



The Mecca Center
2025 Annual Fundraising Dinner

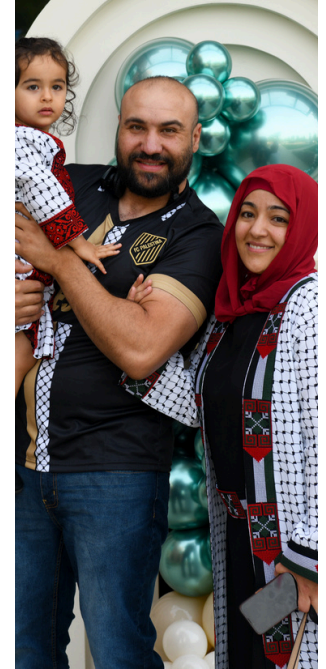
23 YEARS

Together We Build

Generations



www.meccacenter.org







The Mecca Center
Annual Fundraising Dinner

Together We Build Generations



MISSION STATEMENT

The Mecca Center is an organization that believes in a comprehensive and inclusive understanding of Islam based on the noble principles outlined in the Quran and exemplified in the Sunnah. It seeks to establish, guide and serve the Muslim community as an integral part of society at large. It will design programs to develop the spirit, mind and a sense of civic responsibility.

OBJECTIVES & GOALS

- 1- Establish an environment for the Muslim community to practice Islam and worship Allah (Almighty God) as outlined in the Quran and exemplified in the Sunnah.
- 2- Guide young Muslims towards building a model Muslim character in the community.
- 3- Educate Muslims with the teachings of Islam, provide an Islamic perspective to the challenges of our society, and strengthen ties among community members.
- 4- Present Islam to the society, and build bridges of understanding with other cultures and faiths.
- 5- Strengthen ties with other local and national Muslim organizations.
- 6- Establish institutions, educational centers, and organizing activities to achieve the foregoing objectives.



The Mecca Center
Annual Fundraising Dinner

Together We Build Generations



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The Mecca Center
Annual Fundraising Dinner

Together We Build Generations



THE MECCA CENTER COMMITTEES 2025

- ◆ Academic Affairs & Tarbiyah Committee
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- ◆ Communications Committee
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- ◆ Wellness Committee
- ◆ Youth Committee







Dr. Akram Kholoki

President, The Mecca Center

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

It brings me great joy and gratitude to welcome you all to our annual community dinner. This is not merely a gathering, it is a celebration of faith, unity, and purpose. Together, we reflect on how far we've come as a community, by the grace of Allah, and how much potential still lies ahead when hearts and hands join in service.

Our center has continued to grow as a place of worship, education, and compassion, a true home for every generation. This progress is only possible through your sincere support, your du'a, and your generosity.

As we look to the future, let us renew our commitment to strengthen our community and invest in projects that will serve generations to come. Together, with trust in Allah and unity among ourselves, we can continue building not just a center, but a legacy of light and guidance.

Jazakum Allahu khayran for being part of this journey. May Allah bless you and your families and reward your dedication to our beloved center.

With warm regards,

Akram Kholoki M.D.



Hani Atassi

The Mecca Center Endowment Fund President

Dear Mecca Center Community,

As President of The Mecca Center Endowment Fund, I am reaching out to share an important vision for our community's future, one rooted in our Islamic principles and commitment to sustainability.

Establishing an Islamic endowment (waqf) is not just a financial strategy; it is a profound act of faith and a lasting legacy that we can leave for future generations. By contributing to the Endowment Fund, you are helping secure the Mecca Center's future, ensuring it continues to serve, educate, and uplift generations to come.

The importance of financial sustainability cannot be overstated. In a world where resources can fluctuate, having a robust endowment allows us to secure our operations, support community programs, and invest in new initiatives without solely relying on annual donations or fundraising events. This financial independence strengthens our ability to focus on our mission of providing spiritual guidance, educational opportunities, and community support.

Moreover, establishing an endowment aligns with our values as Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "When a person dies, their deeds come to an end, except for three: ongoing charity, knowledge that is beneficial, or a righteous child who prays for them." By contributing to our endowment, you are engaging in an act of ongoing charity that will continue to benefit countless individuals long after we are gone.

