

Islamic Center Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 4
April 15, 2003
Safar 14, 1424

ICNEF, St. John's Bluff Road S., Jacksonville, Florida 32246

CALENDAR

MONTHLY GATHERING

Saturday, April 26, 2003
5:30 pm

HOST FAMILIES

Tahir & Nabeela Sharif
Parwin Arsalla

MAY 2003 HOST FAMILIES

Muhammad Saeed & Naila Choudhry
Rahim & Alicia Shah

BOARD MEETING

Sunday, April 27, 2003
After Zuhr Prayer

"Do you not see how God likened a good word to a good tree whose root is firm and its branches are in heaven?

It yields its fruit at all times by the leave of its Lord. Thus does God set parables for men, in order that they may take heed. But an evil word is like an evil tree, torn out of the earth, and with no stability. God confirms those who believe with the Word of Steadfastness in the present life and in the Hereafter. God leads the wrongdoers astray. God does what He will."

-Surah Ibrahim:24-27

Articles News Announcements
FOR MAY NEWSLETTER

Please submit by
Friday, May 02, 2003

ICNEF WEBSITE

<http://www.ICNEF.org>

EDUCATING A MUSLIM CHILD: MOTIVATIONS, PRIORITIES, AND CHALLENGES

By Dr. Parvez Ahmad

It is not a matter of coincidence that the first command of Islam was "read." Acquisition of knowledge was of paramount importance to the early generation of Muslims. For the early Muslims this simple command "read" was sufficient to transform a group of desert Arabs from a footnote in history to the brightest stars of human civilization.

Muslims today, standing at an epic crossroad, need to evaluate a basic and fundamental question - how are we going to raise our next generation? What values are we going to instill in them so that they can be in a position to reclaim the lost glory of Islam's bright past? What can we do to prepare our next generation so that they assume the lofty responsibility of, "You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in God Almighty" (3:110).

The Islamic paradigm is all encompassing. It does not compartmentalize things into the sacred and the secular. For all of life is sacred. Islam's ultimate purpose is to reveal the Unity of the Divine Principle. Spirituality in Islam is inseparable from the awareness of God Almighty and a life lived according to His Will.

In the general secular paradigm the purpose of education is to provide for the economic prosperity of a nation. Thus, education is measured and often viewed as a necessary cog in the wheels of consumerism. A Muslim providing for the economic prosperity of a nation is not contradictory to the Islamic beliefs. However, for most Muslims the view that the purpose of education is solely money making is often unpalatable.

In Islam's worldview, human beings are not just factors of production but are God Almighty's vicegerents on earth and have potential to be loftier than the angels and the propensity to be worse than animals. "Gifted with intelligence in the true sense of the term, humans alone of all creatures are capable of knowing the reality, of which they themselves are a manifestation, and, in the light of this knowledge, of rising above their own earthly and contingent selfhood" (The Wholeness and Holiness in Education by Zahra Al Zeera)

What should be the guiding philosophy of an Islamic educational institution? The Islamic view of knowledge includes both religious and spiritual issues dealing with God Almighty, the soul, the unseen worlds, the metaphysical subjects as well as worldly issues (ilm al-muamalah). Imam Al-Ghazali, a classic theologian, philosopher and teacher at the Nizamiyyah in Baghdad, in the tenth century wrote in his Book of Knowledge that the only praiseworthy knowledge is one, which leads human beings to success in the hereafter.

continued on page 3

ANNUAL APPRECIATION AWARDS

M. Ashraf Shaikh

Jacksonville is our home. We Muslims need to create an environment of understanding and mutual respect with the followers of other faiths practiced in the Greater Jacksonville area. Furthermore, in order to actively participate in the civic and other aspects of community life, we must build bridges with the civic and other leaders in the community. This is a crucial aspect of community building that Islam and the needs of the time demand of each of us.

Consequently, in order to have an opportunity to recognize and show our appreciation to those who have helped create the wonderful community in which we live, the Islamic Center has decided to present four awards each year. The first three awards are reserved for those who are not members of the Islamic Community, whereas the fourth award is reserved for a member of the local Islamic community. Every year in the month of December, an announcement will be printed in the Islamic Center Newsletter, inviting members of the Islamic Community to nominate those whom they think deserve these awards. However, this year, in the interest of time, based upon the input received from the community, the Managing Committee of the Islamic Center has decided to present these awards to the recipients listed below:

ICNEF Civic Service Award: Awarded to a civic leader or to an organization that has made significant contributions towards the quality of life in the Jacksonville Metropolitan Area.

