



Message from the IAR Chairperson

The Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR) is a conglomeration that is standing firm on the strength of diversity and unity among our community members! It is run with the effort of hundreds of volunteers who spend their valuable time to serve the community for the sake of Allah (SWT). Let's remind ourselves, as Prophet Muhammad, (PBUH) said, "The best one among you, is he who is most useful to his community." (Bukhari and Muslim).

In this short message, I would like to focus on volunteering at IAR. I encourage you all to come forward and get involved in various committees that each offers its own unique services to the community. With our honesty and sincerity to Allah (SWT), we can continue to make IAR an amazing place to work and a platform from which to prepare our youth as future IAR and community leaders. We have a strong volunteer base, irrespective of ethnicity, gender or age. We have more sisters coming forward as chairpersons in Executive Committees. We have Chairpersons with age range from 20+ to 60+ years. All this is to say, we have opportunity for all.

With 2014 being an Election Year for the term 2015 - 2017, I request those who are eligible, to actively pursue becoming Shura members. Those who want to use their skills and potential, may aspire to become Executive Committee Chairpersons. Those who are eligible to vote, I urge them to actively participate to choose the best leaders.

Let's get involved and take positive action to bring that difference we want to see, so we can continue to improve our services to our community!

—by Sr. Rabia Sultana, IAR Chairperson

Meet Our New IAR Officers

Sr. Rabia Sultana, Chairperson moved to Raleigh in 2006. She immediately started attending various educational classes offered at IAR, including the Imam Baianonie's Sunday class. She started volunteering in Al Furqan School since 2008, and served in various capacities such as PSG Lead, Head of Department or Principal. She worked as IAR Women's Committee Chairperson during the years 2009-2011. From Jan 2012 till Jan 2014, she has served as Al Furqan School Chairperson. She is also Shura member for the 2012-2014 term and currently serving as IAR Chairperson.

She has educational background in Electronics & Telecom Engineering, Business Administration and Project Management disciplines. She brings her skills and experience from professional background in Project and Program Management of IT and Infrastructure Projects. Sr. Sultana is married to Ameenulla Syed and has three lovely sons Arshad, Asad and Asjad. Masha Allah!



Br. Mohamed Elgamal, Vice Chairperson has been a Shura member since

2011 and recently was elected as IAR Vice Chair. He enjoys serving the community and just completed his term (6 years) as Muslim American Public Affairs Council (MAPAC) Chairman. MAPAC is dedicated to enhancing understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims. Mohamed is a member of a number of Interfaith organizations in North Carolina. He is married and has four children. Mohamed has an MBA and PhD in Electrical Engineering and owns some engineering companies.



Sr. Adilah Shabazz, Secretary

moved to the Triangle area over eight years ago because she met and married Br. Jameel Abdul-Rasheed, who was living here and was very active in the IAR, particularly in security and prison dawah. Sr. Shabazz says she was happy to discover that she was part of a very diverse and growing Muslim Community and become active in any Committee that she wished to join. Soon she became involved in the Education and Women's Committees and after serving on Shura for two terms, she recently was elected Secretary.

Although Sr. Shabazz says she finds her new role as Secretary challenging, Allah (SWT) has blessed her with an educational background and experience that have prepared her to serve as Secretary. That education and experience includes a BA in English and an MA in Mass Communications, plus additional studies in public relations and marketing. She also has been a college and university professor, a news writer for the Associated Press and CBS-TV, and owner/publisher of a community newspaper, as well as the editor of IAR's Voice Newsletter.

In addition to her education and experience, Sr. Shabazz says she is "fortunate to work with a wonderful team, and to be among some highly educated and creative people on Shura and the Executive Committee. It is challenging being a member and now an official, but I pray Allah (SWT) gives me the strength and the fortitude to continue until my term ends."



