

Ramadan Greetings

CHICAGO CIOGC RESCENT

A PUBLICATION OF THE COUNCIL OF ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS OF GREATER CHICAGO

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Ramadan: A Time for Thought, Action, and Change

TAHA GHAYYUR AND TAHA GHAZNAVI

Fasting in Ramadan develops in a person the real spirit of social belonging, of unity and brotherhood, and of equality before God. This spirit is the natural product of the fact that when people fast they feel that they are joining the whole Muslim society (which makes up more than one fifth of world's population) in observing the same duty, in the same manner, at the same time, for the same motives, and for the same end. No sociologist or historian can say that there has been at any period of history anything comparable to this powerful institution of Islam: Fasting in the month of Ramadan. People have been crying throughout the ages

for acceptable 'belonging', for unity, for brotherhood, for equality, but how echoless their voices have been, and how very little success they have met..." says Hammudah Abdalati, in Islam in Focus.

"What is fasting?" "How does the fasting of Muslims in Ramadan differ from the fasting of other faiths?" "Why should one 'torture' one's body in the first place?" "What do you really gain from fasting in the end?"...These are a few questions that a number of non-Muslim friends and colleagues often ask us, usually out of fascination with this spiritually-uplifting practice of Islamic faith, and at times out of pity and sympathy for us, thinking, why should anyone suffer from hunger and thirst like Muslims? I wouldn't be surprised if many of us shared the same negative perception of Fasting. It is important to note that Fasting in Arabic is called, "Sawm", which literally means 'to be at rest'. Fasting in the month of Ramadan (the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar) is one of the Five Pillars upon

which the "house" of Islam is built. During this month, every able-bodied Muslim, is required to fast, every day from dawn until dusk.

12 Reasons To Fast!

1. Fasting is an institution for the improvement of moral and spiritual character

of human being.

The purpose of the fast is to help develop self-restraint, self-purification, God-consciousness, compassion, the spirit of caring and sharing, the love of humanity and the

love of God. Fasting is a universal custom and is advocated by all the religions of the world, with more restrictions in some than in others. The Islamic Fast, as opposed to mere starvation or self-denial, is an act of worship and obedience to God, thanksgiving, forgiveness, spiritual training, and self-examination.

2. Ramadan gives us a break and provides us with a rare opportunity to think about our own selves, our future, and our families. It is a time to give ourselves a mental break and to temporarily forget about the hundreds of worries and stresses we are constantly bombarded with. In hectic times, such as ours, and in places like the West, this valuable time to think about our lives, on individual basis, is a luxury and is desperately needed! It is a unique month of self-analysis, and of taking stock of



one's moral and spiritual 'assets and liabilities.

3. Fasting indoctrinates us in patience, unselfishness, and gratitude. When we fast we feel the pains of deprivation and hunger, and learn how to endure it patiently. The meaning of this powerful experience in a social and humanitarian context is that we are much quicker than anybody else in sympathizing with the oppressed and needy around the world, and responding to their needs. "It is the month to visit the poor, the sick, and the needy to share their sorrows. It is the month where the food, sustenance and the earnings of a believing Muslim increases and they are blessed," says the Final Prophet of God, Muhammad (peace be upon him), a man who was known for his noble humanitarian causes, for social justice, and for being the first to respond to other's needs, despite the fact that he himself lived a very simple and humble life. It is only during such a trying time as Ramadan that we can reflect on the condition of those in this world who may not be as fortunate as us.

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CIOGC and Partners Make an Impact in Springfield for IMAD



CIOGC held its 9th Annual Illinois Muslim Action Day (IMAD) on Thursday, April 27, 2017 with a breakfast honoring Illinois Senate President John J. Cullerton and Senator Jacqueline Collins, a press conference in which legislative leaders expressed their support, and meetings between Muslim community leaders and Illinois State Senators to discuss and address legislation that matter to the Muslim community of Illinois.

Illinois Senate President John J. Cullerton and Senator Jacqueline Collins both received recognition and awards for their years of endless support for CIOGC and the Illinois Muslim community at the official IMAD Breakfast. Senator Cullerton thanked CIOGC, and assured breakfast attendees that he would continue to stand with, and protect the interests of the Muslim community.

Following the IMAD Breakfast, CIOGC led a press conference at the capitol building which included multiple legislators, community members, as well as interfaith, and immigrant advocates. Senator Jacqueline Collins expressed her appreciation for the civic efforts of the Muslim community, and stated

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Coming Events

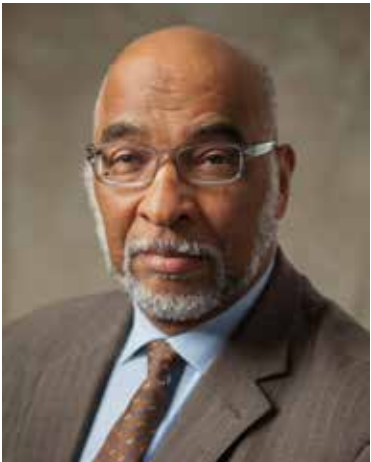
- June 1 - The Mecca Center Interfaith Iftar
- June 12 - CIOGC Catholic-Muslim Iftar at Islamic Foundation North (IFN)
- June 13 - Mosque Foundation Interfaith Iftar

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CIOGC Welcomes New Executive Director G. Abdullah Mitchell

CIOGC is pleased to announce Gregory Abdullah Mitchell as its new Executive Director. Mitchell is a licensed attorney in the State of Illinois, chairperson for Leadership Development Institute and a board member of Masjid Al-Taqwa of Chicago, American Islamic College, and the Southland Ministerial Health Network. He has also served as board member and secretary of the Association for Quranic Understanding (with Dr. Irfan Ahmad Khan) and as board member and secretary of Universal School.

Having served on the boards of and provided legal assistance to many Muslim organizations over the past 25 years, Brother Mitchell brings a wealth of knowledge and experience concerning not for profit organizations to CIOGC.



“Alhamdulillah, I am pleased to inform you that the CIOGC House of Representatives appointed Br. Abdullah Mitchell as the CIOGC Executive Director yesterday upon recommendation of the Board. Br. Mitchell is known to most of you. He worked with various Muslim communities in the Chicago area. He earned his Juris Doctor degree after a B.S. degree in Finance and practiced as an attorney for many years.” said Dr. Bassam Osman, CIOGC Chair. “The CIOGC Board is confident that Br. Mitchell will be an immense value to CIOGC. Please join me in welcoming Br. AbdUllah Mitchell. Jazakum Allah Khair.”

You can send your welcome message to Br. Mitchell at abdullah@ciogc.org. ♦

Hope In A Time Of Darkness

OMER M. MOZAFFAR

When the political institutions in our societies shift toward fascism and chaos, we start to scramble for anything that will provide safety and stability. The light seems to diminish, but we persist, with hope. Sometimes all we have is hope. A few turn to Allah, though many turn to the world. As we proceed through this next Ramadan, we are gifted with another opportunity recollect ourselves against the storms of uncertainty.

We know that the accursed devil is locked up. Among the many of his tragedies devil is his despair. We are taught so many times that the door to forgiveness with Allah is always open, until we breathe our last breath, or until the sun rises from the west. Yet, even with such a wide opening to return to Allah, the accurse devil chose to hide behind arrogance, and thus became among those who reject. A refusal to repent is a refusal for redemption, which is a refusal to hope. Such a life is pathetic.