I encourage each of you to consider how you can play a role in this vital initiative. Whether through direct contributions, planned giving, or simply raising awareness. Together, we can build a sustainable foundation that keeps The Mecca Center thriving for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our community. Let us work together to build a sustainable future for The Mecca Center .

Warm regards,

Hani Atassi



Dr. Syed Ajaz Hussain

Chair, Education Committee

Dear Beloved Supporters of The Mecca Center,

Tonight, we gather under a theme that captures the heart of our mission: “Together We Build Generations.” This is more than a slogan, it is the story of our past, present, and InshaAllah, future of our beloved The Mecca Center (TMC).

We began with just a handful of students and a dream in a rented building in 2002. Today, Alhamdulillah, over 400 children fill our Sunday School classrooms, eager to learn, grow, and live their faith. The Mecca Quran Institute (MQI), once a vision on paper, has now touched the lives of more than 1,200 students, producing confident reciters and leaders grounded in the noble Qur’an. Our beloved Quran Blossoms (Baraem) program, launched in 2017, now embraces 171 little hearts. Each one carries the seeds of tomorrow’s Muslim leaders.

These numbers tell a powerful story: we are not just teaching students but shaping generations. Every lesson, verse, and gathering at The Mecca Center (TMC) builds a foundation that will outlive us. This is our legacy. This is our sadaqah jariyah, our ongoing charity that continues long after we are gone. But the work is not finished. With growth comes new challenges: limited space, rising demand, and the need to expand our programs. Families are waiting, and children are eager. The opportunity is here, but it cannot be realized without you.

Tonight, I invite you to see beyond the walls of this banquet hall. Imagine TMC classrooms where no child is turned away. Picture our TMC community where the Qur’an is at the center of every heart. Envision a future where TMC, our children, and grandchildren carry the torch of faith, leadership, and service in America.

Your generosity makes this possible. Your gift tonight is not just a donation but an investment in eternity. Together, we can ensure that The Mecca Center remains a beacon of hope and a home for future generations.

May Allah bless your families, multiply your giving, and reward you with the highest place in Jannah. Together, we are not just building programs, we are creating generations.

Warm regards,

Syed Ajaz Hussain

Syed Ajaz Hussain, Ph.D.

**Dr. Linda Mahairi Hamadeh**

Chair, Academic & Tarbiyah Affairs Committee

Assalamu Alaikum Respected Community,

Alhamdulillah, this past year has been one of remarkable growth, learning, and inspiration for The Mecca Center community.

The Academic and Tarbiyah Affairs Committee has worked tirelessly to help foster a culture of Islamic literacy and provide meaningful opportunities for Islamic knowledge, spiritual development, and community connection. From intensives and workshops to community collaborations, our programming has touched every segment of our community, young and old alike.

General Community Programming

Masha'Allah, our respected shuyookh have been busy facilitating numerous educational opportunities for our beloved community. The 1st Annual Marriage Seminar, featuring Dr. Ahmed Arafat and guest speaker Dr. Sarah Syed from Khalil Center, provided practical tools and faith-based guidance for building stronger marriages. The community also benefited from Shaykh Yousef Wahb's Islamic Worldview Workshop, as well as a two-day seminar reading and commentary on the translated text *The Heart's Joy in Remembering Laylat al-Qadr*. Meanwhile, our regular weekly programming continues to enrich the lives of community members, with Monday Divine Callings lectures by Shaykh Tariq and Thursday Arabic Tafsir sessions with Dr. Arafat.

A major milestone this year was our first-ever Summer Intensive: Fundamentals of Faith. This six-week program brought together Dr. Ahmed Arafat, Shaykh Tariq Musleh, and Shaykh Yousef Wahb to teach foundational subjects in aqidah, fiqh, and tazkiyah. The Fundamentals of Faith intensive not only deepened participants' understanding of their faith but also set a precedent for future immersive learning opportunities at The Mecca Center.