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FROM THE MOUNTAINS IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD TO THE METHOD COMMUNITY TODAY: HIGHLIGHTS OF NORTH CAROLINA'S MUSLIM HERITAGE

By Br. Glenn Silver

Although the Islamic Association of Raleigh's (IAR) presence in the Method Community is fairly recent, the Muslim presence in North Carolina goes much farther back in time – even before the establishment of “The Lost Colony” on Roanoke Island, NC and the settling of Jamestown, VA!

During a raid on the coast of Brazil in 1586, the English pirate, Sir Francis Drake, captured some West African Muslims. Drake had planned to release the Africans on Cuba, but storms forced them to continue up the coast of North Carolina. When Drake landed on Roanoke Island, he met some stranded English settlers pleading for a ride home so he left the West African Muslims along with some Moors, Turks, Portuguese soldiers, and South American Indians on the Island.

Apparently, some of the Muslims that Drake left behind moved from the coast to the mountains because in 1654, English explorers from Jamestown reported finding a colony of bearded people they called "Moors." The English explorers described these Moors as wearing European clothing, living in cabins, engaging in mining, smelting silver and dropping to their knees to pray many times daily in the mountains of North Carolina.

The history of Muslims in North Carolina and the IAR locating in the Method Community, which has a rich history of its own, reminds us of how the history of Muslims in America and the history of Africans in America are interwoven.

The industriousness that the English explorers from Jamestown discovered among the Muslims in the mountains in 1654 is very similar to the industriousness and entrepreneurial spirit of the founders of the Method community. The Muslims in the mountains were involved in the smelting and trading of silver and the founders of Method were involved in the development of real estate – both groups were very business minded and good at their business!

One of the founders of the Method Community who was involved in the real estate business was Jesse Mason. At the end of the Civil War, Brigadier General William Ruffin Cox began to invest in community development around Raleigh, such as the railroad, and even offered to sell some land to his former carriage driver, John O’Kelly. O’Kelly had also worked as a builder, and had a hand in the construction of J.P. Prairie’s Standard building on Fayetteville Street as well as various railroad projects. It is most likely the railroad construction that brought John O’Kelly together with the Mason family. The O’Kellys and Masons were former slaves, but were working after emancipation to buy their own homes for the first time. John O’Kelly died before he had the chance to buy some land, but his friend Lewis Mason, who also built railroads, was intrigued by the idea. Lewis then passed the idea on to his father, Jesse Mason, and a plan was hatched.

Jesse Mason invested in 69 acres of land in what was then called House Creek Township, part of which had been Camp Mangum during the Civil War. In the spring of 1870, Mason began to subdivide and sell lots to former slaves. They built small, log-cabin or slab houses with dirt floors, much like the early colonial pioneers had once constructed. The new town four miles west of Raleigh was called Mason’s Village, or by the nick-names Slabtown, or Save-Rent.

Berry O’Kelly, who had been born in Orange County, was raised by his kin in Mason’s Village.



Berry O'Kelly
Image courtesy of the NC Division of Archives and History.

He began by working at the general store in the village, and within a few short years, he bought the store. Soon afterward, he had succeeded in bringing a railroad spur to the village, starting a trans-Atlantic mercantile and warehouse, and establishing Mason Village’s first post office.

By the 1950s, Method was still a rural community with dirt roads and no sewage or water systems. Residents came together to erect street signs as the city of Raleigh encroached from the east. Then in the 1960s, Raleigh incorporated Method and put up all new street signs with entirely different names. Method community members gathered at Raleigh City Council meetings and demanded that their street names be changed back, and a compromise was reached. Method Road now stretches from Beryl Road (named for Berry O’Kelly’s daughter), to Western Boulevard, where it changes over to the Raleigh-given name, Kent.



Students at the Berry O'Kelly School
Image courtesy of NC Division of Archives and History

Although there is no direct connection between the Muslims in the mountains of pre-colonial North Carolina and the founders of the Method community, both groups shared the character trait of being keen at business – the early Muslims in the trade of silver and the founders of Method in the trade of real estate. One of the founders of Method, Berry O’Kelly, also shared a trait with current Muslims in the Method Community – a passion for education. Just as he succeeded in transforming the village’s one-room schoolhouse into the Berry O’Kelly School for training black teachers, the IAR has transformed part of its campus into the Al-Iman, An-Noor, and Al-Furqan schools.

