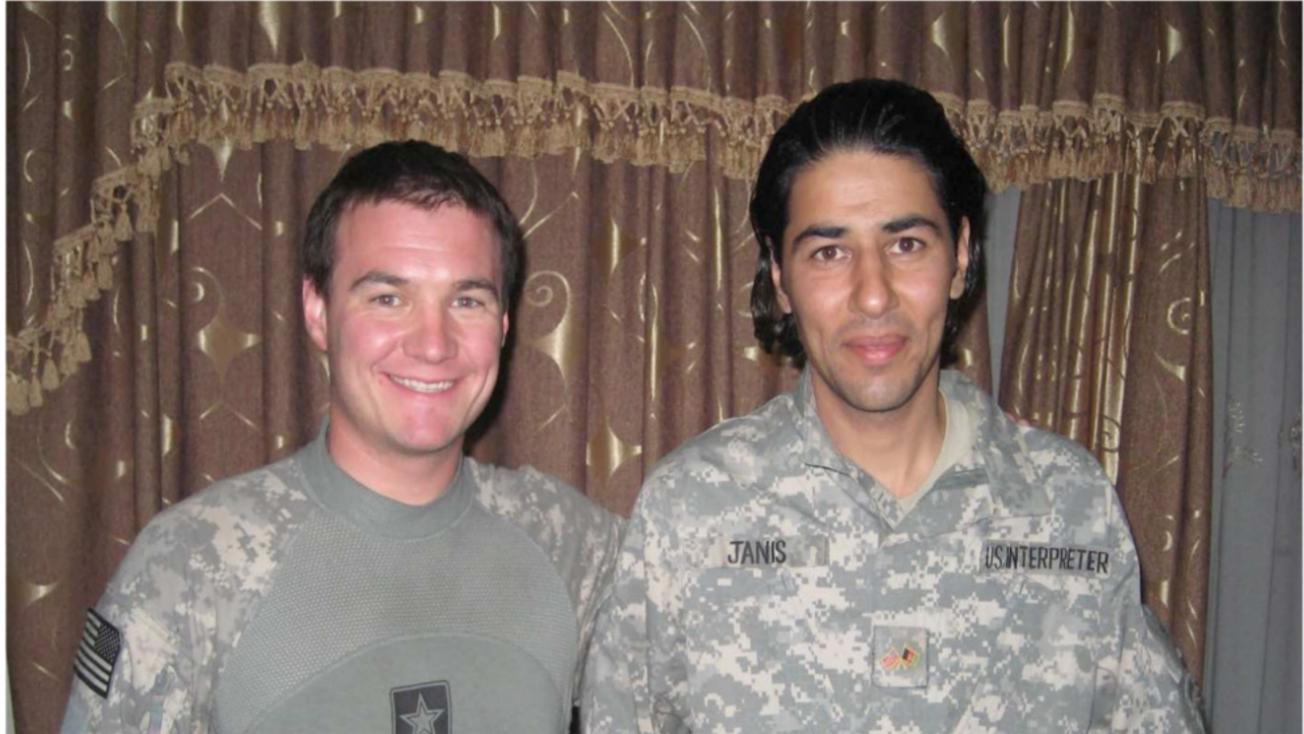


Photo from Matt Zeller (left)

Zeller was about to die during a battle with Taliban forces, until a man who identified himself as a U.S. translator dragged him out of harm’s way. They may not have known each other before that moment, but the

experience forged an unshakable bond.

“Since that time, we become even closer than brothers,” Janis said.

With the Taliban in pursuit of Janis, Matt began working furiously

to get him a visa so he could leave the country. Initially, they expected the process to only take a couple of months, but it actually took several years. Thanks to Matt’s persistence gathering signatures on a petition,

and meeting with several members of Congress, Janis and his family fled to the U.S. in 2013.

Once he arrived, Matt helped him with every aspect of his new life in

Cont on page 14.

DTE

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Community is what holds us together, and makes us stronger.

So DTE is supporting our neighbors. Donating 2 million masks

to emergency personnel, and 600,000 to small businesses as they reopen. Providing essential meals and shelter to more than half a million families. And leading a coalition to provide tablets and internet access to 51,000 school children so they can continue to learn at home.

Community matters. And to DTE, all of Michigan is our community.

