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**Council on American-Islamic Relations
PHILADELPHIA**

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A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends, As Salaamu Alaikum:

This quarter I am pleased to report that CAIR-Philadelphia has experienced encouraging growth in many of the programs we initiated during the past year. After much hard work we have put together the initial component of a Muslim Youth Leadership Program which will debut this fall. We have also spearheaded our third successful Citizenship & Immigration Information Session and continue to offer *Know Your Rights* presentations around the region. In addition, we have expanded our internship program to accommodate eight college students who have been diligently assisting staff in providing our core services to the Muslim community.

Finally, it is with much sadness that I would like to announce I will be stepping down as Executive Director of CAIR-Philadelphia in August. It has been a tremendous privilege contributing to the development of this fine organization and serving the Muslim community these past two years. I would like to thank each of you for the support that made it possible. A new Executive Director has been selected and we are currently working in close cooperation at our office to ensure a smooth transition upon my departure. I pray that each of you and CAIR-PA will continue to enjoy success long into the future.

Sincerely,



Justin L. Peyton

SAVE THE DATE

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION
WORKSHOPS**

**CAREER
EXPLORATION**

**Muslim Youth
Leadership Program**

**Fall 2009 Conference
Civil Rights Advocacy**

**INTERACTIVE PANEL
DISCUSSIONS**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE
OPPORTUNITIES**

Dates: Saturday, Sept. 26th & Sunday, Sept. 27th

Times: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (Sat)

9:00 am - 4:00 pm (Sun)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 28, 2009

CAIR-Philadelphia's inaugural Muslim Youth Leadership Program (MYLP) Conference will focus on civil rights advocacy and teach local high school students how to assert their rights to prevent injustices against themselves and the community; explore civil rights career fields and provide volunteer opportunities conducive to utilizing their newfound skills.

For more information or to download an application form, please visit our website:

<http://pa.cair.com/activism/mylp>.

To advertise in our next news letter, contact our office at 215-592-0509

PROTECTING CIVIL LIBERTIES

ADVOCATING AGAINST WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

In June, CAIR-Philadelphia helped to successfully resolve a complaint by an African American female who felt she was harassed, suspended and ultimately fired from her job because she observed hijab.

CAIR-Philadelphia sent an advocacy letter to her employer seeking redress and when they proved unwilling to talk we assisted the woman through the PA Human Relations Commission complaint process, resulting in a negotiated settlement and monetary compensation for the alleged act of discrimination.

"KNOW YOUR RIGHTS" PRESENTATION

CAIR-PA continues to offer "Know Your Rights" sessions in mosques around in the Greater Philadelphia area. In May 2009, CAIR-PA gave a presentation at the Islamic Society of Greater Valley Forge. During the presentation we discussed one's rights in the work place, school, with law enforcement, while traveling, and in public areas. Following the presentation, we devoted a significant amount of time to address questions of specific individual issues and the Muslim community in general.

RESPONDING TO PUBLIC ACCOMODATION DISCRIMINATION

In June of 2008, a Muslim family from Texas visiting eastern PA reported mistreatment they suffered at an area hotel.

The family alleges the hotel management checked them out of their rooms without notice while they were not present and placed their belongings in plastic bags in a pool locker room. After an advocacy letter to the hotel failed to yield results, we assisted the family in filing a complaint with the PA Human Relations Commission and are currently working to secure a resolution.



QUARTERLY CASE FLOW:

Open Cases: 65
New Cases: 21
Closed Cases: 16

ADVOCATING AGAINST WRONGFULL TERMINATION

In April, CAIR-Philadelphia assisted a Middle Eastern man to successfully appeal his termination from a residency program in eastern PA. This aspiring doctor felt his termination stemmed from bias against his Muslim background which began after he requested and was denied permission to attend Friday prayer. In part because of the suggestions CAIR-Philadelphia provided on how to approach this situation he was able to uphold his position at the hospital and is currently continuing his residency.

CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION INFORMATION SESSION

In June, CAIR-Philadelphia held our third Citizenship and Immigration Information Session in partnership with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at the African Islamic Community Center in southwest Philadelphia. After a short presentation on the immigration process and a general question and answer session the 40-50 attendees had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with immigration officers to have their specific concerns addressed.