Dr. Ahmed's Suhbah initiative has provided unique opportunities for spiritual connection, mentorship, and reflection, further strengthening the bonds within our community.

The Wednesday suhbah halaqahs are organized and alternate weekly, each tailored for different audiences within the community. Meanwhile, our Saturday children's suhbah groups run in 8-week sessions with small groups of 10–12 participants, nurturing young hearts in an intimate and impactful way. The Sunday suhbah group continues its tradition of serious study, most recently completing a close reading of Imam Al-Ghazali's timeless text, *Oh My Beloved Son*.



Collaborations and Partnerships

The Mecca Center has become a hub for collaborative educational programs with both local and nationwide organizations. Under the leadership of our Outreach Director, Shaykh Tariq Musleh, we have been honored to host a wide range of events that brought together renowned scholars, teachers, and institutions, enriching the learning opportunities available to our community.

Highlights include:

- Special event community nights throughout the year, with a variety of guest speakers and scholars
- Seminars and intensives with Miftaah, Qalam, AlMaghrib Institute, and others, connecting our community with leading voices in Islamic education
- A joint 8-week Fiqh of Ramadan series in collaboration with ICN
- The spiritually uplifting Ramadan Nights Program, held during the last ten nights
- Family-oriented initiatives such as the Family Story Night Series
- The Portrait of the Prophet's Character and Screenshots from the Seerah series, which provide new and engaging perspectives on the life of the Messenger ﷺ
- Our most recent program, Loving the Beloved, which, by Allah's grace, has quickly become a community favorite and is set to become a monthly offering.

These collaborations not only allowed our community to benefit from diverse scholarship but they have positioned The Mecca Center as a leading institution for Islamic learning and literacy in the Chicagoland area, inshaAllah.

Two New Major Initiatives

We are excited to announce the launching of two transformative educational initiatives, under the leadership of our Education Director, Shaykh Yousef Wahb, that will Insha'Allah expand our educational mission and vision:

- **The Fard 'Ayn Program** – A structured curriculum designed to ensure every Muslim in our community is grounded with the essential knowledge of their faith. Covering the basics of belief, worship, and character, this program aims to empower individuals with the tools they need to live Islam with confidence and clarity.
- **Journey into Arabic** – A new course aimed at opening the doors of the Arabic language to our community, enabling participants to connect more deeply with the Qur'an and classical Islamic texts, and develop a deeper relationship with the rich legacy of Islamic scholarship.



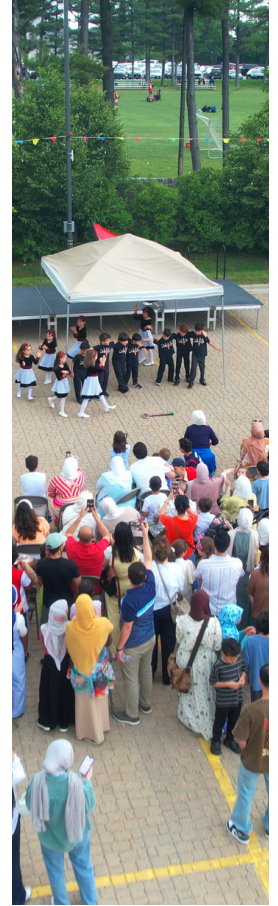
The growth of the Academic and Tarbiyah Affairs Committee reflects the spirit of our community's thirst and passion for knowledge and connection with Allah ﷻ. With your support and participation, we look forward to providing more meaningful learning experiences, and pray that The Mecca Center continues to nurture faith, inspire hearts, and cultivate a generation rooted in knowledge and spiritual excellence, inshaAllah.

Warm regards,

Linda Hamadeh

Linda Mahairi Hamadeh, M.Ed., Ed.D.







Leaving a Legacy of Faith For our Children

Dr. Ahmed Arafat

Resident Scholar

When thinking about leaving an inheritance for their children, many parents instinctively envision a *wasiyyah* or a legal will that meticulously outlines the distribution of their assets. While financial inheritance offers great benefits, the Quran emphasizes that a living legacy of faith holds greater significance as a sacred bequest. A cursory examination of the Quran reveals remarkable legacies of faith. Notably, the example of Prophet Ibrahim stands out. His aspirations, supplications, and actions exemplify a profound concern for future generations. For instance, he prayed: *“And grant me a rightful honorable mention in later generations”* (Q. 26:84). In other words, he prayed that his influence would go beyond his own time and become a source of true inspirations of faith and closeness to Allah for future generation.