Cont. from page 1 Hagia Sofia

ment. A deed of sales is maintained. He removed the statues of Jesus and Mary, but retained the structure and kept other Christian artifacts. In 1931, Kamal Ataturk turned it into a museum of Christian and Muslim artifacts. The museum displayed Christian symbols and a copy of the Quran written by the third Caliph Uthman.

In July 2020, a Turkish court decided to restore its status as a mosque. Christians of all denominations who fought for centuries for the possession of this historical religious monument and secularists condemned this. The Turks have divided opinions. A majority want it as a mosque while a minority wants it to retain its museum status. The Muslim community, all over the world, is divided and has four opinions. A group of Muslims supports the Turkish court decision. A group condemns it. Another group calls it a bad move and says it would hurt Muslims in countries where they are in the minority, and the fourth groups prefer to stay neutral.

How should one develop an opinion based on divine teachings? There are two opinions among Muslim scholars on the issue of conversion of non-Muslim places to worship. One group states that if Muslims take over land and others abandon their places of worship, they should turn them into mosques. They quote the Quran verse. "And say, Truth has come, and falsehood has perished. Indeed falsehood, [by its nature], is ever perishing/bound to perish." (17:81)

The second group argues that Muslims should protect the houses of worship of others, especially Christians. In support of their argument, the quote the following Quranic verse. those who were ousted from their homelands against all right for no other reason than their saying. "Our Sustainer is God!" For, if God had not enabled people to defend themselves against one another, all] monasteries and churches and synagogues and

mosques – in [all of] which people abundantly extol – the name of God would surely have been destroyed [ere now]. And God will most certainly assist him who succors His cause: for, verily, God is most powerful, mighty, (22:40)

They also quote a letter; the Prophet sent to the monks of Mt. Saint Catherine that reads as follows:

"They [Christians] must not give anything of their income but that which pleases them—they must not be offended, or disturbed, or coerced or compelled. Their judges should not be changed or prevented from accomplishing their offices, or the monks disturbed exercising their religious order.

He will be regarded as one who has corrupted the oath of God, disbelieved His Testament, rejected His Authority, despised His Religion, and made himself deserving of His Curse, whether he is a Sultan or any other believer of Islam.

Whenever monks, devotees, and pilgrims gather together, whether in a mountain or valley, or den, or frequented the place, or plain, or church, or in houses of worship, certainly we shall protect them. For they are under my Protection."

History reminds us that Hagia Sophia was not only a Church but also a center of crusaders. It also served as a garrison for the Byzantine army. It fell to the Turks when they won the war. They did not destroy it; the way victors used to do during those times. They kept it intact. They did not convert it into a palace or cause its desecration. They transformed it into a place of worship of God. They believed their God was the God of Christians and Jews also.

Was their decision divinely inspired and guided. No. The politics of war and the hostility between the Turks and others determined their action. But was that the only option the Turks had? The Turks had seen the Hagia Sophia play a pivotal role in conspiracies against them. They were not willing to take

another chance. In their view, the Church was a military headquarters of the Byzantines, where all the major decisions against them were taken. Instead, they transformed it into a mosque out of political necessity. They did not follow Catholics' example in Spain. No inquisition took place in Turkey and no mass conversion of churches into mosques happened.

Was the decision to turn it into a museum the right one in 1931? No. If religious sensitivity was the concern for this decision, then the mosque should have been restored to Christians. If legality was the concern, it should have been given back to Muslims as a mosque. It was a place of worship. The choice of Ataturk opened the wounds again.

Is the 2020 decision the right one? No. It is again a decision based on politics. Turkey could have pioneered a new chapter in interfaith relations by offering a unique action on the issue. Hagia Sophia has acres of land. A decision allowing Muslims and Christians to hold their prayers in their own legally designated spaces while retaining the museum in its original form could have convinced all parties. It might still be within the theological framework of Islam. Turkey missed this pioneering approach.

The tears of the world over the Turkish decision are crocodile's tears. The world's secular and political leadership is not sincere in its fake concern over the issue. The UNESCO or human rights group did not show their outrage when Spain, Greece, Italy, India, and Israel demolished thousands of mosques or changed their status. It was silent when China destroyed hundreds of mosques. It remained quiet when India, under a judicial order, handed over the Babri Masjid to Hindus based on their concocted claims.