Now that we, 21st century Muslims have discovered some common threads in our heritage and that of the founders of the Method Community of which we are proud to be members, we hope to weave the common threads of our heritage into a cord of community mindedness that compels us to enthusiastically work together to preserve our rich past and produce an even more prosperous future – a future in which our youth of today will emerge as leaders of tomorrow!

Al-Iman School- Soaring to New Heights and Accomplishments!

By Sr. M.Jabeen, Principal

Al-Iman School is in its 22nd year of operation and our mission is to, within an Islamic environment, promote leadership qualities, and develop global awareness and 21st century skills in our students. Alhumdulillah, as a community school we have come a long way in terms of building bridges with our IAR community, and the community at-large. We have partnered with local Universities and Schools that include, Duke University, UNC-Chapel-Hill, NCSU, Carolina Friend's School, B'Nai Shalom School, and some Wake County Public Schools to promote community relations. Some of the community projects that Al-Iman has promoted are as follows:

- Hifz- and Arabic Program
- Basketball Program for Boys and Girls
- Hajj Re-enactment
- Muslim Heritage Project Presentation
- Islamic Studies teacher offers Free Dawah Classes for new Muslims and non-Muslims
- Some teachers hold Halaqa's for Upper Elementary and Middle School Girls in the community
- Service Learning projects include Food and Clothing Drive for IAR Community and NC Food Bank, Food Shuttle, Backpack for Buddies to help the less fortunate students in Wake County Schools, Fundraising for Leukemia Society, Students' visit to Nursing Homes, Fundraising for Flood Victims and Syrian Civil War Victims, and many other activities.



Sr. M.Jabeen, Principal

As we cherish the milestones that Al-Iman School has accomplished over more than twenty years, we thank all those who contributed through their expertise, selfless efforts, and time to make Al-Iman the unique learning institution that it is. Our special thanks to everyone who put forth the effort and ideas to establish a community Islamic School. May Allah (SWT) reward each and every person in the community who helped in the establishment, and continuous improvement of Al-Iman School.

From time to time, we have updated you on Al-Iman's accomplishments and the following are some highlights of our most recent, major accomplishments.

Al-Iman School's Major Accomplishments

- Student Enrollment from 1992 to 2012: increased from 12 to 250.
- Percentage of Graduates from 1998 to 2008 who attended college: 99%
- Al-Iman School Alumni attend Medical Schools, Dental Schools, and Graduate Schools after undergraduate studies.
- Number of Staff/Faculty from 1992 to 2013: increased from 2 to 35.
- Number of Certified Teachers from 1999 to 2013: increased from 1 to 12.
- Annual Budget from 1995 to 2013 increased from \$250,000 to \$1.4 million.
- Our students received awards at Regional and State Science & Math Fair in 2013.
- Al-Iman School received the highest rating of "Highly Functional" in all Seven Standards by AdvancEd QAR (Quality Assurance Review) Team in 2010-2011.
- Percentage of Al-Iman School Middle School Students who passed both Reading and Mathematics EOG since 2000: 100% with the exception of 2009 in Reading and 2002 in Mathematics.
- Percentage of 8th grade students who passed Science EOG from 2008 to 2012: 100% with the exception of 2008.
- Percentage of Middle School Students who passed High School Course Algebra-1 from 2005-2013, and Geometry from 2006 to 2010 :100%
- Many of our graduates are actively participating in High School MSA Chapters and some deliver the Friday Khutbahs (Sermons).

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students:

Al-Iman school admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered program

An-Noor School: A Unique Integration of Intensive Qur'an Education with Academics

An-Noor School is a full-time school from 3rd - 8th grade that focuses on Qur'an memorization with proper pronunciation, while uniquely incorporating an approved academic curriculum. An-Noor School was established in Summer 2009 as a pilot program and was approved as a permanent, full-time School by the IAR Shura in May 2010. The mission of the School is to nurture a strong connection with the Book of Allah (SWT), the Glorious Qur'an, through its memorization and understanding and to develop well-rounded future leaders who are guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah.