Through our intense period of fasting, we are taught hope in a unique way. Meaning, during the day we eat and drink nothing, while looking forward to being able to eat and drink at iftar. This experience is a reminder that this world and all that is in it is a test from the Divine. This means, then, that everything that happens to us, happens to us with one purpose: to bring us closer to Allah. When time comes to pray or fast, we have an opening to get closer to Allah,



Every moment in our lives is set before us by Allah to be a means to get closer to Him.

by obeying Him. When we are gifted with ease, we have an opening to get closer to Allah, through gratitude to Him. When we are hit with struggle, we have an opening to get closer to Him, by persevering through the difficulties. When we have to make difficult decisions, we have an opening to get closer to Him, by relying upon Him. Every moment in our lives is set before us by Allah to be a means to get closer to Him. Thus, we move a handspan towards Him and He moves an arm’s length toward us. We walk to Him, and He speeds to us.

This means that every struggle we are hit with -- including today’s unknowns that have us wondering what will happen to us in the coming months -- is designed for us. When Allah hits you with struggle, He is giving you something tailor-made for you. At the very least, your sins are being dropped like leaves falling from a tree. More than that, your struggle is purifying the darkness out of your heart, allowing it to beam with light. More than that, when you are hit with struggle, it is not that Allah has abandoned you;

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CHICAGO CRESCENT

Mission of CIOGC

Our mission is to be the unifying federation of Islamic organizations of greater Chicagoland, the leading advocate of Muslim community interests, and a catalyst for enriching American society.

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The Chicago Crescent is a publication of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC). For over 20 years, the Council has served as the unifying federation of Islamic organizations in greater Chicagoland, the leading advocate of Illinois Muslim community interests, and a catalyst for enriching American society.

The views and opinions expressed in The Chicago Crescent are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of CIOGC.

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CIOGC Malcolm X Day Panel Focuses on His Life and Legacy

In recognition of Malcolm X Day on May 19, the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC) held a panel and discussion at the Ephraim Bahar Cultural Center in Chicago on the life and legacy of Malcolm X and how his work can be carried on through dedicated community service and activism.

In 2015, CIOGC led an effort with Senator Jacqueline Collins to recognize May 19 as Malcolm X Day in the state of Illinois. A resolution was passed and the day has since been commemorated by CIOGC through educational programs and community service.

The speakers for this year's Malcolm X Day panel and discussion program included Imam Omar Karim, Executive Director of the Ephraim Bahar Cultural Center, Jameel Karim, Youth Coordinator for CIOGC, Bashirah Mack of Sapelo Square, and Imam Charles Muhammad of the Al Aqsa Community Center Masjid in Plainfield.

Imam Omar Karim provided a background into Malcolm's early years as a community organizer and his eventual high-ranking position and influence in the Nation of Islam. He underscored how the polarizing figure was able to bring tens of thousands of people to the Nation of Islam and came to influence African American public opinion for decades to come.

Jameel Karim discussed how the hardships Malcolm X faced ultimately

Malcolm X's adoption of Islam and increased God-consciousness helped guide his spiritual path in recognizing and advocating for the equality of all people.

prepared him for greatness as he rose above numerous challenges throughout his life. He shared how Malcolm X's experiences, from his father's murder by white supremacists when he was a young boy, to growing up during Jim Crow, and being victim to unfair criminal justice system, led to Malcolm's disciplined determination to seek God-consciousness, or Taqwa, and thus, liberation of the Black community.

Bashirah Mack of Sapelo Square provided a contextual overview on the struggles the Black community and people of color have faced during and since Malcolm's time in the 1960s. Driving home the point that struggles against injustice continue, and are arguably much greater now, she called for the unification and collective action of communities to advance the rights of the oppressed. Focusing on Malcolm's intent as an activist, Mack also shared how his commitment to freedom, justice, and equality demonstrate the highest levels of spiritual enlightenment and God-consciousness.

Imam Charles Muhammad spoke of how Malcolm X effectively challenged the status quo during a time of discrimination, segregation, and Jim Crow, through a life of righteousness and an unapologetic commitment to universal justice. Muhammad began his



Imam Charles Muhammad speaks on Islam's impact on Malcolm X's worldview and mission for justice and equality. PHOTO CREDIT: Husnaa Vhora

presentation by asking attendees to set themselves in the time of the Jim Crow era. He then proceeded to describe vivid examples of injustices faced by African Americans and people of color. He explained that in response to these injustices, Malcolm X's adoption of Islam and increased God-consciousness helped guide his spiritual path in recognizing and advocating for the equality of all people.

During the question and answer session, the speakers and audience members discussed how to carry on Malcolm X's life and legacy through practical activities. Speakers and audience members recommended

the Ephraim Bahar's Walk for Moral excellence on July 29, and in general, reaching out to neighbors to meet and learn about each other, organizing events to bring communities together for a common cause, and volunteering for organizations that serve the common good.

CIOGC thanks the Ephraim Bahar Cultural Center, speakers, and guests for attending this important discussion about how to carry the legacy of one of the most influential and important Black Muslim leaders in history. ♦

Hope In A Time Of Darkness

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rather, He is giving you special attention, calling upon you to respond back to Him.

Thus, when we are hit with struggle, the choice is within us whether to hope or to fall into despair. We see the behavior of despair in so many communities around us. The contemporary rhetoric of supremacy is merely collective arrogance, which is a defense mechanism against feelings of despair. Rather than face reality with all its dark unknowns, these people choose to hide by exerting force upon everyone else. But, when you and I are fasting, we are going through a physiological process of humility whose fruits present themselves toward Ramadan's end.

But, what is the behavior of hope? It is the experience of floating in the middle of the ocean, in the middle of a night that is so dark that you cannot see your hand in front of you, yet you are convinced that there is light somewhere in the darkness, that there is land somewhere nearby. Or even simpler: if you make a du'a (supplication) to Allah, then you have hope.


While fear seems tied into our central nervous system, hope seems tied into our endocrine system. Meaning, there

is a physiology within us that affects our level of hope. Further, there is a sociology that affects our hope: the stronger we make our bonds of family, friendship, and community, the more stability we put into our hearts, allowing for more hope.

Now, consider the world we are giving to our young people: it is a disconnected world full of so much doubt and destruction. Many students have visited me in the past year with either struggles of faith or struggles with despair. The common element in most of these cases is that students are struggling to find healing for the scars in their hearts, and the world around them is telling them to give up on Allah, and to give up on life. And, that is something that you and I need to remedy. Even the Prophets, may peace be upon them, would wonder when the help of Allah was coming. And, we have to remind ourselves and our young people that the help of Allah is most definitely near, perhaps more near than the next iftar, if we choose to see it.

And Allah knows best. ♦





Omer M. Moazzfar is the Muslim Chaplain at Loyola University Chicago.



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Learning From Interfaith Dialogue

SARAH AGER

As people of faith, we sometimes act under the assumption that ours is the only way of perceiving God. We hold this view even though Muslims make up only a seventh of the world's population. We sometimes forget that we live in a multi-cultural world alongside people of many diverse beliefs and faith backgrounds, who have their own unique ways of approaching and perceiving the Divine.

“Through sharing we gain greater understanding and become more inclusive in our interactions with the people around us.”

There are many lenses through which people perceive the world – the Bible, the Torah, the Qur'an, the Bhagavad Gita – to name just a few. There are a wealth of religious and non-religious texts which guide people in their daily lives – just as the Qur'an acts as a moral compass for Muslims.