The so-called world that is now crying over the decision has remained a silent witness to Muslims' atrocities for centuries. Is it not a fact that the Roman Catholic

Church organized inquisition against Muslims in Spain? Is it not a fact that Jews of Israel are carrying a systematic genocide against Muslims?

The Turkish decision emerges from their understanding of global politics. If the Turkish government had given priority to divine guidance, the outcome might have been different. What the Quran says about conflicts among people is as follows:

But [since] good and evil cannot be equal, repel thou [evil] with something better and lo! he between whom and you was enmity [may then become] as though he had [always] been close [unto thee], a true friend! (41:34)

Important Events

- 360 – Inauguration of Hagia Sophia, under the rule of Constantius II.
- 404 – The original roof got destroyed in a fire.
- 415 – Restored and rededicated by Theodosius II.
- 532 – Burned down once again in the Nika riots beginning in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. The church got completely destroyed alongside various others. After a mere 93 days, construction of the Hagia Sophia began.
- 537 – The reconstruction got completed with the lavish decorations and ornaments
- 553 – An earthquake shook Hagia Sophia, weakening the crown of the Eastern arch.
- 558 – Another earthquake hit, causing a break between the two halves. A few months after, the main dome collapsed alongside the eastern semi-dome. It destroyed the ambo, ciborium, and the Holy Table.
- 562 – Reconstruction completed.
- 726 – Hagia Sophia got stripped of religious illustrations and sculptural work with the abolition of the veneration of icons (iconoclasm).
- 842 – The Second Council of Nicaea commenced the redecoration of Hagia Sophia and reinstated icons.
- 859 – A great fire dam-

aged the Hagia Sophia.

- 869 – An earthquake caused a half dome to collapse.
- 989 – Another massive earthquake caused the collapse of the western dome.
- 994 – Hagia Sophia reopened after reconstruction took place.
- 1204 – Hagia Sophia became a Roman Catholic Cathedral.
- 1261 – Hagia Sophia was converted to an Eastern Orthodox Church again.
- 1344 – An earthquake caused severe damage throughout the striation
- 1346 – Various parts of the building collapsed, and the church was closed.
- 1354 – Hagia Sophia reopened after construction.
- 1453 – Following the fall of Constantinople, Sultan Muhammad ordered the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque. Some say he purchased the building.
- 1573 – The exterior changed and altered to follow the customary mosque appearance.
- 1717 – Renovations on the interior began.
- 1734 – Hagia Sophia added a library and a Quranic School.
- 1847 – The structure underwent another restoration.
- 1849 – The mosque reopened.
- 1919 – The Divine Service in Hagia Sophia, after the Salvation in 1453, started and completed by a Greek military priest.
- 1935 – The building transformed into a museum on the order of the first President of Turkey Ataturk.
- 2020 – The 1935 decision to convert the Hagia Sophia to a museum; the Turkish President signs a decree converting it into a working mosque.

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CONTINUED STORY

**Cont. from page 1
COVID-19**

on Linwood Street with the camera rolling for her popular live Facebook feed. Her camera scanned over several men from a nearby urban farm in safety masks and gloves preparing to distribute dozens of boxes labeled “Eastern Market—Healthier, Wealthier, Happier Detroit.” Inside the boxes were assorted fruits and vegetables, including mushrooms, onions, asparagus, potatoes, apples, and more. Started in 2009, C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N Urban Farms (Community Resources Institute to Empower Residents in Our Neighborhood) is an agricultural, community redevelopment, and revitalization initiative located about half a mile away from its base institution HMWM. C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N.’s co-founder and president, and long-time HMWM member Na’im Muslim Sabir explained that the urban farm is now engaged in a ten-week program to source fresh produce and offer it to the community each Monday afternoon.

Sabir, who had a long career as a restaurateur, grew up on a family farm in Pennsylvania. He brings skills from both experiences to the farm. Although the items provided in this season’s boxes are from Eastern Market, Sabir intends for C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N. soon to be able to provide similar produce for the community. Started in 2009 and stretching over 21 contiguous lots, C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N. is progressing toward housing a high output urban farm; a center that provides education about agriculture to youth and adults; and a place where community members can hone marketable skills related to farming and food preparation.