By the mercy of Almighty Allah (SWT), 22 students have completed Qur'an memorization and more are on their way. These budding huffadh are already giving back to the community. Last Ramadan, An-Noor huffadh assisted leading the taraweeh prayers at IAR, ICM, and Shaw University Masjid. An-Noor students have also served as tutors of Qur'an to Burmese refugees and other children in our community.

The academic curriculum at An-Noor prepares students to be competitive with the Wake County public school system and complies with the NC Standard Course of Study (NCSOS) requirements. Most students at An-Noor School achieve above average scores on standardized tests in Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Graduates of An-Noor have gone on to excel in public and private school settings as a result of the solid academic foundation they received at An-Noor.

We believe completing Qur'an memorization is only the beginning of our students' lifelong education in Qur'an. A strong After-School program exists that allows the huffadh to maintain continuity, further strengthen their memorization, and provides them the opportunity to pursue Ijaaza



An-Noor Students Displaying Certifications

(certification) in Qur'anic tajweed and memorization. A Qur'anic Arabic course teaches the huffadh to learn the grammatical structures of Qur'anic verses, understand the position of every word they read, and develop an understanding of the Qur'anic verses which they have memorized. "Them being Huffadh are at an advantage to quickly learn the new rules and relate to the verses of Qur'an" says Imam Sameh who teaches the Qur'anic Arabic class.

An-Noor also brings a blend of experienced and certified Qur'an teachers to the entire community with a program called Iqraa Al Qur'an. This program aims to teach proper Qur'an reading, tajweed, and basic memorization. It is open to all children and adults in the community at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels.

An-Noor School employs a full-time Director and 12 additional staff. The student-to-teacher ratio at the School is 8:1 in hifdh studies. On average, students complete memorization in 3-4 years.

Parent participation and support has been instrumental in the progress of the school.

The An-Noor School committee thanks Almighty Allah (SWT) for the blessing of this School and thanks the community for their extraordinary support. May Allah (SWT) bless the staff, students, parents, and volunteers of An-Noor for their dedication and hard work to enlighten our hearts and minds with the words of Allah (SWT). We thank Allah (SWT) for the innocence and beauty of our children, for the opportunity to raise them as strong and pious Muslims, and to nurture love for the book of Allah (SWT) in their hearts.

Al-Furqan School: 2013-2014 Highlights

Al-Furqan School takes pride in a legacy of educating students about Islam through a variety of programs and outstanding curriculum. Founded in 1986, Al-Furqan School continues to serve the Muslim Community in the Triangle and surrounding areas.



The School offers Islamic education in light of the Quran and the Sunnah to our children, with a goal of preparing them to maintain their identity as Muslims, living in a non-Islamic environment.

The core curriculum is based on Quran and Islamic Studies consisting of Islamic History, Fiqh, Seerah and so on. We have special Programs for Quran Reading, Salah and Character Education. The Quran Reading Program aims at teaching students to read Quran and memorize different surahs at each grade level. There is also focus on tafseer at higher grades.

Al Furqan school also aims to instill Islamic behavior and manners in our youth to help our children become proud, practicing Muslims.

The school is unique in its service to offer Islamic education to students who go to the public or private schools during week days. The school operates on Sundays from 10:00 am to 1:20 pm

It is completely run by the parent volunteers. More than 150 volunteers support the school by performing all teaching and administrative functions. Currently, there are more

than 380 students enrolled in grades from Kindergarten to 12th and more than 40 students generally on a waitlist. The school charges nominal fees annually, which is spent for the books, lunch and programs for the students.

The school meticulously selects teachers based on their Islamic knowledge, background, and professional skills. This is in an effort to maintain the quality of education.