2003 Recipient: Honorable John A. Delaney, Mayor, City of Jacksonville

ICNEF Religious Understanding Award: Awarded to a religious leader or to an organization for helping create an environment of understanding and mutual respect among people of the many faiths practiced in the Jacksonville Metropolitan Area.

2003 Recipient: Interfaith Council of Jacksonville

Rev. Tom Borland, President

Rev. B. Fred Woolsey, Vice President

ICNEF Community Support Award: Awarded to an individual or to an organization for their community support, and/or for making significant efforts to build bridges between Muslims and other segments of our community in the Jacksonville Metropolitan Area.

2003 Recipient: New Covenant Ministries

Pastors Wiley and Jeana Tomlinson

ICNEF Humanitarian Service Award: Awarded to a local Muslim or to an organization headed by a local Muslim for its service to humanity.

2003 Recipient: Mohammad N. Mona, MD

The above awards are to be presented at a dinner to be held at the Adam's Mark hotel in June of this year. All expenses relating to the purchase of awards, dinner, and others will be covered by the sale of tickets. No Islamic Center funds will be used for this effort.

Tickets are to be sold for \$50.00 per person, and for \$400.00 for a table of ten. Businesses and others who can afford to buy a table are encouraged to do so. They are, however, expected to make available at least two seats (more if not needed by them) on each table for seating the guests. Prior to the dinner, there will be a social hour where soft drinks will be served. After dinner, awards will be presented, and there will be a speech by either one of the award recipients or another speaker.

NOTE: Although \$50 for a ticket (\$100 per couple) may seem a hefty price, we must remind ourselves that this event will go towards establishing our rapport with the Greater Jacksonville community, especially in the current environment. Tickets will be available within the next few days, and will be sold by the members of the Appreciation Awards Committee. In the meantime, if there are any questions or if you would like us to contact you as soon as the tickets become available, please feel free to call me at 904-334-3880. May God Almighty Guide us all. Ameen.

“O mankind, we have created you from a male and female, and then rendered you nations and tribes so that you might know one another. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of God Almighty, is he who is the most pious. God Almighty is Knower, Aware.” (49:13)

Continued from page 1

IMAM'S DIARY

By Muhammad Zaid Malik

Imam Ghazali goes on to divide knowledge into two branches - religious (ulum Shariyah) and rational (ulum aqliyyah). The latter refers to knowledge attained solely by using human intellect and the former gained through the revelations of God Almighty made to His Prophets and Messengers. In *Ihya Ulum al-Din* (Revival of Religious Sciences), Imam Ghazali states that although both religious and rational knowledge are important for achieving purification of the mind and soul, the ultimate aim of knowledge is the purification of the soul. As God Almighty states in the Quran, "But only those will prosper, who bring to God Almighty a sound heart" (26:89).

While it may be difficult to believe but it is a fact that the entire Islamic civilization was built on the Quran. "Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which God Almighty sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they Trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth; (Here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise" (2:164).

To seek knowledge in all its beneficial form is obligatory upon all Muslims. The Islamic paradigm of education, unlike its secular counterpart, is tri-dimensional. It encompasses God Almighty, the human being and the cosmos. God Almighty being the Ultimate Truth, human being the seeker and the cosmos the vehicle that can be utilized to seek the ultimate truth. The fallacy of today's education is the often compartmentalized and warped view of the world. Today's education lacks the wholeness because holiness has ceased to be a concern. Islamic education in its pristine philosophical form seeks to impart a balanced vision for education. Islamic education seeks to inject holiness into our daily discourses so that human beings are never remote from the Mercy of God Almighty nor can they ever forget that while they do not see God Almighty, for sure God Almighty is always watching over them.

An educational system that does not integrate these tri-dimensional values - awareness of God Almighty, concern for the cosmos and understanding of the strengths and limitations of the self, should never be mislabeled as an Islamic institution. It is only within this tri-dimensional paradigm that an Islamic educational system can manifest in its all inclusive form.

HADITH

Submitted by Homa Mojadidi

Hadhrat Thaubaan (RA) narrates that Muhammad (PBUH) said: "There will soon come a time when all nations (of the unbelievers) will unite against you (Muslims)..." Someone asked: "Will we be less in numbers at that time?" Muhammad (PBUH) said: 'In fact, you will be numerous, but useless. God will remove your respect and your fears from the hearts of your enemies (who will then despise you) and God will instill weakness in your hearts.'" Someone asked: "What is the cause of the weakness?" Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Love of the world and detestation for Death."