The prayers of the Quran not only convey the aspirations of the prophets and righteous servants of Allah but also illuminate their lived experiences. For instance, the life of Prophet Ibrahim exemplifies numerous avenues through which he nurtured faith for his contemporaries and future generations. The Quran clearly mentions the distinct strategies employed by Prophet Ibrahim in disseminating faith to subsequent generations. Let’s examine the following passage: *And “remember” when Abraham raised the foundation of the House with Ishmael, “both praying, “Our Lord! Accept “this” from us. You are indeed the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Our Lord! Make us both “fully” submit to You and from our descendants a nation that will submit to You. Show us our rituals, and accept our repentance. You are truly the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful. Our Lord! Raise from among them a messenger who will recite to them Your revelations, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Indeed, You “alone” are the Almighty, All-Wise”* (Q. 2: 127-129).

The aforementioned passage lays down the strategies essential for passing down faith to the succeeding generation. These strategies encompass six key points:

1. **Prophet Ibrahim started his legacy by establishing the “House of Worship”** with a profound emphasis on the genuine intention of seeking God’s pleasure. This motivation is evident in the sincere prayer, *“Our Lord, accept this from us.”* Consequently, the mere construction of a mosque is insufficient. It is only when the mosque becomes a sanctuary of worship dedicated to honoring Allah that it starts fulfilling its purpose of fostering faith for generations. Our teachings and policies must align with our ultimate objective of honoring Allah ﷻ and transmitting the fundamental principles of our faith in a veritable manner to future generations. For



example, maintaining the *adab* of the masjid, observing hijab for women and wearing appropriate attire for men during their stay in the masjid are silent ways of passing on the value of honoring the House of Allah to next generations. Failure to do so would undermine the very essence of the pursuit of Allah's pleasure and potentially present an inaccurate representation of our faith and practices to future generations.

2. **Prophet Ibrahim did not establish the "House of Worship" alone;** he included his devoted son Ismail in this noble act. This serves as a reminder for us to include our youth and young members of the community to be an integral part of the masjid. In line with this insight, I have initiated a special Children Suhbah Program through which our children have direct access to the resident scholar. Through this program, children acquire a reasonable understanding of the foundations of our faith in a way that preserves their *fitrah* and safeguards their moral compass. Equally important, these children have the opportunity to give *khatirahs* after Isha for the entire congregation. This intentional participation of our children in the development of our programs has a significant impact on increasing their confidence and fostering a sense of belonging to the masjid and the broader community.
3. **Prophet Ibrahim placed significant emphasis on spiritual development.** According to his prayer *"Our Lord! Make us both 'fully' submit to You and from our descendants a nation that will submit to You,"* cultivating a spiritual heart is marked by the inward discipline of surrender and devotion to Allah. In alignment with this principle, I prioritize the spiritual disciplines of Islam through ongoing classes on the *Aphorisms* of Ibn 'Ataillah on Wednesdays and the works of Imam al-Ghazali and other spiritual masters on Sundays.
4. **Prophet Ibrahim's concern extended beyond internal practices to encompass external rituals.** This is evident in the following statement: *"Show us our rituals."* The emphasis on outward practices after the emphasis on inward discipline underscores the significance of both aspects. This sequence of thought suggests that a devoted heart manifests in the unhesitant adoption of external practices. These rituals serve as spiritual disciplines that express the unwavering obedience and devotion of the heart to Allah.
5. **Prophet Ibrahim encourages acknowledging our mistakes as essential for personal and professional growth.** This is evident in the part *"accept our repentance. You are truly the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful."* In our spiritual tradition, repentance is regarded as a sign of strength, courage, and integrity.
6. **Prophet Ibrahim prayed for the most qualified teacher to carry on the legacy of faith.** The appearance of the final prophet ﷺ was a fulfillment of Ibrahim's prayer. Since the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, mosques have typically been multi-functional buildings where education took place alongside other religious and civil activities with the ultimate purpose of