Another C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N. co-founder and long-term HMWM member, Omar AbdulKhaaliq, brings his years of expertise as a carpenter to the urban farm. Abdul Khaaliq explained that C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N. is currently working to restore a large house on Monterey Street at the center

of the farmland. Project volunteers will add a commercial kitchen and other community amenities to the structure. According to AbdulKhaaliq: “Our leader, Warith Deen Muhammad, put emphasis on doing work that attracts people to Allah because it reflects

the “Mother Mosque” by some area institution due to the way it has led by example and how its members have fostered efforts in other mosques. For example, HMWM members helped establish and organize the long-running Saturday soup kitchen at the Mus-

1,000 meals per week to families in need.”

On Southfield Freeway, about 8 miles away from the Muslim Center and HMWM, Dar Al-Rahma (DAR), is following in the footsteps of these older institutions. Established in 2018, DAR devotes

community with food into fruition more quickly than might have been otherwise. Jabril Abdul-Nur Ahmad, a young community activist with DAR who initiated and manages key aspects of the food distribution program, explained: “Food is the universal need that everyone has, and it isn’t always met. So if we’re going to be in this neighborhood and in this area, we should be working to provide some source of goodness, some source of sustenance, for the people that we serve.”

During Ramadan, DAR’s curbside dinners were prepared by rising culinary star Khalipha Kane, owner of Khalipha’s Katering. Several times each week, Khalipha provided mouthwatering halal southern specialties based on the recipes of her Alabama-born grandmother Mrs. Mary Williams. Khalipha’s offerings bring novel flavors and traditions to Detroit’s halal food scene. Khalipha, who is a member of the Sister’s Service Committee at DAR, prepared items like barbeque chicken, mac and cheese, and green beans for families in the DAR neighborhood, and for other community members. Khalipha prepared about 250 meals every night that she cooked. She explained: “Every time I cook, I make dua [prayers] over the food and I say, “Oh Allah please allow this food to be nourishment for whoever partakes in it, and allow it to be the best taste that they have experienced.”

Khalipha’s prayer captures the spirit of giving that is sweeping through Detroit’s Muslim communities. Detroit Muslims are not only giving, but they are bringing their best. The challenges of COVID-19 are raising the energy of an already generous community to new heights. Based on the sentiments of these inspired community leaders, there is no sign of stopping. For more information about or to support any of the giving programs mentioned in the article, please visit www.criterionurbanfarm.org; www.historicmwm.com; www.muslimcenterdetroit.com; www.daralrahma.org.



Photo credit: Davine El-Amin

Islamic ideals and values of good character. And he also asked us to build up our community life on the pattern of Medina, as it was established by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his companions.” This message holds resonance – people from across the country have been sending their donations to advance the urban farm.

The C.R.I.T.E.R.I.O.N. initiative is just one of many ways that HMWM supports the community. Founded in 1930, HMWM moved to its present location in 1959. It is one of the area’s oldest mosques and highly distinguished for its community service. HMWM offers hot, freshly prepared meals each Saturday at its soup kitchen and a food pantry twice each month, in cooperation with the Detroit Muslim Mission/Community Services Community Development Corporation. Since 2008, Mitchell Shamsud-Din, Executive Director of the Detroit Muslim Mission a long time HMWM member explained that in recent months, the hot meals have been prepared off-site and offered via drive-up distribution in response to COVID-19 safety concerns.

HMWM is known as

lim Center Mosque and Community Center on Davison Freeway, about 1.5 miles northeast from HMWM. The Muslim Center soup kitchen staff and volunteers intensified and expanded their efforts during COVID-19, especially during Ramadan 2020, to safely meet community needs. In addition to re-structuring the ongoing Saturday soup kitchen and food pantry into a drive-by pick up, the Muslim Center offered hot meals to their neighbors and the wider community every night during Ramadan and distributed this food to the sick and shut-in. Muslim Center Board Chairman Moussa Niang elaborated:

“In future years, one thing that will be remembered about COVID-19 is how people spent their time, and where organizations stood to help. The Muslim Center board knows that one of the most important things is relief action for people who need food, particularly people who can’t leave their homes. One thing we have done is to offer food boxes and hot meals at the mosque, and also to distribute them to people who can’t make it to the mosque. During this past Ramadan, we provided over

itself to community service and empowerment as part of its mission to educate about Islam. DAR leader Shaykh Abdulkarim Yayha explained:

“Among the first pieces of advice that the Prophet gave in al-Medina was to spread peace, share food, and pray by night. Spreading peace includes making people safe. Detroit has a large low income population, and many of those people lack transportation. If there were—and there is—another mosque a mile from here—having food be distributed at both places still would be relevant. Somebody walking a block or two versus a mile or two, or not having to take the bus from across town, is dramatically different for someone who is struggling.”

