



# Ithna-asheri Muslim Association of the Northwest

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## IMAN Annual Report of Activities 2013-2014

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# 1 Executive Committee Report for 2013/2014

IMAN Executive Committee (EC) expresses gratitude to its membership for the opportunity given to it to serve the term ending September 30th, 2014. This report outlines our progress and activities since October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. This would not have been possible without the continued sincere dedication, support and participation of the community at large. The Executive Committee is honored to have had this opportunity to serve.

Alhamdulillah, there were many activities offered and pursued by the IMAN community. The following observations augment what is covered in sub-committee reports.

The following were the IMAN Executive Committee members for 2013/2014:

|                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Hamed Esfahani        | President      |
| Sameer Tejani         | Vice President |
| Meisam Seyed Aliroteh | Secretary      |
| Mohammad Nikjoo       | Treasurer      |

## 1.1 Executive Committee Priorities

From the recommendations of last year, the three areas discussed below had a priority focus from the Executive Committee.

### Children and Youth

As a community we need to make the children and youth a priority. Building on last year's momentum on this front, this year we have been able to have some more youth-oriented activities throughout the year.

Many of these activities depend on having adequate volunteers to lead and organize such programs.

IMAN subcommittees need to figure out a way to engage the youth in various activities and encourage them to participate. In addition we request all parents to offer ideas, act as mentors, and volunteer to lead, coordinate, and participate in these various activities. Below is a summary of the key youth oriented programs we have had throughout the year.

#### **Milad-un-Nabi Program**

The Milad-un-Nabi program at IMAN was driven by the school and it was encouraging to see a good attendance across the spectrum. More can be done here to combine IMAN programs with school activities.

#### **Ramadhan & Muharram Programs**

This year several community members stepped up to organize youth and children's programs during Muharram and Ramadhan. During Muharram we had evening programs specifically for the youth and children, running alongside or combined with the adults program. During

Ramadhan the children were encouraged to learn and memorize short Surah's from the Holy Qur'an and they were invited to come on the stage during the final nights of the month to recite in front of the attendees. All participants were recognized and the children who participated consistently received prizes on Eid-ul-Fitr. This was made possible with the help of several volunteers who were willing to dedicate their time to running these programs and forgo their own participation in the adult programs and lectures.

### **Weekly Children Programs**

Two years ago we started a step towards having enriching programs for children on regular basis throughout the year rather than only on the major occasions such as Ramadhan and Muharram. This year we continued to have programs specifically tailored for children and youth nearly every Friday evening, with few exceptions. IMAN EC has welcomed and supported this initiative and recommends building on it in the coming years. We have received positive feedback from the parents, saying that their children are excited to come to IMAN on Friday evenings. At times we have had more participation and attendance from the children than adults. The goal of the weekly children program is to create an environment for the children to interact with each other and have a sense of belonging to a community; it is not necessarily to provide religious education, which is one of the primary goals of the Sunday school. Some of the activities that the children participated include: movie nights, learning to code (TouchDevelop), discussing current events, team building exercises (team challenges), and variety of other activities.

### **Volunteer capacity**

In order to be able to run all our activities and programs successfully, we need a large pool of volunteers. Currently, a small group of volunteers are doing a lot of work in the day to day running and maintenance of IMAN. This limits the amount of activities we can take on in a particular year and also risks burn out of those overworked small group of volunteers.

We have good participation from the community for the everyday tasks like setup and cleaning during major events like Ramadhan and Muharram. We need to tap into this energy for the rest of the year when we need help in activities like cleaning the center, Together We Build, small maintenance tasks, etc.

An important need is to have people step up and take the lead in planning and organizing events, especially the ones involving our children and youth. It was particularly challenging to organize the children's Ramadhan program this year as there were not enough people available to plan and organize the program for each of the age groups.

Based on suggestions we received last year, EC started to look into hiring a part-time administrator. Please see the 2014-2015 recommendations sections for details on the next steps on this topic.

## Increased Scholarly Presence

Securing the services of a resident scholar for IMAN is a topic that has been under the consideration of IMAN EC and Board for several years. We decided last year to dedicate one of our three main priorities to increasing scholarly presence at IMAN. The programming budget was increased this year for this purpose. The Program Committee was able to increase scholarly presence at IMAN via live or recorded lectures by various scholars throughout the year. The video lectures have been well received by the community. More can be done on this priority in terms of having visiting scholars throughout the year, not only on major occasions such as Ramadhan and Muharram.