honoring Allah ﷻ. Notably, the world's oldest university is Al-Qarawiyyin, founded by Fatima al-Fihri in 859 AD. Initially functioning as a mosque, Al-Qarawiyyin's educational system continues to operate to this day. This idea of the enduring integration of *masjid* and *madrasah* has blessed the Mecca Center with a significant expansion of its educational programs, catering to diverse community members from preschool to the elderly. The many classes organized and offered by Sh. Tariq Musleh and Sh. Yousef Wahb are great testimonies for the educational vision of the Mecca Center. May Allah guide us in aligning our lives and education in accordance with the teachings of the prophet ﷺ and bestow upon us the wisdom to impart our tradition authentically to future generations. Amen.

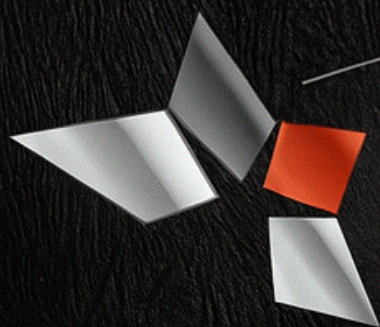
Ahmed Arafat

Ahmed Arafat, Ph.D.









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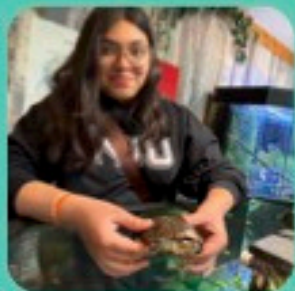
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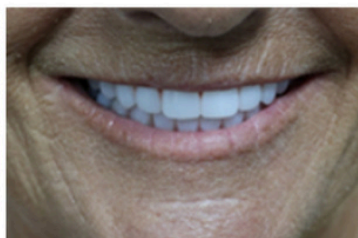
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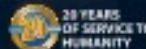
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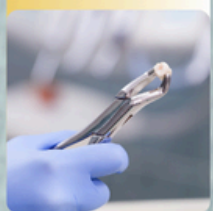
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More than
4.4 Million



BENEFICIARIES

More than
1.4 Million



FACILITIES (TOTAL)

144



MEDICAL STAFF

4,015



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163,705



BABIES DELIVERED (Includes C-Sections)

22,052



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What sets us apart is our comprehensive, 360-degree model. We don't just respond to immediate needs—we invest in every layer of life: safety, education, income, dignity, and voice.



Rebuilding Lives Starts With Restoring Humanity

At Syrian Forum USA, we believe change begins with community. With every family we support, every child we educate, and every voice we lift, we move one step closer to a just and hopeful Syria.

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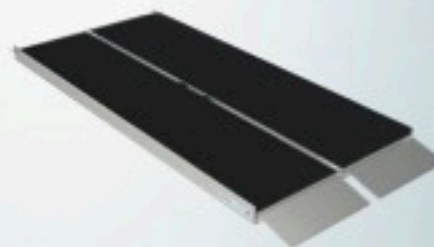
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Building a Better Tomorrow



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-  MUHSEN Weekend School
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-  MUHSEN Adult Day Program
-  MUHSEN Convention Services
-  MUHSEN Umrah Trip

Building a Better Tomorrow Muslim Families and Individuals Living with Disabilities

Founded by Shaykh Omar Suleiman and Sister Joohi Tahir, MUHSEN is a nonprofit organization serving families and individuals with intellectual, mental, and physical disabilities. MUHSEN works to establish inclusive and accessible American Muslim communities for individuals with disabilities and their families.

We do this through engaging in community advocacy and education (Awareness) and implementing and encouraging programs and services (Accommodation), leading ultimately to inclusive and welcoming communities (Acceptance).

To learn about our programs & services, please visit us at [MUHSEN.org](https://www.muhsen.org) or contact info@muhsen.org.



MUHSEN Makes It Possible.

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