During this past Ramadan, DAR began distributing food to its neighbors. This included Ramadan dinners several nights per week. It also included the distribution of food boxes, which is continuing into the year. Shaykh Yayha explained that one of the blessings of COVID-19 is that it served as a catalyst for DAR to bring its long-desired dream to provision the neighborhood and

**Cont. from page 1
International Students**

tional students to attend in-person classes in order to stay in the country. The announcement follows a lawsuit hearing against the administration on behalf of Harvard and MIT.

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced on Monday, July 6 that more than a million F-1 and M-1 student visa holders could no longer stay in or enter the U.S. if their college or university switches to an entirely online curriculum for the fall 2020 semester. This announcement comes on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused most colleges to transition most, if not all, of their courses online to minimize the risk of exposure and adhere to social distancing guidelines.

This leaves international students who are currently in the U.S. with only two options; each brings with it a slew of health and logistical obstacles that will dilute the quality of education that they will receive. Any student taking an entirely online course

load must “depart the country or take other measures, such as transferring to a school with in-person instructions,” ICE said in its news release. Students who fail to follow these guidelines “will face immigration consequences, including, but not limited to, the initiation of removal proceedings.”

The change falls under the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), an institution operated by ICE that sets rules for student visas. Earlier this year in March, SEVP temporarily allowed for those on non-immigrant student visas to take their spring and summer 2020 courses online while remaining in the U.S. Prior to that exemption, which was issued due to COVID-19, visa-holding students were required to participate in in-person learning.

Students who are currently in their home country cannot enter the U.S. without the proper I-20 paperwork. This document must be reissued by colleges and universities by August 4 to prove that the student is registered for

in-person classes for the upcoming semester. This document also states that as long as the students meet the in-person class requirement, they will be allowed to take more than one class or three credit hours online.

Since the beginning of Donald Trump’s presidency, the current administration’s anti-immigration policies—the “Muslim ban,” the border wall, the attack on sanctuary cities, and limiting access to asylum seekers, to name a few—have caused significant mental, physical and financial harm to the immigrant community. Using the façade of COVID-19 to place restrictions on international students is the administration’s latest attack on the immigrant population; it comes only one month after the Trump administration suspended work visas for non-immigrant workers.

Many international students feel helpless as they are left to choose between equally bad options. Should they stay in the U.S. and risk being exposed to the COVID-19 in their schools? Or should they travel back

to their native country where the pandemic may be more widespread? If they go back home, would they have an appropriate study environment with access to the internet and a computer? Would switching schools or taking a leave for the upcoming semester affect their scholarships? What happens if the school that is currently offering in-person classes is forced to switch to online-only education due to COVID-19? And how would their decision ultimately affect their meticulously crafted long term goals, dreams and aspirations?

This sudden declaration by ICE has left colleges scrambling to find a solution that allows them to retain their international students while simultaneously minimizing the negative health impact of having classes in person.

New York University and Columbia University are transitioning to a hybrid model by creating in-person courses to accommodate and prevent the deportation of their international students. Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on the other

hand, are jointly taking legal steps by suing ICE and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to deter the enforcement of the new guidelines.

In addition to the students, ICE’s policy also hurts the universities and negatively impacts the U.S. economy. In 2019, the Institute of International Education found that 1,095,299 students are in the U.S. on F-1 and M-1 visas. International students brought universities an upward of \$2.5 billion in revenue, added \$41 billion to the economy, and supported 458,290 jobs. This loss of income could be devastating to many struggling universities and will likely further damage the already hurt economy.

Playing political chess with the U.S. education system and hindering the continuity of education will hurt millions of people worldwide and also in the U.S. The immediate and long-term consequences of ICE’s policy can be devastating if loopholes and work-arounds are not found.