I was not as busy in the month of March as I was in February. A man embraced Islam in Clay County Jail. At his sister's request I went to visit him there. His brother-in-law included me in his friends' list and I was allowed to visit him on Mondays at 6:30 pm. When I visited him, he told me that there are some 15 other Muslims who pray Jumu'ah there and that about 20 other people come just to watch them pray. He also asked me to send some materials on Islam for those who are interested.

March 3rd: Dr. Rick Marks, who is Dr. Jerry Vines' Assistant Pastor, invited me to lunch. He expressed his regret for what Dr. Vines said about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

March 7th: The International Resource Center of Jacksonville invited me to a breakfast with the Mayoral candidates at Adams Mark hotel. It was a good program where people got the chance to ask various questions from their future mayor.

March 14th: I attended another program at the Adams Mark hotel, arranged by the Interfaith Council of Jacksonville, ICARE, Notional Conference for Community and Justice and St. Vincent Medical Center. The topic of this program was: "God's Concern for the Uninsured". The issue of health care access was addressed. The research papers presented indicated that between 82,000 and 155,000 people in Duval County, 12-20% of the population, are without health insurance, and that 25% of the uninsured are children: 58% of the uninsured adults are Caucasian, 33% are African American, 7% are Hispanic and 2% are of other ethnic groups.

March 20th: I was invited by Flagler College, St. Augustine (Department of World Religions) to deliver a lecture on Islam. It went well (Alhumdulillah). Professor Timothy Johnson, who is a good friend of mine, and who has been inviting me for three years, was the host. He and his World Religion class will be our guests in the monthly gathering of May. Last year a professor from St. Augustine wrote an article in St. Augustine Record (news paper) against Islam. Dr. Johnson was the only person who wrote a rebuttal to that article and got it published in the same newspaper.

March 26th: Brother Ashraf and I taped our weekly T.V program, Understanding Islam. "Islam the Way of Life" was the topic. This program is aired every Sunday at 5:30 pm, on channel 24 or 29 (cable). On the same day I attended a deposition concerning a divorce case that took 2 and a half hours. Alhumdulillah I was able to explain to both parties the rulings of Islam regarding divorce, marriage, child custody and Mahr (dowry) in detail. I was also invited to the Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church to deliver a lecture on Islam on the same day.

March 31st: As part of our on-going series on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the Southeast Public Library, we showed a segment from "The Message," followed by a Q&A session.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 2003

By Khadim Hussain

FUND NAME	BEGINNING BAL- ANCE	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	ENDING BAL- ANCE
General Operating	\$2,022.00	\$9,672.00	14,322.79	-\$2,628.79
Building	\$41,123.12	\$130.00	\$34,044.56	\$7,208.56
Fund Raising	\$180.00	\$1,265.00	\$0.00	\$1,445.00
Sound System	\$3,987.50	\$8,000.00	\$17,437.50	-\$5,450.00
Sunday School	\$2,046.27	\$161.00	\$2,186.29	\$20.98
Zakat	\$242.00	\$65.00	\$0.00	\$307.00
Total on hand as of				\$902.75

NOTE: We are negative in the Operating Fund. Please come forward and donate so we can operate this House of God. Now you have the option to pay by automatic deduction from your checking account or various credit cards. Please pick up a form from the Islamic Center or call me for more information 904-374-2123.

ICNEF MONTHLY OPERATING BUDGET

Prepared by Shah Faisal & Khadim Hussain

Islamic Center Of Northeast Florida, Inc.