Interfaith activist Christina Safiyyah believes, “we live in a world where we are no longer isolated” and “this constant contact with other backgrounds and faiths make it imperative to learn more about the diversity of our neighbors because we are all an intrinsic part of the communities in which we live.”

Developing mutual respect, rather than merely tolerating one another, is not something that can be learned overnight. Through reaching out and speaking openly we can begin to nurture genuine appreciation for the ways others express their faith.

Without education, we can all too easily develop an irrational fear and mistrust of those we deem to be ‘other’. This is especially true between people of different faiths, and when political groups, individuals, and certain factions of the Media so often seek to divide by

exploiting and exaggerating religious difference.

Fear and mistrust of people based on assumptions of race or faith are at the core of countless acts of discrimination. To overcome this problem, we need open and constructive communication – the foundation of all positive relationships.

Through interfaith, an all-encompassing and inclusive way of interacting with one another, we endeavor to transcend human-made boundaries and make personal connections with people from all faith and non-faith backgrounds. Interfaith invites us to come as individuals with personal stories rather than being burdened with collective responsibility and representation of an entire faith community. Through sharing we gain greater understanding and become more inclusive in our interactions with the people around us.

Interfaith is not a foreign concept to Islam, it is in fact an intrinsic part of our faith. Within the pages of the Qur'an, we are called to protect “cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of God is oft commemorated” (Qur'an, 22:40). In his lifetime, Muhammad ﷺ encouraged and was actively involved in interfaith.

On one such occasion, Muhammad ﷺ met with a delegation of Christian Chiefs from Najran and together they signed a peace treaty which included the terms;

“No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims’ houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God’s covenant and disobey His Prophet.”

Alongside the promise that the Christians of Najran could worship freely, the treaty also included the understanding that “their

Churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants,” meaning they would be able to uphold their faith tradition alongside Muslims in the Arabian Peninsula.

“Building strong communities” explains Cristina Saffiyah, “and taking care of the people who live in it, including Jews, Christians, and those of other faith backgrounds, is a tradition instilled in the Muslim Ummah by the Prophet saw. Since we love him and strive to adhere to his Sunnah with the aim of pleasing Allah SWT, it is our duty and privilege to continue that beautiful interfaith work today.”

Present day examples of interfaith in action include the recent incidences of Muslims protecting Coptic Christians in Egypt during the 2011 Arab Spring and more recently, Christians providing refuge for persecuted Muslims in the Central African Republic despite the serious risk to their own lives. On a smaller but no less significant scale, there are regular and heartening stories of religious groups coming together to help other groups in times of need, from churches providing safe spaces for Muslims to pray during the EDL riots, to Muslims looking after synagogues in Kolkata.

On a more local level, interfaith helps us to develop new and comprehensive ways of speaking in our daily lives that respects differences, and brings people together based on shared values. This inclusivity feeds into all our relationships, with family, friends, co-workers etc., and is particularly relevant for converts who have non-Muslim family members or those in interfaith families. The tools of interfaith can also aid us in much needed intrafaith dialogue, creating stronger ties between different groups under the umbrella of Islam.

Although interfaith dialogue invites us to share our personal experience of

faith, we should remember that interfaith is not about throwing a net to catch potential converts. Critics of Muslim-based interfaith initiatives have argued that it's cleverly disguised dawah of the “creeping sharia” variety. And certainly, we should recognize the fine line between education and evangelism. Trust is crucial for open dialogue but it cannot develop if we suspect the other party is trying to boost their own numbers. Instead, interfaith offers us a safe space where we are able to come together, explore our similarities, change stereotypes, and build relationships based on constructive communication.

Learning about other religions allows us to gain insight into how others worship and, ideally, helps us to deepen our connection with God while honoring our own faith tradition. Interfaith as a shared experience was addressed at the recent DC Young Adult Faith Leaders Summit. At the event, Jonathan Lewis, a youth ministry coordinator, described the process of interfaith;

“We’re not in relationships of hostility. We’re not in relationships of proselytism. But we’re in a common journey as learners and as seekers towards a better self and a better faith community that we represent.”

Although we may be strolling down different paths, we are all on spiritual journeys seeking to find meaning in our lives and grow closer to our Creator. Interfaith dialogue reminds us of how much richer our lives can be when we strive towards that goal hand in hand. ♦

Sarah Ager is an English teacher and expat writer living in Italy. She describes herself as an ‘Anglo-Muslim hybrid’, having converted to Islam in 2011. She writes about interfaith dialogue, religion, and culture. She also curates @InterfaithRam, a new interfaith initiative bringing together writers and contributors from different faiths, countries, and backgrounds during the month of Ramadan.

CIOGC appoints Chairs for Interfaith and Civic Engagement Committees

CIOGC is pleased to announce the news Chairs of our Interfaith and Civic Engagement Committees.

Kareem M. Irfan, a former CIOGC Chair, will now lead the Interfaith Committee. Aside from his many years of service to CIOGC, Br. Kareem served as the President of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC). His day job is working as the Assistant General Counsel for the North American Division of Square D Co. – Schneider Electric. Br. Kareem also sits on the Board of Directors of the Islamic Center of Naperville (ICN) while continuing his work for non-profit, religious, and professional institutions. Br. Kareem’s work for the community has earned his numerous awards,

including the Distinguished Community Leadership Award from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Aliya Husain, who will now lead the Civic Engagement Committee, is a graduate of Harvard University and has served the Muslim community of Chicago for over ten years. Sr. Aliya’s is directly involved in Islamic Foundation’s community, where she is the current Chair of the Parent Teacher Association, and works extensively with Islamic Foundation’s full time school. She also provides sensitivity training in the Wheaton School District. Along with her tireless work for the Islamic Foundation community, Sr. Aliya serves as Islamic Foundation’s representative for DuPage United’s rapid response team. ♦

Methodist and Muslim Communities Celebrate 12 Years of Unity


Nearly two hundred guests joined CIOGC and the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church on April 19, 2017 to celebrate twelve years of unity at their Annual Methodist-Muslim Interfaith Dinner entitled, “Immigrants and Refugees: Our Nation’s Story.” The event was hosted at the newly inaugurated Mecca Center in Willowbrook, Illinois.

One of the keynote speakers, Hassan Shibly from the Center for American Muslim Understanding, shared his immigration experience to the United States from Syria. He noted how he immediately recognized the freedoms he was granted in the U.S. as opposed to the repression he and his family confronted in Syria. Syrians who

practice their religion or who have views opposing the Syrian government, often face repression.

In a time of increased xenophobia and fears regarding immigration, the Annual Dinner program allowed Methodist and Muslim communities to engage in important conversations about how immigrants have played an integral role in the foundation of our nation’s history.





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For over 20 years, the Council has served as the premier federation of Islamic organizations in Illinois, the leading advocate of Muslim community interests, and a catalyst for enriching American society. The Council unites over 60 diverse Islamic organizations, collectively serving and representing over 400,000 Muslims across the state. Learn more at www.ciogc.org.

MSI & ICN Hold Successful Open Mosque Day Events

The Muslim Society Inc. (MSI Masjid) in Glendale Heights recently joined GainPeace to hold an open mosque day event on April 22 which brought over 150 neighbors together to learn more about Muslims and the Islamic faith. The attendees were given tours of the mosque, an introduction to Islam and Muslims, and were provided the opportunity to “Meet an Imam and Muslim.”