Every year Al Furqan hosts parent teacher conferences at the end of the Fall semester to allow staff to discuss the progress of students with their parents. Parent-teacher conferences include from Kindergarten to 12th grade. Each year parent turnout is very high – a strong indication of the increasing participation of the parent community in our school each year.

The IAR Youth Director is conducting talks and workshops on many important topics such as -Gender Relations, Peer Pressure and Keeping Good Company/Friends, Developing Khushoo in Salah (How to Focus, Benefit and Find Joy in Prayer), Tricks and Deceptions of Shaitan (Guarding and Protecting Yourself). and so on.



Al-Furqan emphasizes the importance of Salah to 3rd grade students. These students are introduced to the concept of Salah, the role of Salah in our lives as Muslims and then spend the year learning how to correctly perform wudu and Salah. At the end of the year, the 3rd grade class performs a Salah demonstration for parents, signifying their ability to correctly perform this act of worship.

We invite external speakers, such as Imam Amir Abdul Malik and Sr. Maryam Elgamal, for talks on important topics for our youth and parents. We also conduct Dawah sessions in collaboration with the IAR Dawah Committee.



We organize special treats for our students during the working Sunday after Eid. Our aim is to foster and promote a social environment that strengthens their identity as Muslims. The School is run by the parent volunteers who perform teaching and administrative functions.

We have hired three security guards to make sure everyone coming to Al-Furqan School is safe and secure while in the classrooms and during break time. Security for everyone is our priority, especially for all our students.

We have been constantly making efforts to automate the student registration process and reduce paperwork as much as possible.

The Messenger of Allah said, "When Allah wishes good for someone, He bestows upon him the understanding of Deen." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

We thank Allah (SWT) for bestowing the opportunity to learn Islamic knowledge on our children, through Al Furqan School.

-----By Sr. Rabia Sultana



Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR): How The IAR Is Organized

The Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR) is an Islamic center serving as a masjid, school, and a gathering place for the Muslim community in the Triangle region of North Carolina. The Islamic Center consists of two buildings providing a main musallah (prayer hall) and a private Sisters' musallah, education facilities, multipurpose hall and gym, library, Sisters' areas, children's play areas, and Al-Maidah Kitchen and Cafe.

Three shifts of Jummah (Friday) prayers are held in order to make it easy for everybody to attend the Friday prayers and the late timings of the third shift of Friday prayers are targeted specially for Muslim students to attend prayers after regular school hours. Eid prayers are usually held at NC State Fairgrounds to accommodate large gatherings of the community.