Monthly Operating Budget for Year 2003

	Jan-03	Feb-03	Mar-03	Apr-03	May-03	Jun-03	Jul-03	Aug-03	Sep-03	Oct-03	Nov-03	Dec-03	Tot-03	% Of Total
Salary & Benefits														
Salaries	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	\$60,000	
Imam IRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000	\$2,000	
Imam Medical	965	1,113	853	853	853	965	853	965	965	1,094	2,979		\$13,421	
Imam Other Exp.	165	1,250	0	0	500	0	305	0	780	0	0	2,000	\$5,000	
Sub- Tot	\$6,130	\$7,363	\$5,853	\$5,853	\$6,353	\$5,965	\$6,270	\$5,853	\$6,745	\$5,965	\$6,094	\$11,979	\$80,421	62%
Building Expenses														
Building Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,060	0	0	0	0	0	\$4,060	
Repairs & Maintenance	230	752	397	237	159	190	160	112	133	364	235	201	\$3,171	
Security System	51	43	49	77	38	51	27	46	50	43	52	39	\$565	
Tax Paid	61	0	0	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,271	0	\$1,393	
Sub- Tot	\$342	\$795	\$446	\$375	\$197	\$241	\$4,247	\$158	\$182	\$407	\$1,558	\$240	\$9,189	7%
Utilities														
Electricity	1,005	1,014	800	800	800	800	800	850	802	800	822	788	\$10,081	
Telephone	299	125	213	148	191	350	130	145	156	25	327	156	\$2,265	
Waste Pickup	173	143	146	154	142	154	154	158	158	131	158	176	\$1,844	
Water	59	63	51	50	49	54	70	58	54	50	51	56	\$664	
Sub- Tot	\$1,536	\$1,345	\$1,210	\$1,152	\$1,182	\$1,358	\$1,154	\$1,210	\$1,169	\$1,006	\$1,358	\$1,177	\$14,854	11%
Office Expenses														
Bank Charges	451	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	\$462	
Books & Publications	302	328	786	63	70	0	0	0	155	228	660	48	\$2,640	
Copying	79	462	119	120	139	186	96	49	0	136	43	87	\$1,514	
Dues & Subscriptions	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	0	0	\$600	
Mailing	327	390	135	57	218	313	67	74	440	191	13	80	\$2,304	
Newsletter	162	879	119	105	65	65	115	112	88	123	128	0	\$1,961	
Supplies	726	803	728	226	151	578	272	754	973	586	471	500	\$6,768	
Sub- Tot	\$2,347	\$2,863	\$1,886	\$571	\$643	\$1,141	\$550	\$989	\$1,656	\$1,564	\$1,315	\$726	\$16,249	12%
Other Expenses														
Other Expense	278	1,334	205	677	170	0	150	913	340	341	0	515	\$4,923	
TV Program & Advertising	323	345	271	334	271	1,276	353	271	329	266	363	311	\$4,712	
Sub- Tot	\$601	\$1,680	\$476	\$1,011	\$441	\$1,276	\$503	\$1,184	\$669	\$606	\$363	\$826	\$9,635	7%
Tot	\$10,976	\$14,047	\$9,870	\$8,960	\$8,817	\$9,981	\$12,723	\$9,394	\$10,421	\$9,548	\$10,687	\$14,947	\$130,348	100%

The Managing Committee of ICNEF has approved the first detailed Operating budget for the Islamic Center. A special team has been formed to further examine the possibilities of reducing the expenses in key areas. We request the community members to help reduce some of the most obvious expense items such as electricity, and water among others. If you have any suggestions regarding improving the budget, please contact Br. Shah Faisal at 904-655-3826.

LITERARY CORNER

We would like to introduce a new department of the IC-NEF Newsletter. In the past we have requested community members to share their poems, prose, and/or creative writings. We have started to receive various works from various individuals. "Literary Corner" will showcase this talent. (This is an original work and is copyrighted)

All living things, the planets, and the stars
must follow their natural course
they don't intentionally collide
with each other or drop out of orbit
or defy the laws of nature
the way human beings do
a higher wisdom keeps them
from straying from their fixed paths
it keeps them turning on their particular axis
to avoid the ultimate cacophony
the final catastrophe that will end it all
even as men try to invite Armageddon before its time
but no one can alter the appointed time
or know when it will come
that day when men will fall
from their seats of corrupted power
all their might and glory will be gone
they will fall on their faces
weak, guilty, and ashamed
at the gigantic errors of their ways
errors they could have easily avoided
if they'd only chosen to but they did not
and brought God's wrath upon themselves
and the time for forgiveness
would have long since past
while they were busy rejoicing
in the errors of their ways
in their false pride and vanity
in all the deadly sins
breaking every law, every rule of guidance
they could possibly break
completely unashamed
reveling in the guilty and unsatisfying
pleasures of this world
but they won't be laughing or rejoicing
when they are dragged on their faces
through the scorching fires of hell
that will consume their flesh the way
their desires consumed them in this world
they will smell nothing but
the stench of their own burning flesh
and have nothing but boiling water to drink
they will be truly sorry then
but it will be too late for repentance
it will be too late for everything
except the infinite mercy of God
the unlawful things of this world
will turn into corrosive poisons within them
that will make them writhe and scream

in unbearable agony
but there will be no one
to hear their screams
or offer them sympathy
even Satan, their guide and friend in this world
will turn his back on them and say
"You're on your own now
I didn't force you to follow me
I merely tempted you and you did
I too fear Him who created me"
they will be the most forsaken
and miserable creatures of all
regretting their actions in this world
when it is too late
they will suffer in unimaginable agony until
they are saved by the mercy of God
-Nida