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**Cont. from page 11
Afghan Translator**

America—including raising \$35,000 with a GoFundMe campaign.

Janis finally became eligible for citizenship this year and, on June 30, Acting Homeland Security Secretary Ken Cuccinelli administered

the oath of allegiance to Janis and his wife, officially making them U.S. citizens—just in time to celebrate their new country’s Independence Day.

During the ceremony, Janis was thanked for his brave service and saving the lives of 5 Americans.

ICYMI: Yesterday, @HomelandKen joined a

naturalization ceremony welcoming 20 #NewUS-Citizens at our Washington office. Included were Mr. Janis Shinwari & his wife. Shinwari was a translator alongside our troops in Afghanistan & saved the lives of 5 Americans. Congrats to all! pic.twitter.com/CJgrqLiMBb

— USCIS (@USCIS) June 30, 2020

Though Janis is grateful for his life in the U.S., and the kindness from countless strangers, he hasn’t forgotten about the other brave translators in Afghanistan.

He and Matt started the nonprofit No One Left Behind, which has helped

more than 5,000 translators and their families to settle as refugees in the US.

It’s their way of paying back the indebtedness they feel for each other, genuinely believing neither would be here today if not for the other’s care and assistance.

**Cont. from page 10
Primary Races**

who defeated another career-long establishment democrat in the primary last election cycle.

“Everyone seemed to be really excited about this election and me as a

candidate. When it was 10 o’clock at night and I saw people still standing in line, I knew that we had a chance not just to win, but to have a really strong showing. It’s just humbling,” Jamaal Bowman, described his own performance in The

Washington Post.

Bowman attributed his apparent success to “thousands of pretty good relationships with kids and families throughout the district. I’ve also been an organizer, not just in the district, but across

the state and country fighting for educational justice issues. So that authenticity was present as we launched our campaign and throughout the campaign.” He also said that Engel had been seen as absent from the community and not

representative of their concerns. Bowman’s race coincides with a tight senate primary in Kentucky to determine who will face Mitch McConnell in November

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Anguilla	\$310	—	Mali	—	\$85
Bahamas	\$125	—	Mexico	\$170	\$190
Bangladesh	\$160	\$90	Montenegro	—	\$155
Bosnia	\$215	\$210	Mozambique	—	\$105
Brazil	\$155	—	Myanmar (Burma)	\$130	\$85
Burundi	—	\$85	Nepal	\$205	\$75
Cambodia	\$210	\$125	Pakistan	\$150	\$80
Congolese Refugees in Kenya	\$120	\$85	Palestinian Refugees in Jordan	\$185	—
Central African Republic Refugees in Chad	—	\$85	Peru	\$95	\$80
Central African Republic Refugees in Mali	—	\$85	Philippines	—	\$175
Chad	—	\$85	Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh	\$160	\$85
Colombia	—	\$175	Rohingya Refugees in India	\$165	\$60
Djibouti	—	\$105	Rohingya Refugees in Indonesia	\$190	\$160
Dominica	—	\$210	Rwanda	—	\$85
Ethiopia	—	\$85	Saint Martin	—	\$220
Ethiopian Refugees in Kenya	\$120	\$85	Sierra Leone	—	\$115
Gambia	—	\$85	Somalia	\$120	\$85
Ghana	\$145	\$85	South Africa	—	\$125
Guyana	\$200	\$120	South Sudanese Refugees in Kenya	\$120	\$85
Haiti	—	\$100	Sri Lanka	\$160	\$70
India	\$155	\$60	Syrian Refugees in Jordan	\$185	—
Indonesia	\$135	\$130	Tanzania	\$120	\$85
Iraqi Refugees in Jordan	\$185	—	Thailand	—	\$195
Jordan	\$185	—	Tunisia	\$165	\$280
Kashmir (Azad)	\$145	\$80	Uganda	\$120	\$85
Kashmir Valley	\$155	\$90	Venezuelan Refugees in Peru	\$95	\$80
Kenya	\$120	\$85	Vietnam	—	\$145
Kosovo	\$160	—	Yemeni Refugees in Djibouti	—	\$105
			Yemeni Refugees in Jordan	\$185	—

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