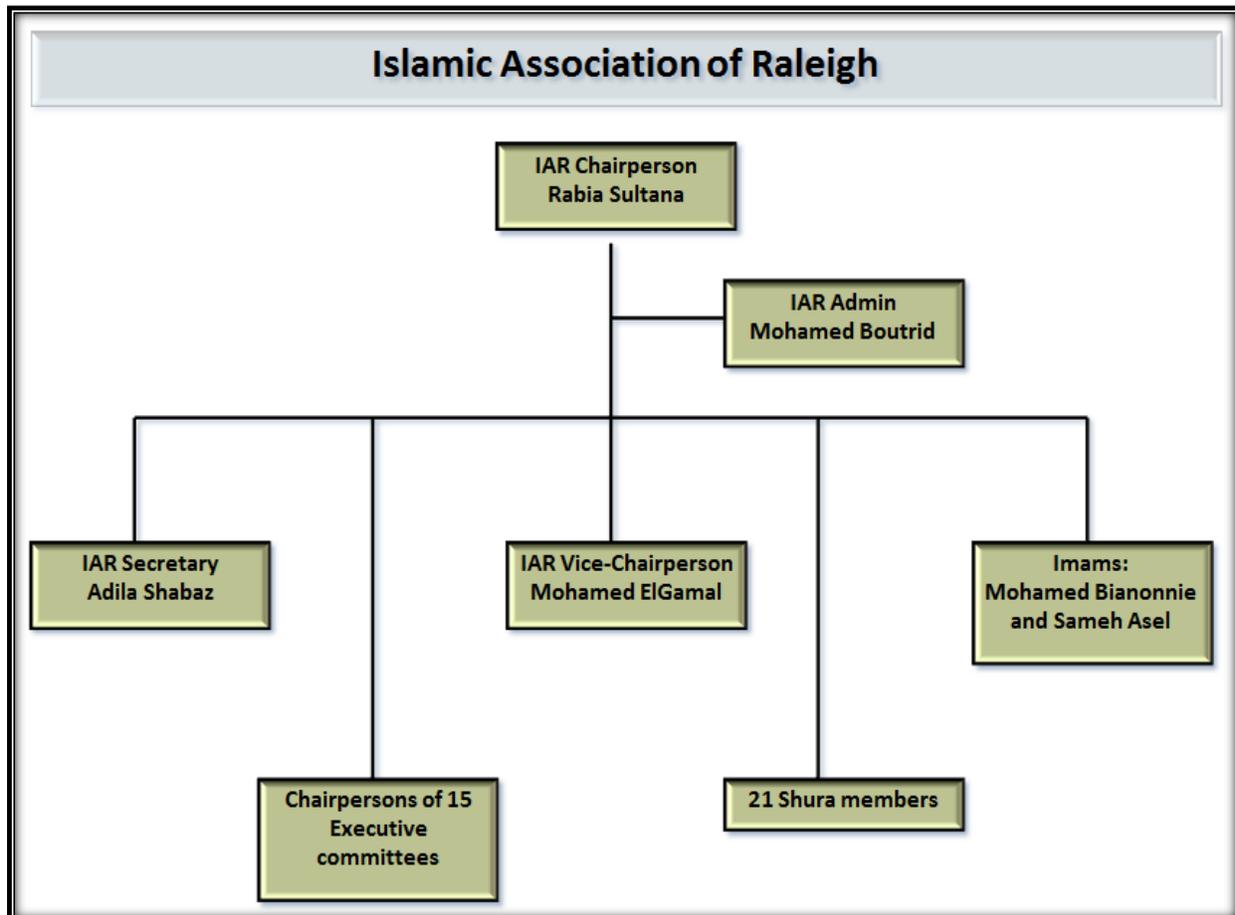
There are many regular youth activities and daily & weekly classes for adults. Social services include zakaat and sadaqa (alms and charity) distribution and refugee assistance.

IAR offers Hajj group services managed by a qualified Hajj leader every year. IAR also offers washing, funeral, and burial services in a private Muslim cemetery in Zebulon.

Community events include annual picnics and the Health Fair, which offers various free medical services and information and is open to the public.

Al-Maidah Kitchen and Cafe is open for lunch and dinner and also offers catering services.

The Islamic Association of Raleigh is blessed with the knowledge and guidance of Imam Mohammad Baianonie and Imam Sameh Asal, as well as the services of countless volunteers, the Board of Directors, the Shura, and the Executive Committee.



Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR): How The IAR Operates

IAR is a Volunteer run Islamic Center

Some of us may take it for granted that every time we come to IAR, we expect it to be open, clean, etc. It takes hundreds of volunteers putting in thousands of hours to run the IAR around the clock, every day of the year.

Below, is a high-level organizational chart of the IAR.

In future newsletters, insha'Allah, will cover each team and each committee in more detail.

IAR GENERAL BODY

It consists of all members who have paid their annual membership dues. It has the power to approve amendment(s) to the Constitution and elect the Shura.

IAR SHURA

The Shura is an elected body. It appoints, oversees, guides and directs the work of the Executive Committee and other committees.

IAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

It consists of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary of the Shura, Treasurer and Chairpersons of all standing committees. It shall implement the decisions of the Shura and coordinate the work of different committees.

IAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It consists of five members elected by the Shura. The Board ensures appropriate functioning of the IAR in general compliance with the Constitution.

For a copy of the IAR constitution, please visit the following webpage:

<http://www.raleighmasjid.org/officialdocs/IAR-Constitution-Bylaws.pdf>