In addition, we thank the community members for contributions to the operational expenses at IMAN. As has been noted in past years, we need to create sufficient reserves for maintenance and renovations that will be necessary in the times ahead. For example, we do not have sufficient reserves funds to repave the driveway which is showing signs of wear. Thanks to the available reserve funds, we were able to complete some of the much needed repair work, such as repairing the corroded drainage area on the upper parking lot, fix a source of leak on the roof, and paint the garbage enclosure fence.

This year we had a fundraising effort during Ramadhan to build awareness about Social Services committee activities and the need to cover the deficit that has resulted from significant increased demand by influx of refugee families to Seattle area. IMAN EC had a target of raising \$40,000 to cover the deficit for Social Services at that time, and Alhamdulillah we were able to reach the target. Community members donated over \$43,000 during Ramadhan towards this cause.

IMAN community has reached out and responded to various invitations to promote interfaith understanding and dialogue. We thank Br. Jawad Khaki for leading and representing IMAN for most of these efforts.

IMAN community continues to weather the effects of a bad economy. Rising social services disbursements are a significant portion of the IMAN expenditure. The Executive Committee appreciates the generosity of all donors in these tough economic times.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Mamoun Sakkal for donating his professional services to redesign IMAN's logo. We adopted the new logo created by Dr. Sakkal at the beginning of this year, thanks to Br. Farhan Ali for his initiative.



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## 1.2 Humanitarian Relief

In addition to the efforts lead by the IMAN Social Services Committee covered elsewhere in this report, as a community we have responded to financial appeals from various appeals around the world including economic hardship locally. This includes our responses to Asia Relief (Philippines) and Gaza Relief efforts, details of which can be found in the financial report.

## 1.3 Funeral Services

Members of IMAN have continued to provide funeral services when contacted. IMAN recommends the services of the House of Mercy in Kent. Because we see continued cases where bereaved families insist on burying at cemeteries in Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah and Lynnwood, there is a need to make arrangements with local cemeteries for a dedicated Muslim section, if they don't already have one. This is an opportunity to cooperate with other regional Islamic organizations.

Given the increased demand in recent years, we also would like to encourage more people to sign up and help out with funeral services. You can do so by joining the [imanfuneral@yahoogroups.com](mailto:imanfuneral@yahoogroups.com) email list, where notification is sent when volunteers are needed.

## 1.4 Aqd Nikah Services

As a sign of a growing community servicing increasing needs, IMAN conducted several Aqd Nikah ceremonies during the past year as a service to Muslims in the area. We have an established process in place that streamlines the Aqd using a draft marriage contract that was designed by the World Federation. The services provided include issuance of a Certificate for Islamic Nikah as well as the official Certificate of Marriage for the State of WA.

IMAN is also approached occasionally to witness and document the pronouncement of Islamic Talaq (Divorce). One area of expansion to be considered is Islamic matrimonial services to facilitate match making and marriage counseling.

## 1.5 Newsletter/Communication

Communication with IMAN community has been through announcements made at the IMAN Center, our web site and through email lists. The IMAN website continues with incremental improvements by adding relevant information on Islam. This is still a work in progress. This is an area with huge potential to impact the broader Seattle community's understanding of Islam and Muslims.

## 2 Sub-Committee Reports

Over the past year we have focused on the sub-committees described below. In order to expand our range of activities, we have also begun several additional projects which are described in Section 3. Below is a brief report on sub-committee activity.

## 2.1 Sunday School Committee

### Members

The school year for 2013-2014 began in the middle of September with the following individuals serving in the sub-committee:

- **Sameer Tejani** (Principal)
- **Ameen Eetemadi** (Vice Principal)
- **Ali Mansoor Naqvi** (Co-Administrator)
- **Farhan Ali** (Co-Administrator)
- **Farzana Noray** (Treasurer)
- **Ali Mansoor Naqvi** (Secretary - double duty)
- **Natasha Habib** (Parent Liaison)
- **Syed Ahmed Hasan** (Parent Liaison)