By the (steeds) that run, with panting (breath), and strike sparks of fire, and push home the charge in the morning, and raise the dust in clouds the while, and penetrate forthwith into the midst (of the foe) en masse; Truly Man is Ungrateful; And to that (fact) he bears witness (by his deeds); And violent is he in his love of wealth. Does he know, when that which is in the grave is scattered abroad and that which is (locked up) in (human) breasts is made manifest—that their Lord had been well acquainted with them (even to) that Day?
- Surah Adiyat

PARENTING IN ISLAM

Based on Imam Zaid's lecture; by Sameen Piracha

For those who were not able to attend the Monthly Gathering for March missed a great lecture by Imam Zaid, on the rights and duties of parents and children as outlined in Islam. The lecture was organized into two parts: advice to parents and advice to children.

It is obligatory for Muslim parents to teach Islam to their children. Even before a Muslim is blessed with children, he/she should pray to God Almighty that they may be blessed with righteous offspring, as is demonstrated by Prophets Ibrahim (PBUH) and Zakariya (PBUH). In Surah As-Saffat (37:10), Prophet Ibrahim prays, "O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son)!" In Surah Al-Imran (3:38), "There did Zakariya pray to his Lord, saying: 'O my Lord! Grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure: for Thou art He that heareth prayer!'" But it's not as easy as praying for or hoping for your children to turn out righteous. The following hadith establishes the duty of parents to provide the spiritual nourishment of their children, "Every new-born child is born in state of fitrah. Then his parents make him a Jew, Christian, or a Magian, just as an animal is born intact. Do you observe any among them that are maimed (at birth)?" (Muslim)

Imam Zaid discussed how our youth are faced with two major problems: either they have an extreme secular upbringing or they have an extreme spiritual one. He stressed that neither way is better than the other, but one in the same. Islam teaches us to adopt the middle path.

continued on page 6

WELCOME TO JACKSONVILLE

We are blessed to have the Mujahid and the Qureshi families move to our community. Please take the time to introduce your families and welcome them.

GOD ALMIGHTY DIVIDED MERCY INTO 100 PARTS

Submitted by Zan Shareef

Narrated Abu Hurairah: I heard God Almighty's Messenger (PBUH) saying, "God Almighty has divided mercy into one hundred parts and He kept ninety-nine parts with Him and sent down one part on the earth, and because of that, one single part, His creatures are merciful to each other, so that even the mare lifts up its hoof away from its baby animal, lest it should trample it."

ISLAMIC CALENDAR 2003

The Islamic Calendars are still available for purchase at the price of \$10. These make great presents for your Muslim and non-Muslim family and friends. Please stop by the Imam's office for your copy today!

CAIR-FL'S ANNUAL BANQUET: A VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

WHEN: Saturday, April 19 at 5 PM

WHERE: Hyatt Orlando at Walt Disney World
6375 West Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway
Kissimmee, Florida 34747
407-396-1234

Confirmed Speakers:

Omar Ahmed, Keynote Speaker, CAIR-National
Jason Erb, CAIR-National
Derrick Daniels, Florida Commission on Human Relations
Imam Musri, Islamic Society of Central Florida
Mark Schlakman, Center for Advancement of Human Rights, Florida State University

Bonus Attraction: Concert by Zain Bikha, Recorded over 30 Islamic songs including those with his mentor Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens)

Register Online: <http://www.cair-florida.org/banquet/>
Call: 954-916-5661

(Limited number of tickets available)

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continued from page 5

How do parents provide this moral training? It is by setting a good example. Imam Zaid pointed some parents have often misinterpreted the hadith regarding children and praying. At the age of 7, the parent CAN ask the child to pray. Note, there is no mention of force. If an example of praying has been set, then there should be no problem. At the age of 10, the parent CAN punish the child for not praying. Note, there is no mention of abuse. Again, if an example has been set, there should be no problem. By being parents, parents do not automatically have the right to preach about Islam. They can only preach after having set a good example for their children to follow and taught them Islam.