Dr. Sabeel Ahmed of GainPeace gave a presentation on various aspects of Islam including the five Pillars, the parallels between Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and the concepts of Sharia Law and jihad. Among the attendees were Glendale Heights Village President Linda Jackson, Glendale Heights Police Chief Douglas Flint, and Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi.

The Islamic Center of Naperville (ICN) welcomed over 1,200 people to its Open Mosque Day event on April 23 and helped demystify Islam and Muslims with a program that brought neighbors face to face to learn more about each other and their commonalities. Attendees have followed up with the ICN community to thank them for the enlightening experience and newfound perspective on Islam and Muslims.

One Arab Christian attendee described the event as “an atmosphere of friendship and harmony and genuine affection” and appreciated ICN community’s presentation of Islam which underscored its similarities to Judaism and Christianity. Various materials sharing similar messages were distributed. The event was separated into different sections – one of them being a tutorial on how to put on the hijab, and another for kids which shared the common message of the Prophets in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Reflecting on the event, ICN President Shoaib Khadri said, “Alhamdulillah, it was a wonderful event ... truly, a blessing of Allah (swt) and a great team of dedicated volunteers who put in a lot of hard work and effort in the planning and execution.” ♦

Mecca Center and Syrian Community Network Open Their Doors

CIOGC congratulates two of its member organizations, the Syrian Community Network (SCN) and the Mecca Center in Willowbrook, on the opening of their new community spaces.

On Friday, April 22, 2017, SCN held the official opening of their new office, located at 5439 N. Broadway St., Chicago, Illinois. The many guests and well-wishers included elected officials, representatives for other social service agencies, donors, volunteers, and their families. SCN’s new office is reflective of the organization’s rapid growth and intent to expand its efforts in supporting newly resettled Syrian refugee families in Chicagoland. Learn more about SCN’s new office!

On April 22, 2017, the Mecca Center held its official Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting ceremony for its new 4.7 acre center located at 16W560 91st Street in Willowbrook, Illinois. In addition to spacious prayer halls, classrooms, meeting rooms, a library, and an office for visiting Imams, the center includes an Olympic-size gym, used by the youth and members, a banquet and multipurpose hall, administrative offices, and a conference room. There are LED monitor screens and wi-fi available across all common areas of the building, and there is plenty of green landscape and parking around the facilities. ♦



The Mecca Center celebrates the grand opening of their new facility at their Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.



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2017 RAMADAN TARAWEEH & IFTAR SCHEDULE

Mosque	Taraweeh	# Raka	Completing Quran?	Imams	Community Iftar	Interfaith Iftar
American Islamic College	After Isha ~10:15pm	20	Yes	Ahmed Chahin	No	TBD
Dar-us-Sunnah Mosque	~10:30pm	20	Yes	Hafiz Syeed Sharif, Hafiz Azam Hashmi, Hafiz Sajid Ahmed	Every night	No
Downtown Islamic Center	After Isha	20	Yes	Dr. Nabeel Hamoui	Every night	No
Ephraim Bahar Cultural Center	After Isha	8	No	Omar Abdul Karim	Every night	Weekends
Islamic Center of Naperville	First 15 days - 10:15, last 15 days - 10:20				Every night	
Islamic Center of Wheaton	10:15pm	20	Yes	Sh. Ibrahim al Dardasawi	Weekends & Every night last 10 days	TBA
Islamic Society of Northwest Suburbs	After Isha	20	Yes	Hafiz Ali Sharif and Hafiz Yusuf Chaudry	Sundays	11-Jun (tentative)
Islamic Community Center Des Plaines	10:30pm	20	Yes	Hafiz Ilyas	Every night	No
Islamic Foundation	10pm				Every night	
Masjid Al-Farooq	After Isha	8	Yes	Imam Ousmane Drame	Every night	No
Masjid Al-Huda	10:15pm	20	Yes	Imam Wahidullah Khan	Every night	TBA
Masjid al Taqwa	After Isha	8	No	Imam Tariq El Amin, Imam Rubani, Imam Rasaun Tamir	Friday/Saturday	TBD
The Mecca Center	After Isha	20	Yes	Sh. Hassan Aly	No	1-Jun
Mosque Foundation	10:15pm	8	Yes	Sh. Jamal Said, Sh. Ahmed Arafat, Sh. Mohammad Hussain	No	13-Jun
Muslim Community Center	~10pm	20	Yes	Hafiz Alim	Every night	TBD
Muslim Education Center	10:20pm	20	Yes	Hafiz Yusuf Abdullah	Every night	28-May
Nigerian Islamic Association	After Isha	10	Yes	Sh. Yahya Ali	Every night	No
Prayer Center of Orland Park	10:15pm			Sh. Kifah Mustapha	Every night	

The CIOGC Community Ramadan Taraweeh and Iftar Schedule is an annual resource provided by CIOGC to connect our communities during the most blessed month of the year. Support our work by donating to CIOGC this Ramadan! You can donate in three ways - by phone at 312-506-0070, online at ciogc.org, and by mail at 231 S. State St., Suite 300, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

Inner Dimension of Fasting:

Excerpts from Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali—Inner Dimension of Islamic Worship

Three grades of fasting

It should be known that there are three grades of fasting: ordinary, special and extra-special.

Ordinary fasting means abstaining from food, drink and sexual satisfaction.

Special fasting means keeping one’s ears, eyes,tongue, hands and feet-and all other organs-free from sin.

Extra-special fasting means fasting of the heart from unworthy concerns and worldly thoughts, in total disregard of everything but Allah.

See not what displeases Allah

A chaste regard, restrained from viewing anything that is blameworthy or reprehensible, or which distracts the heart and diverts it from the remembrance of God. The Prophet, said: the furtive glance is one of the poisoned arrows of Satan, on him be God’s curse. Whoever forsakes it for fear of God, will receive from Him, great and gracious is He, a faith the sweetness of which he will find within his heart.’

Jabir relates from Anas that God’s Messenger, on him be peace,said: ‘Five things break a man’s fast:

lying,backbiting, scandalmongering, perjury and a lustful gaze.’

Speak no evil

Guarding one’s tongue from twaddle, lying, backbiting, scandalmongering, obscenity, rudeness, wrangling and controversy; making it observe silence and occupying it with remembrance of Allah and with recitation of the Quran.

This is the fasting of the tongue. Sufyan said: “backbiting vitiates the fast.” Layth quotes Mujahid as saying : “Two habits vitiate fasting: backbiting and telling lies.’

The Prophet said: ‘ Fasting is a shield; so when one of you is fasting he should not use foul or foolish talk. If someone attacks him or insults him, let him say:”I am fasting, I am fasting!”

Hear no evil

Closing one’s ears to everything reprehensible; for everything unlawful to utter is likewise unlawful to listen to. That is why Allah equated the eavesdropper with the profiteer “ (They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden” (part of Quran 5:42).

Do no evil

Keeping all other limbs and organs away from sin: the hands and feet from reprehensible deeds, and the stomach from questionable food at the time for breaking fast.

It is meaningless to fast, to abstain from lawful food, only to break one’s Fast on what is unlawful.

The object of Fasting is to induce moderation. The Prophet said ‘How many of those who Fast, get nothing from it but hunger and thirst!’