To address religious discrimination, call CAIR-PA at 215-592-0509

EMPOWERING AMERICAN MUSLIMS

CAIR-PHILADELPHIA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In the second quarter of 2009 CAIR-Philadelphia saw a tremendous expansion of our internship program. Approximately 40 young college students submitted applications for civil rights, government relations, outreach and research internship positions for the summer of 2009. Of those, eight began internships. Civil rights interns Scott Mayland and Lara SanPietro, are investigating complaints of discrimination from community members and assist in direct advocacy on their behalf.



Government relations interns Michael Klemens and Kira West, are working to create the civic education component of a comprehensive Voter Mobilization Program intended to boost our community's involvement in the political process. Research interns Doug Moore, Evan Walczak and Rennie Whang, are working on independent research projects that will result in community empowering presentations which we hope to begin offering in the future. And outreach intern Elizabeth Johnson, has been instrumental in organizing the first offering of our Muslim Youth Leadership Program (MYLP) this fall.

FALL 2009 POSITIONS:

Civil Rights Intern
Media/Communications Intern
Community Outreach Intern
Government Relations Intern

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Visit our "Internship Center" at <http://pa.cair.com>

ENHANCING UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM

COURSES & PRESENTATIONS

In April, CAIR-Philadelphia concluded teaching its highly popular Course “Understanding Islam and Muslims through History and Jurisprudence” at two churches in West Chester, PA. Also in April, CAIR-PA offered our class, *Understanding Political Islam*, in conjunction with Elderhostel at the Foundation for Islamic Education and gave a presentation entitled *The Path to Forgiveness* at the Lutheran Theological Seminary.

In May, CAIR-Philadelphia gave a presentation on *Muslims in America* at the PECO building. Finally in June, CAIR-Philadelphia continued offering an ongoing series of weekly classes on *Understanding Islamic Jurisprudence* at the Foundation for Islamic Education.

Courses Offered

- Introduction to Islam
- Understanding Islam in a Modern World: A Comparative Perspective
- Understanding Islam & Muslims Through History and Jurisprudence
- Understanding Political Islam
- Jesus in the Islamic Tradition
- The Path to Forgiveness

QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES:

Courses Taught: 1
Presentations: 3
Discussions: 0

To schedule presentations, call CAIR-PA at 215-592-0509

BUILDING COALITIONS

USCIS COMMUNITY MEETINGS

In May, CAIR-PA’s Director of Civil Rights attended the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) quarterly Community Organization Meetings. At that meeting, CAIR-PA was able to announce and advertise our most recent Citizenship and Immigration Information Session. In addition, by attending these meetings, CAIR-PA is able to come forward with comments and concerns for USCIS and receive updates on new legislation regarding the immigration process.

TASK FORCE ON CIVIL TENSIONS MEETINGS

In May, CAIR-PA’s Civil Rights Director was asked to comment on issues surrounding the impact of the “PA Garb Statute’s” affect on Muslim educators who wear hijab at a meeting of the PA Inter-Agency Task Force on Civil Tension, hosted by the PA Human Relations Commission. CAIR participates in these monthly meetings to keep abreast of changes in statewide intergroup relations, share incidents of discrimination against Muslims and provide information about our community to other task force members.



To partner with CAIR-PA, call 215-592-0509

COMMUNITY CORNER

IMAM’S ROUNDTABLE: Al-Islam’s Spirit of Community Cooperation



“The Muslim is obligated to recognize his responsibility to all the communities of man. He cannot forget that in promoting his own cause, he has to have a healthy regard for the destiny of other people.”

– Imam W. D. Mohammed

The spirit of cooperation may rightly be considered one of the **hallmarks** of Islamic community life. Whenever Muslims unite and work together in this spirit, our lives are blessed with spiritual and material benefits. In the absence of such efforts, we find only spiritual malaise and social, political and economic stagnation. Allah tells us in the Holy Quran, “Cooperate in good and piety and do not cooperate in sin and transgression...” [5:2] and enjoins us to “Hold firmly to the cable that God extends out to you, and do not be divided among yourselves.” [3:103] Prophet Muhammad, (PBUH), taught us that “the best among you is the one who is most useful to others.”