### Accomplishments

- **Curriculum & Class Structure:** We started using a new Islamic Studies curriculum based on the Sirat books. The curriculum divides Islamic Studies into four sections: Aqaid (Belief), Fiqh (Rules), Islamic History, and Akhlaq (morals). Because of this new curriculum, we more classes each aligned with the grade a student would be in regular school, and with a lower teacher to student ratio. Feedback from using this new curriculum has been positive.
- **Classes:** We had around 85 students enrolled this past year, and established ten classes (PreK – Grade 9) for each grade level in Quran Reading and Islamic Studies.
- **Salaat:** The salaat class was divided into two classes based on ability. This allowed each class to concentrate on specific skills and students took the opportunity to learn and move to the next level.
- **Teachers:** We had at least 18 teachers each teaching one specific class. It was also encouraging to see that 3 of the teachers were youth either in high school or college.
- **Teacher Training:** We had a successful teacher training session in January where about 10 teachers attended a weekend workshop and learnt a lot of new techniques to improve how they teach.
- **Finances and Tuition:** All parents paid their tuition this year. 10% of the families were on scholarship.
- **Milad-un-Nabi:** The school along with the programs committee used the Friday evening program to have a Milad-un-Nabi program exclusively run by the students. There were multiple presentations and songs performed by the students. There was also very good attendance across the whole community.
- **Recognitions:** The school conducted an end of the year awards ceremony for its students.
- **Parent Liaisons:** We had two active parent liaisons who tried different approaches to engage the parents with a movie night, different snack ideas and more.
- **Parent Volunteers:** Parent volunteer signup was much better this year than years past. We had 91% of parents completing at least 20 hours of parent service tasks and at least one family opting to pay \$200 as they were not able to make the committed hours.

- **Snack Time:** All students were provided a small snack every week. This helped keep students energized to complete the day. We also had monthly pizza lunches – something that students looked forward to. Our parent liaisons also tried having creative snacks (e.g. chicken wraps) a few times during the year which was received very well.
- **Safety:** We had a successful fire drill with the school evacuated under 3 minutes. In addition, we implemented a new security plan that ensures that parents and students can enter the building from the entrance downstairs.
- **Social events:** We had a decent mid-year social event at Grass Lawn Park. In addition we had our annual camp at Sound View camp in Longview with about 50 people attending.
- **Committee:** Having a well-balanced committee with two administrators really helped ensure the load was covered by all. We didn't have a secretary which required the Student Admin to cover that aspect.

### Challenges

- **Attendance and Timeliness:** We need to enforce timeliness and attendance as it affects other students who are regular and on-time. We tried to reward those students who showed up early with IMAN Dollars
- **Extending Learning beyond the school:** In order to supplement what is learnt on Sundays, parents need to find ways to enforce that during the regular week. For example, attending other programs or establishing new activities at IMAN where students would be exposed to Islamic beliefs and values.
- **Tuition and Fee payment:** Some parents are behind fees and it requires efforts by the Treasurer to follow up with them regularly.

### Opportunities

- We have students who are at a critical age where greater involvement in the community would fulfill their needs. We need to find ways to encourage them to participate and create opportunities for them to serve the community. These students are also looking for volunteer opportunities to fulfill their volunteer requirements at school.
- Many Sunday school children do not participate in other programs at IMAN. We need to find ways to create an environment for children to be able to participate in other IMAN programs so that they get an opportunity to enforce what they learn during the Sunday School (see integration above on some ideas). A good example was the participation we saw from the children reciting Qur'an during the Ramadhan programs or participating in the Muharram program.

### Recommendations

- Interaction with other IMAN sub-committees to put the focus on children during regular IMAN programs, so that the learning goes beyond the time spent at Sunday School and combines it with other programs at IMAN.

- Parents working together with students during the week to ensure that the education imparted on Sundays is reinforced during the rest of the week.
- Parent support group: create an environment where parents can meet regularly to learn from each other, support each other and the school.

The school would like to thank all the teachers and volunteers who dedicated their time in making 2013-2014 a successful year. The school committee for 2014-2015 appointed by the EC at the end of the school year was as follows:

- Sameer Tejani (Principal)
- Rubina Jafri (Vice Principal)
- Open (Co-administrator)
- Ali Mansoor Naqvi (Co-administrator)
- Farzana Noray (Treasurer)
- Tehmina Zaidi (Secretary)

The parents who were nominated by the parents' body to serve as parent liaisons included:

- Uzma Hussain
- Syed Ahmed Hasan

The new school year started on September 14th. We have more than 70 students enrolled this year and a good team of teachers and volunteers who ensure the smooth running of the school. We look forward to your commitment to help the school reach greater heights.

## 2.2 Program Committee

Alhamdulillah this has been another full year of vibrant activity with regards to Programs at IMAN. Program Committee work requires many hours of work from many people that may not be obvious to most. This not only includes PC meeting time, but outside of the meeting work to follow-up on various aspect of programming, not to mention significant speaker time investment.