Avoid overeating

Of what use is the fast as a means of conquering God’s enemy and abating appetite, if at the time of breaking it not only makes up for all one has missed during the daytime, but perhaps also indulges in a variety of extra foods?

It has even become the custom to stock up for Ramadan with all kinds of foodstuffs, so that more is consumed during that time than in the course of several other months put together.

It is well known that the object of fasting is to experience hunger and to check desire, in order to reinforce the soul in piety.

If the stomach is starved from early morning till evening, so that it’s appetite is aroused and it’s craving intensified, and it is then offered delicacies and allowed to eat its fill, its taste for pleasure is increased and its force exaggerated; passions are activated which would have lain dormant under normal conditions.

It is therefore essential to cut down one’s intake of what one would consume on a normal night, when not Fasting. No benefit is derived from the fast if one consumes as much as he or she would usually take during the day and night combined.

Look to Allah with fear and hope

After the fast has been broken, the heart should swing like a pendulum between fear and hope. For one does not know if one’s fast will be accepted, so that one will find favor with God, or whether it will be rejected, leaving one among those He abhors. This is how one should be at the end of any act of worship one performs.♦

Ramadan: A Time for Thought, Action, and Change

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

4. Fasting in Ramadan enables us to master the art of mature adaptability and Time-Management. We can easily understand this point when we realize that fasting makes people change the entire course of their daily life. When they make the change, they naturally adapt themselves to a new system and schedule, and move along to satisfy the rules. This, in the long run, develops in them a wise sense of adaptability and self-created power to overcome the unpredictable hardships of life! A person who values constructive adaptability, time-management, and courage will appreciate the effects of Fasting in this respect as well.
5. It cultivates in us the principle of sincere Love, because when we observe Fasting, we do it out of deep love for God. And a person, who loves God, truly is a person who knows what love is and why everyone on this Earth should be loved and treated justly, for the sake of God.
6. Fasting elevates the human spirit and increases our awareness of God. It strengthens our will-power as we learn to rise above our lower desires. The institution of fasting is both unique and a shared experience in human history. From the very beginning of time, humans have struggled to master their physical and psychological selves: their bodies and their emotions. Hunger is one the most powerful urges that we experience. Many, through over- or under-eating or consumption of unhealthy foods, abuse this urge. Thus, when a person purposefully denies something to their own self that it craves, they are elevating their mind above their body, and their reason and will above their

- carnal passions. “A fasting person empties his stomach of all the material things: to fill his soul with peace and blessings, to fill his heart with love and sympathy, to fill his spirit with piety and Faith, to fill his mind with wisdom and resolution,” says H. Abdalati in Islam in Focus. The person who can rule their desires and make them work, as they like, has attained true moral excellence.
7. With the clarity of mind and absence of distractions, also comes a greater focus. As students, the period of fasting, especially early during the day, serves as a tool to focus our minds on our academics. In the month of Ramadan, many Muslims try to avoid watching TV, listening to music, and some other leisure activities, which spares them more time and energy to be spent on more productive activities such as academics, intense study of Islam, voluntary prayers, social and humanitarian causes, and a quality time with the family, to name a few. It is a reminder of our duty to God, our purpose and higher values in life, as God Himself describes the purpose of fasting as follows, “O you who Believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may develop consciousness of God” (Quran 2:183).
 8. Fasting has numerous, scientifically proven, benefits for our physical health and mental well-being. The time, length and nature of the Islamic Fast all contribute to its overall positive effect. One of the medical benefits is a much-needed rest to the digestive system. The reduced food intake during the day allows the body to concentrate on getting rid of harmful dietary toxins accumulated as natural by-products of food digestion

- throughout the year. The length of the Islamic Fast itself (around 12-14 hours) is in sync with the ‘transit time’ of food from the mouth to the colon of the large intestine, ensuring that no stimulus reaches the stomach or digestive system while it remains in homeostasis. Therefore, for the vast majority of healthy individuals fasting poses no medical risks but in fact provides many health benefits, such as: an increase in serum Magnesium, essential for cardio-vascular health and prevention of heart complications; improvement in the quality and depth of sleep; improvement in memory and slower skin aging over time; increased production of growth hormone, etc. Also, as a general note, it has been observed that underfed animals live longer than their heavily fed counterparts and suffer fewer illnesses during their lives.
9. The month of Ramadan provides us with a sort of “Boot camp.” It is a month of intense moral training. Since we know that Fasting is a special duty prescribed by God, we learn that any sins may spoil our record of fasting with God, so we go through great lengths making sure we are on our best behavior. Many people who experience fasting in this month, feel the impact that this intense training has on their habits, and realize the power of this transformative tool designed to make us better human beings- the ultimate goal of any spiritual exercise. The entire Ramadan atmosphere provides the driving force for this positive change.
 10. It makes us realize the reality of life and death. Fasting makes us realize how dependent our lives are on things that we often take for granted, such as food and water. It makes us think about our dependence on God and God’s mercy and justice. Moreover,

- it reminds us of the life after death, which itself has a great impact on our character and our world-view.
11. Ramadan is a blessed month for a special reason: It is actually the month in which God first revealed His final message and guidance for mankind to our beloved Prophet Muhammad. This message has been perfectly preserved both orally and textually in the form of a Book, called the Qur’an (The Reading/Recital). Therefore, Muslims try to do an intense study of the Quran in this month especially, and evaluate their lives according to the standards and guidance contained in it.
 12. After the month of Ramadan is over, Muslims celebrate one of the two most important holidays in the Islamic year: Eid ul-Fitr, or the Festival of the Fast Breaking. It is a day to thank God for the blessing and training that He provides us with throughout the month of Ramadan. Eid ul-Fitr is marked by praying in a huge congregation at an Islamic center or mosque, and by giving a small donation to the poor in the community. The adults give the donation on behalf of their children as well. Dinner parties, family outings, fairs, carnivals, and great joyous celebrations follow the prayer and charity.
- In a nutshell, even though the real purpose of the dynamic institution of Fasting is to discipline our soul and moral behavior, and to develop sympathy for the less fortunate, it is a multi-functional and a comprehensive tool of change in various spheres of our lives, including: social and economic, intellectual and humanitarian, spiritual and physical, private and public, personal and common, inner and outer --- all in one! ♦

Fasting and Your Health

Fasting during the month of Ramadan can be good for your health if it's done correctly. If you're overweight, it can be an opportunity to lose weight – provided you eat healthily when you break the fast.

What happens to your body when you fast

The changes that happen in the body during a fast depend on the length of the continuous fast. The body enters into a fasting state eight hours or so after the last meal, when the gut finishes absorbing nutrients from the food. In the normal state, body glucose, which is stored in the liver and muscles, is the body's main source of energy. During a fast, this store of glucose is used up first to provide energy. Later in the fast, once the glucose runs out, fat becomes the next source of energy for the body.

With a prolonged fast of many days or weeks, the body starts using protein and breaking down protein for energy. This is the technical description of what's commonly known as "starvation". "You are unlikely to reach the starvation stage during Ramadan, because the fast is broken daily," says Dr. Razeen Mahroof, a consultant from Oxford.

"The underlying message behind Ramadan is self-discipline and self-control," he says. "This shouldn't fall apart at the end of the day."