One of Hadhrat Ali's (RA) sayings about children is, from the birth of your child to the age of 7, love him/her; from the age of 7 to 14, educate him/her; from the age of 14 to 20, be their friends; and from the age of 20, leave them to decide on their own. This gives parents a roadmap on developing a loving relationship with their children.

Many of the duties fall on the shoulders of the parents, for they are the guardians of children, however, God Almighty has asked children to be grateful for being taught Islam.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003

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- 30.

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PHONE

904-646-3462

*also members of Managing Committee

INTERVIEW WITH BROTHER RAHIM SHAH

Secretary, Islamic Center of Northeast Florida

Br. Rahim Shah has been living in this community for the last two years. He has a BS in Engineering and an MBA in Marketing/Finance. He has been employed in various management positions with MCI, BellSouth, Frontier Corporation, since graduating in 1989. He currently works for Covergys Corporation, here in Jacksonville. He hails from a small village in the North West Frontier Province, but spent his childhood days in Karachi, Pakistan. He came to the States in 1983. He is happily married to Alicia Shah, and they have three children: Henna (13), Jehan (12), and Layla (9).

Newsletter Team: What motivated you to join the ICNEF Board?

Br. Rahim: I had the pleasure of attending one of the Board Meetings and saw many opportunities for improvement (I hope I don't get into trouble for saying this). We all have strengths and weaknesses, and I believe I can bring some of my strengths to the Board to better serve the community at large. Although, I strongly believe that one does not have to be a Board member to serve God and the community, some of my dear brothers and sisters urged me to join.

Newsletter Team: What is your vision for ICNEF and the Jacksonville Muslim Community?

Br. Rahim: Mashallah, our community in Jacksonville is growing rapidly and its needs are changing at a faster rate than we are able to respond to. My vision for the Jacksonville Muslim community is very simple. I would like for this community to become an example for other communities, where we are MUSLIM first and then Pakistani, Afghani, Arab, or American later.

Newsletter Team: What is your favorite project that you would like to get accomplished in the near future?

Br. Rahim: I don't have just one, but four. The projects are: Youth, New/Reverted Muslims, Uniting and integrating the Muslim community, and sharing our best values with our non-Muslim community members, and putting together a 10-year strategic plan for the Jacksonville Muslim community. With the help from many brothers and sisters, and more specifically from the youth, we are making some good progress on the first three but need to work on the fourth project. The most rewarding part of working on these projects is seeing the community come together and support one another. It would be great to see more of it!

Newsletter Team: In addition to being the Secretary of the Board, you are also the new Principal of the Sunday School. Why did you get involved with this endeavor? What are you hoping to accomplish? What can the community expect?

Br. Rahim: Like I said before, we must focus on our youth. If we don't help our youth become good Muslims, I believe we will have to answer for it not only in this world but in the hereafter. As far as accomplishment goes, we can accomplish three things, I'll be very pleased: teach them how to read and understand the Qur'an; give our youth the true knowledge of Islam, so that they feel PROUD being Muslims; and for the youth to look forward to coming to Sunday School. I was and am still amazed with the response we got from parents, teachers and volunteers to devote resources to the Sunday School. We were hoping to get 50 kids, and we have over 115 registered. May God reward all the volunteers who are devoting their time, skills and money to make Sunday School successful. We want the community to be involved, not just with Sunday School, but with all the affairs of the community. We also want to see parents working with their kids half an hour each day.

Newsletter Team: What would you like to tell us about your involvement with AMYA?

Br. Rahim: I am very passionate about the youth. We need to guide them (not do things for them) spiritually, professionally, academically, and socially.

Newsletter Team: Anything else you would like to add?

Br. Rahim: Individually, Muslims are quite successful, but as an Ummah we are very fragmented and thus, very fragile. We must think about who we are, what our purpose in life is, how we are going to best utilize all of the resources God has given us, and about our obligation to the Jacksonville Muslim and non-Muslim community is.

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To

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Educating A Muslim Child, Annual Awards, Literary Corner...

ALL THE KNOWLEDGE

“It must be owned that all the knowledge, whether physics, astronomy, philosophy or mathematics which flourished in Europe from the tenth century, was originally derived from the Arabian schools, and that the Spanish Arabs, in a more particular manner, may be looked upon as the father of the European philosophy.”

Devan Port

TORCH

“Muslim Spain wrote one of the brightest chapters in the intellectual history of mediaeval Europe. Between the middle of the 8th and the beginning of the 13th centuries, as we have noted before, the Arab speaking peoples were the main bearers of the torch of culture and civilization throughout the world.”

Philip K. Hitti