Many verses of Quran and traditions of the Prophet lay stress upon the vital importance of cooperation among Muslims and also with non-Muslims, *when such cooperation enhances the best interests and noble aspirations of our shared freedom space.* Any examination of Islamic history reveals that when Muslims united and strove together with their persons and wealth for the sake of Allah, the entire world became the beneficiary, as the torchlight of al-Islam moved humanity from ignorance to true education in every field of human endeavor. Today, we Muslims are faced with a choice. Muslims can once again model the Quranic values of mutual cooperation & the way of Muhammad (PBUH), leading humanity to new heights and real solutions for our time, or we can sit on the sidelines, mouthing pious platitudes while the world looks in vain for what we **should** be able to show – the cooperative spirit that leads to all that is good and true, the real message of al-Islam.

Imam Malik Mubashshir
Philadelphia Masjid/Sister Clara Muhammad School

To contribute content, email CAIR-PA at cairphilly@gmail.com

YOUNG ADULT FORUM: PASSING THE BATON

Youth activism has always been the driving force in spreading the deen. Prophets Saleh and Ibrahim (AS) were barely teenagers when they began calling the people to the worship of Allah (SWT) despite death threats from their brethren. During the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), young Muslims like, Aisha bint Abu Bakr, Usama bin Zaid, and Ali ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with all of them) struggled and sacrificed for Allah's cause.

That same dedication and commitment was shown during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s as African-American and immigrant Muslims gave of their time and money to open masjid, build Islamic schools, and establish a Muslim presence in the United States. Like the prophets and sahaba mentioned above, these modern-day Muslims were young adults (30 years old and under), however, they did not allow age to deter them from working for Islam.

Fast forward to 2009 and you will see that while young Muslims still have a strong desire (as well as the expertise) to serve the Islamic community, the generation before hasn't necessarily been as welcoming. Unfortunately, we have accepted the concept of "passing the baton," meaning that the younger generation inherits leadership once the older generation voluntarily relinquishes authority or power. This was not the way of our Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He worked with the elders, youth, and everyone in between. Here are some tips to promote inclusion of youth and young adults:

Get on Board - Elect younger members of the community to your masjid board (this includes women). This group of decision makers should reflect the Muslim community in that locale.

Ummah's Got Talent – It is important for leaders in the Muslim community to use the skills and talents of young people. If so, we can accomplish much more in a shorter period of time, insha'Allah.

Speak Out – Imams and masjid board members should hold town hall meetings to allow young people to express their concerns and share ideas for improvement. In his first address after assuming the position of khali-fah, Abu Bakr encouraged the participation of all Muslims stating, "I've been put over you and I'm not the best of you. If I do good, help me to do better."

- Naeemah Khabir

ABOUT CAIR

CAIR-Philadelphia is a non-profit 501(c)(3), grassroots civil rights and advocacy group. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties group, with regional offices nationwide and in Canada. The national headquarters is located on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C.

WHY SUPPORT CAIR-PHILADELPHIA?

Since our establishment in 2004, CAIR-Philadelphia has worked to empower the American Muslim community at the local level and encourage our participation in political and social activism. CAIR-Philadelphia also seeks to promote a positive image of Islam and Muslims in America through media relations, advocacy and education.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT CAIR-PHILADELPHIA?

Your financial support is invaluable in helping CAIR-Philadelphia continue our operations in service of the Muslim community. You can send us a one-time donation via check/money order, donate via credit card on our website, or establish monthly automatic deductions from your bank account by sending us a voided check. We ask Allah (SWT) to accept your charity and multiply your rewards.

DONATION METHODS

1. Check/Money Order
2. Credit Card
3. Automatic Deduction

BENEFITS OF SUPPORTING CAIR-PHILADELPHIA

Contributions to CAIR-Philadelphia are tax-deductible and Zakat-eligible. Our Tax ID number is 542174614. In addition, numerous Muslim scholars have confirmed that Zakat is payable to organizations that exist to serve the Muslim community by protecting their rights. This is because the work done by CAIR (and other such organizations) can be classified as fi-sabilillah, which is one of the eight categories of Zakat recipients detailed in the Qur'an (Chapter 9, Verse 60). For more information go to :

<http://www.cair.com/Zakat.aspx>