Dr. Razeen Mahroof

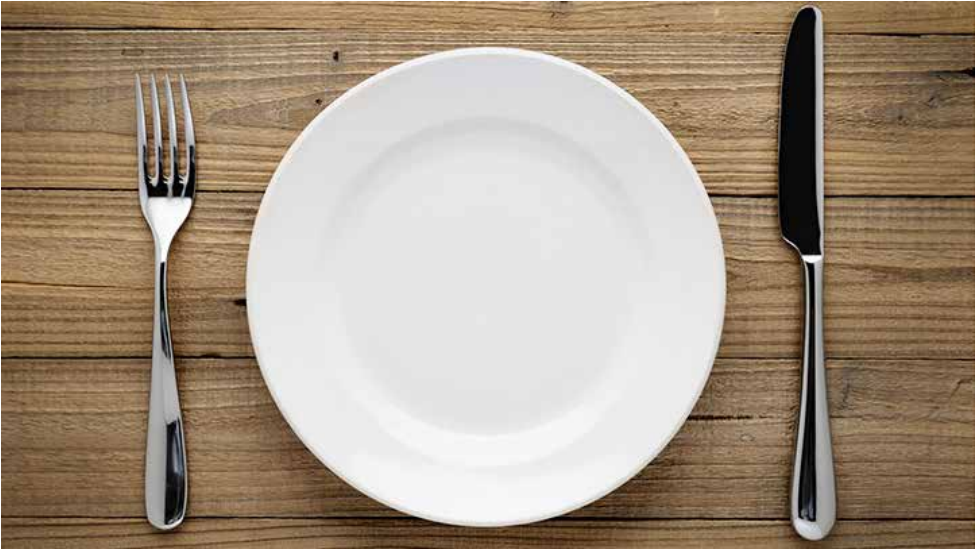
Gentle transition from glucose to fat

As the Ramadan fast only lasts from dawn till dusk, the body's energy can be replaced in the pre-dawn and dusk meals. This provides a gentle transition from using glucose as the main source of energy to using fat, and prevents the breakdown of muscle for protein. The use of fat for energy helps weight loss. It preserves the muscles and eventually reduces your cholesterol level. In addition, weight loss results in better control of diabetes and reduces blood pressure.

After a few days of the fast, higher levels of endorphins appear in the blood, making you more alert and giving an overall feeling of general mental wellbeing. A balanced food and fluid intake is important between fasts. The kidneys are very efficient at maintaining the body's water and salts, but these can be lost through sweating.

To prevent muscle breakdown, meals must contain enough energy food, such as carbohydrates and some fat.

How to fast safely during Ramadan
The way to approach your diet during fasting is similar to the way you should be eating outside Ramadan.



You should have a balanced diet, with the right proportion of carbs, fat and protein.

If you're not careful, food eaten during the pre-dawn and dusk meals can cause some weight gain.

Dr. Mahroof recommends approaching the fast with discipline, otherwise an opportunity to lose weight and be healthier could be wasted.

"The underlying message behind Ramadan is self-discipline and self-control," he says. "This shouldn't fall apart at the end of the day."

Aim for a balanced diet

Those observing the fast should have at least two meals a day: the pre-dawn meal (Suhoor) and a meal at dusk (Iftar).

Dr. Mahroof says your food intake should be simple and not differ too much from your normal diet.

It should contain foods from all the major food groups:

- fruit and vegetables
 - bread, cereals and potatoes
 - meat, fish or alternatives
 - milk and dairy foods
 - foods containing fat and sugar
- Try to limit the amount of sugary foods you eat and instead include healthier sources of carbohydrate in your diet, such as wholegrains, potatoes, vegetables, fruits, legumes, and lower fat dairy products.

Foods high in fibre can help to keep your bowels healthy and add bulk to your meal, helping you to feel full. These include:

- fruit
- vegetables
- pulses
- starchy foods (especially wholegrain varieties)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Go Green This Ramdan

What is the point of the physical act of fasting if our actions and words go unchanged? Here are some ways to be extra earth friendly this Ramadan and every day!

Share food with your neighbor

Invite your neighbors to enjoy a meal with you in the evenings as you open your fast. Sharing food with your neighbor and being kind to your neighbor might bring them closer to Islam. Remember actions speak louder than words. Abdullah ibn `Abbas reported that the Prophet said, "The believer is not he who eats his fill while his neighbor is hungry."

Don't waste food

Package any unfinished food in eco-friendly wrapping and give the food to a

homeless person on the street, an elderly neighbor who has trouble leaving home, or a family you know is often extremely busy.

Don't waste water

Be mindful of the time spent showering, never leave the sink running while not in use, keep a watchful eye while making wudu'. The Prophet (s.a.w) was said to not waste water even when doing wudu'.

Plant trees

Purchase seeds from local nurseries or garden stores and plant trees in parks, around the mosque, or near your home to improve the ecosystem. "If the Hour (the day of Resurrection is about to be established and one of you was holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of

even one second before the Hour is established to plant it." –Al-Albani. The Prophet said "if a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird or a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (sadaqah) for him."- Imam Bukhari

Recycle materials such as plastic

If your home and mosque do not already have a recycling system set up, lead the way to develop a plan for recycling— especially materials made of plastic.

Don't use Styrofoam cups and plates

When using disposable dishware, only use ecofriendly plates and cups that are biodegradable, especially for masjid iftaars as the usage adds up day by day!

Ask for the Khutbah

to be about conserving our environment. Take the lead in bringing this kind of education to the community. You can even use this article

or prepare your own sheet about tips & tricks to make homes and businesses more eco-friendly.

Use energy saver bulbs

Replaces the bulbs in your home and mosque to produce light in the most eco-friendly way. If your local mosque has not already implemented this, take the initiative to replace all light bulbs.

Organize masjid clean up days

Collaborate with members to facilitate a day of cleaning, including the outside and inside of the masjid—eliminate any health concerns that may be surrounding the masjid.

Post conservation reminders around the Masjid

Post simple signs around the masjid to remind members to join in on this "green" campaign and keep the ideas flowing, even long past Ramadan ends! Implement a plan for sustainability for your masjid for the long-term. ♦



We the People

MALAAK YEHYA

Approximately 53.9% of the American population did not receive their candidate of choice in the 2016 elections. The election created a culture of fear and made being hopeful for a better future incredibly challenging for us as a nation.

Enthusiasm turned into disappointment over the course of one night, creating another concern. Instead of becoming immobilized by this outcome, a push to bring about change to better our future is crucial. To begin, we should not stay downhearted.

We, the people, must remain hopeful and determined. We must remember legends like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks who were model citizens - just as we are - and made powerful changes through spreading love, fighting fear and hate with words of kindness, and taking initiative within communities. Spreading kindness is a simple yet effective action

that all community members can participate in without having to take leaps and bounds.

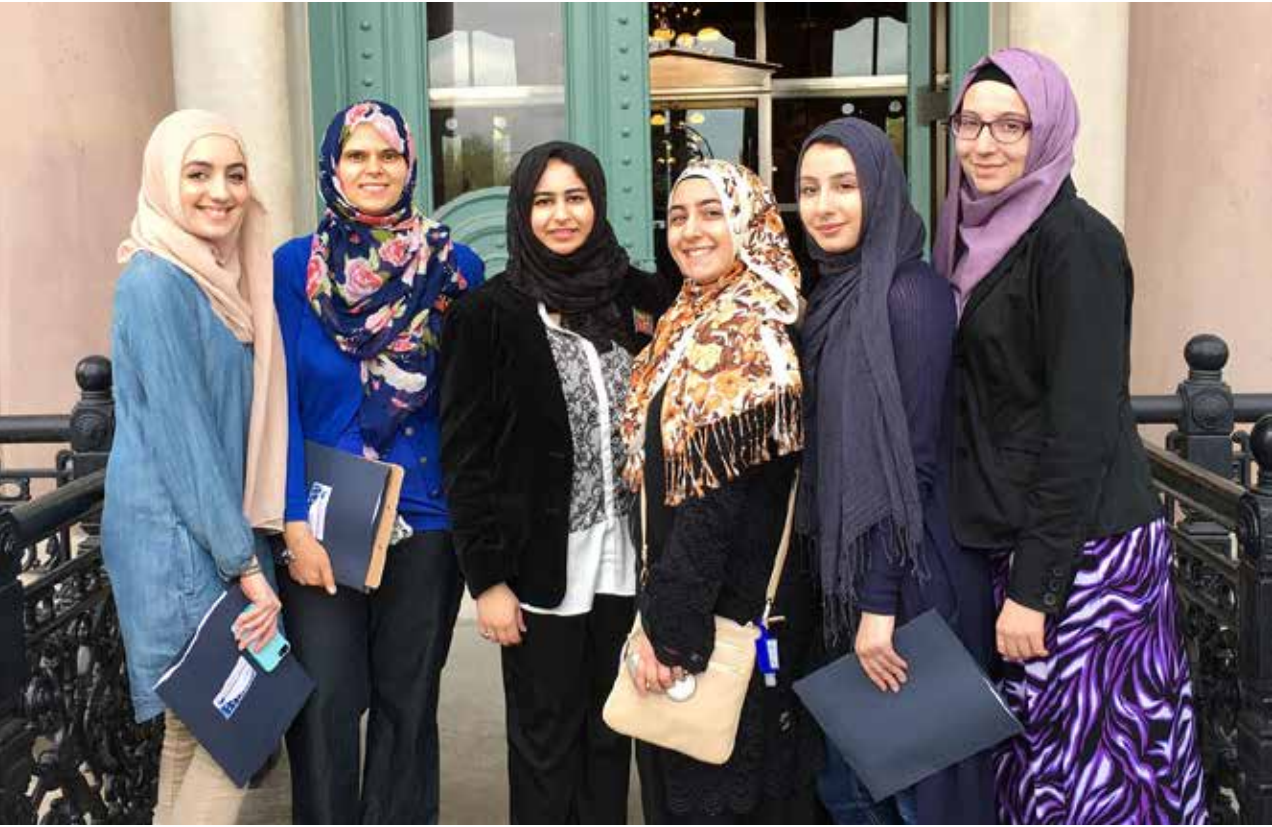
If we take the time to get to know "the other" by learning their name and slowly learning about their story then any type

"Rather than feeling powerless and becoming complacent, it is our civic duty to be a current of change."

of fear can be diminished. In President Obama's Farewell address, he stated that, "We the people give the constitution power and meaning with our participation and decisions that we make." It is what we decide to make of the current situation that begets a real difference.

Rather than feeling powerless and becoming complacent, it is our civic duty to be a current of change. For many of us, we feel that it has become safer to retreat into our own bubbles, which in turn results in closed minded thinking. Contacting local politicians to voice your concerns is one way to help make a formal change.

We are provided with the contact information to reach our senators and representatives online for this very



Six Senate Pages from CIOGC's recent Illinois Muslim Action Day have been offered internships with Illinois Senators they shadowed.

reason. This allows us to communicate pressing issues impacting you and your community. Additionally, we must encourage our youth to mobilize in an era where a man, whom we do not agree with, determines our fate and future.

Recent technological advances have given us new opportunities to reach out to our local representatives through social media as well. Looking back into history, so many achievements including women's suffrage, have resulted from

the power of the united people. Being active through these types of mediums demonstrates true democracy. We must step out of our comfort zone to help create a better America. ♦

Malaak Yehya is a 2017 CIOGC Senate Page and a student at Aqsa School in Bridgeview, Illinois.

Ideas for Sharing Ramadan

Ramadan is best spent when its shared with others! Here are some ideas on how to share Ramadan with your friends and neighbors.

- 1. Be fruitful to your neighbors** - Prepare baskets of fresh fruit (or even little cakes) to be distributed to neighbors.
- 2. Cans for a Cause** - Break up into small groups within the community and hold a competition to see which group can collect the most cans/food for the needy.
- 3. Interfaith Iftar** - Invite members of other religious organizations or faiths to Iftar. Emphasize an understanding of the month of Ramadan and its meaning.
- 4. Community Iftar** - Invite members of the community around the mosque to Iftar. Share the meaning of Ramadan!
- 5. Sharing is Caring** - Plan ahead while grocery shopping or preparing food for the month to donate to homeless shelters in your area.
- 6. Meat and Greet the Hungry** - Team up with local butchers to create vouchers for the homeless and needy to get fresh meat from the butcher.
- 7. Fill the toy box** - Hold a toy drive at the local mosque or community center to collect toys for underprivileged children in the area, work with local youth charity to help distribute.
- 8. Bake for the Good** - Community members come together to produce

delicious baked goods to be sold. Donate the profit from the bake sale to a local charity of choice.

- 9. Ramadan Reads** - Work with a local library to have a reading section of books about Islam and Ramadan on display.
- 10. Kraft with the Kids** - Host an afternoon of making arts and crafts for kids at the mosque, community center, or home for the kids to come together and make Ramadan and Eid decorations.
- 11. Give to those who give** - Give little gifts to police officers, doctors, bus drivers, firefighters, teachers etc. Encourage kids to be involved in the gift giving.
- 12. At your service!** - Plan a community service day as a group to spend time cleaning up a park, hosting an event, raising money for a cause, or volunteer at a local shelter.
- 13. Learn about Ramadan** - Get in contact with the diversity officer at your corporation. Collaborate together to promote an event that introduces Ramadan to coworkers.
- 14. Decorate** - Decorate the mosque and/or home, especially to get your children in the festive mood of appreciating Ramadan. Use websites like Eidway.com, Noorart.com or Ranoon.com
- 15. Ramadan, the month of Qur'an** - Use the media advisory in the packet or write a reflection piece and submit it to local media.

Thank You to Our Pillars for Your Dedicated Support

The CIOGC Board and Staff extend sincere thanks and appreciation for the generosity of our supporters during CIOGC's 4th Annual Pillars Dinner in Oak Brook on May 6.

The program was led by CIOGC Executive Director G. Abdullah Mitchell and featured informative interviews with CIOGC staff, as well as an inspiring testimonial by Aleena Ahmed, a Senate page who participated in Illinois Muslim Action Day in April. Our Pillars also had an opportunity to dialogue with the Board and Executive Director about CIOGC's current and future direction.

Throughout the evening, Br. Mitchell underscored the importance of CIOGC as an organization that mobilizes member organizations, and our community at large, to address social issues through civic engagement, while building interfaith partnerships, helping our youth develop professional leadership skills, and allowing Chicago

Muslims to collectively serve as an intelligent voice and trustworthy source for media.

Given the increasingly growing and diverse Muslim community residing in Chicagoland, CIOGC serves a critical role in providing a platform for Chicago area Muslims to come together and act on causes vital to them.

For years, CIOGC has emphasized a particular verse from the Qu'ran that exemplifies the purpose and importance of the Council: "And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided." Qur'an 3:103. CIOGC's efforts are by their very nature this aya (verse) in the form of human action. CIOGC encourages Muslim community members to join us as Pillars of this important platform for our community. For more information on how you can become a CIOGC Pillar, please visit our Pillars Page. ♦



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SAVE THE DATE

FOR THE 2017

MUSLIM YOUTH EXPO

Save the date for CIOGC's 3rd Annual Muslim Youth Expo which will be held on Saturday, September 23, 2017 at Moraine Valley College and will be co-sponsored by Moraine Valley's Muslim Student Association.

At last year's Youth Expo, CIOGC hosted an art competition in which Muslim youth were able to showcase their talents. The Fresh Palettes competition allowed Muslim youth to showcase their original works in poetry and spoken word, sketches, paintings, and sculptures. The Expo also included a lecture by Ustadh Ubaydullah Evans to remind the youth that they are responsible for upholding, maintaining, and passing on Islamic values to the generations coming after them.

The Fresh Palettes competition will take place again this year, and we aim for it to be even bigger and better with more diverse pieces of work on display. For more information, to sponsor, volunteer, or register for this event, please contact CIOGC Youth Coordinator Jameel Karim at jameel@ciogc.org.

Fasting and Your Health

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

It's also worth avoiding caffeine-based drinks such as tea, coffee and cola. Caffeine is a diuretic and stimulates faster water loss through urination.

Wholesome foods

Suhoor, the pre-dawn meal, should be a wholesome, moderate meal that's filling and provides enough energy for many hours.

"Slow digesting food like pitta bread, salad, cereal (especially oats) or toast provide a constant release of energy," Dr. Mahroof says.

"It's important to have some fluids with vitamins, such as fruit juice or fruit. Some people have isotonic drinks to replace any lost salts."

It's customary for Muslims to break the fast (Iftar) with some dates, in accordance with the Prophetic traditions.

Dates will provide a burst of energy. Fruit juices will also have a similar revitalising effect.

Start by drinking plenty of water, which helps rehydration and reduces

the chances of overindulgence. Avoid the rich, special dishes that traditionally celebrate the fast.

Foods to avoid

- deep-fried foods – such as pakoras, samosas and fried dumplings
- high-sugar and high-fat foods – including sweets such as gulab jamun, rasgulla and balushahi
- high-fat cooked foods – such as parathas, oily curries and greasy pastries

Healthy alternatives

- baked samosas and boiled dumplings
- chapattis made without oil
- baked or grilled meat and chicken
- homemade pastry using just a single layer
- milk-based sweets and puddings, such as rasmalai and barfee

Cooking methods to avoid

- deep frying
- frying
- excessive use of oil

Healthy cooking methods

- shallow frying – usually there's little difference in taste
- grilling or baking is healthier and helps retain the taste and original flavour of the food, especially with chicken and fish

Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning while cooking

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that has no smell or taste. When breathed in, it can make you unwell and can kill.

Cooking for large numbers of people using oversized pots on gas stoves has been shown to cause the build-up of carbon monoxide in some homes, particularly those that aren't well ventilated.

If you're planning to cater for large numbers of people at your home – for example, at a pre- or post-Ramadan gathering – it's important that you don't use oversized pots on your gas stove and don't place foil around the burners.

Source: National Health Service (NHS) 2017

CIOGC and Partners Make an Impact in Springfield for IMAD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that she will continue supporting the issues that are important to them.

IMAD also gave high school and college students the chance to be Senate Pages where they shadowed a State Senator to get an inside look on their day-to-day duties and first-hand experience on the legislative process. In addition, Senate Pages were invited to join a Senate hearing where their assigned Senators introduced the pages to the entire Senate body.

CIOGC also participated in a rally in support of higher education funding held by the University Professionals of Illinois. The rally addressed the issue of universities and colleges getting funding cut by millions of dollars due to Governor Bruce Rauner not implementing a budget in Illinois. CIOGC Communications Coordinator, Husnaa Vhora, spoke to the crowd

about how the power of the people and standing together despite opposition from state officials would prevail in the end.

CIOGC expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation everyone from community leaders, to member and partner organizations, and legislators for joining and supporting us at the 9th Annual Illinois Muslim Action Day.



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Zakat Worksheet

	Value
1 Total Cash on Hand and in Bank Accounts	\$
2 Current Value of Gold and Silver (jewelry is not subject to Zakat unless its amount is excessive or it was purchased for business)	\$
3 Expected Receivables (such as loans to others, refundable deposits, tax refunds, etc.)	\$
4 Current value of stocks and shares	\$
5 Retirement Accounts and Pension Plans (total amount you can withdraw minus penalty and taxes)	\$
6 Business Cash on Hand and in Bank Accounts	\$
7 Business Inventory (wholesale value of inventory)	\$
Total Zakatable Wealth	\$
Total Zakat Due = 2.5% of Zakatable wealth (If your Total Zakatable Wealth is less than \$3,710, no Zakat is due)	\$

54TH ANNUAL ISNA CONVENTION

“

Verily, this Quran shows the way to all that is most upright, and gives the believers who do good deeds the glad tidings that theirs will be a great reward.

17:9

”

Hope & Guidance through the Quran



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Ramadan Greetings!

Support CIOGC this Ramadan

Uniting Muslims on a single platform

CIOGC supports its members by empowering their leadership and communities, enhancing their organizational capacity, serving their constituencies most effectively through House of Representatives meetings, goal-setting, strategic planning, fundraising guidance, and various educational workshops.



Members of the CIOGC House of Representatives meet to network and coordinate efforts.



Engaging with the interfaith community

CIOGC fosters its relations with the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC), Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, United Methodist Church - Northern Illinois Conference, the Presbytery of Chicago, and the Chicago Board of Rabbis. CIOGC is also initiating regular Catholic-Muslim and Jewish-Muslim Scholars Dialogue sessions in 2015.

CIOGC recently held its 12th Annual Methodist-Muslim Dinner with the Northern Illinois Conference of Methodists.

Working with federal, state, and local government

CIOGC works closely with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as well as with state, county and city governments. Through Illinois Muslim Action Day (IMAD), CIOGC presents a legislative agenda to state lawmakers to help influence and create positive societal change for Muslims and broader society.



CIOGC Vice Chair Shahnawaz Khan discusses legislation with Senator Daniel Biss at Illinois Muslim Action Day.



Improving the community's image through media

The CIOGC Communications team produces the monthly print and digital news publication - The Chicago Crescent, annual Yearbook, weekly E-Newsletter, CIOGC website, documentaries, and engages with the community via social media. The CIOGC team also actively works with media outlets to publish positive stories about the Muslim community.

CIOGC Chair Dr. Bassam Osman responds to the 'Muslim Ban' at a press conference with immigrants rights groups.

Fostering leadership skills among Muslim youth

CIOGC helps Muslim youth become better Muslims and American citizens by offering opportunities to build leadership skills, become civically engaged, and be recognized for their academic achievements through Youth Leadership Forums, the Senate Page Program, Internship and Volunteer Program, and Muslim Valedictorians recognition.



Senate Pages Jinan Chehade and Ismaeel Jarad shadow Illinois Senator Jacqueline Collins.

Support CIOGC!

Clip and mail this donation form to CIOGC, 231 S. State Street, Suite 300, Chicago, Illinois 60604
You can also donate by phone 312-506-0070 and online at www.ciogc.org!

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