### Members

The following were the IMAN Program Committee members for 2013/2014:

- **Robina Qureshi (chairperson)**
- **Jawad Khaki**
- **Meisam Seyed Aliroteh**

The following are the current IMAN Program Committee members for 2014/2015:

- **Robina Qureshi, Chair**
- **Meisam Seyed Aliroteh**

### Accomplishments

1. The following regular programs were conducted during the last year:
  - a. Maghrib/Isha prayers every night at IMAN.



- b. Dua Kumail program on Thursday evenings.
  - c. Friday Juma prayer and evening program.
  - d. Fajr prayer on Sunday mornings followed by Dua Sabah and breakfast.
  - e. Wiladah and Shahadah of the Ahlul Bait per WF calendar.
  - f. Themes of the months drew from recent events and occurrences around the world, and featured speakers that are well received by the community.
2. Conducted a successful Muharram program:
- a. Shaikh Arif Abdulhussain was the scheduled speaker for the month of Muharram. Aside from a few negative feedbacks, Shaikh Arif's lectures were extremely well received by the majority of the community, as was indicated by the survey conducted after Muharram.
  - b. Provided marsiya and latmiya recitation in Urdu, Arabic, Farsi, and English languages.
  - c. All-day programs for Ashura and Sham-e-Gharibaan
  - d. Great community support in preparing food for Ashura
  - e. Organized engaging programs and activities for the children during Muharram:
    - i. Organized three separate sessions for ages 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12.
    - ii. Provided children with lessons and teaching from the event of Karbalaa that was at their level, with small and engaging project to keep them interested.
    - iii. Presented of their hands-on projects and crafts to the community.
    - iv. Conducted a successful Who Is Hussain project using water bottles, which were distributed at the local college campuses.  
Created 72 Care Packages which were delivered to the First Congressional Church in Bellevue.
    - v. Marsiyah and Latmiyah recitation by the kids in the main prayer hall for the adults.
3. Conducted a successful Ramadan program:
- a. Shaikh Murtaza Bachoo was our guest speakers for the first two weeks of the month. His lectures were very well received. We managed to work out a plan with Az-Zahra Jamaat in Vancouver to broadcast the lectures of Sh. Bachoo for the second two weeks of the month.
  - b. Provided a detailed calendar of events to the community in advance which ensured smooth running of the programs and better participation.
  - c. Continued with the modified format of the programs from last year. Daily iftar was discontinued due to the late time of iftar, and instead was replaced with light refreshments.
  - d. Continued to provide full iftar on Fri/Sat/Sun nights as well as the special Qadr/Amaal nights.
  - e. All-night program on the eve of 23rd included sohur and ended with Fajr prayer with great participation.
  - f. High attendance at Eid prayer and breakfast.
  - g. Variety of adult programs such as Quran recitation for men and women in Arabic and English, dua recitation, and main lecture by the visiting speaker.
  - h. Variety of youth and children programs:
    - i. Qur'an Memorization/Tafseer for children and youth, where participants memorized and recited chapters from the 30th Juz and presented to the adults near the end of Ramadhan.

- ii. Daily Arabic Qur'an Recitation for children under 12.
  - iii. Various daily activities for the children including learning about Ramadhan, walking field trips to the park, educational movies, and more.
- 4. Participated in and organized various outreach events with other communities:
  - a. Events hosted for school students, church groups and community at large received very positive feedback from the guests.
- 5. Arranged for live broadcasting of various events such as Muharram, Ramadhan, and interfaith programs.
- 6. Provided weekly children's program lead by Br Hamed Esfahani, which has been very well received, with 10+ children attending every Friday.
- 7. Increased scholarly presence at IMAN via live or recorded lectures of various scholars throughout the year.

### Challenges

1. Need to promote the spirit of volunteering in the community. All of the challenges listed below require participation and volunteering from the community members to in order to resolve the challenges and attain success.
2. Need to ensure that IMAN attendees and visitors stay respectful of the volunteers who are enforcing IMAN rules and guidelines.
3. Need more members in the committee, particularly more female presence.
4. We need to grow our speaker pool.
5. Need to use opportunities throughout the year to improve recitation during Muharram & Ramadan.
6. Need to continue finding diverse, stimulating, and motivating content for various programs.
7. Need to devise the means to bridge the gap that exists between IMAN daily programs and the participation of the youth of the community particularly those at IMAN School.
8. Need to devise programs that are specially tailored for the youth and children.
9. Finding and selecting reciters that meet the need of all of the community members, given that we have a diverse and multi-cultural / multi-lingual community.
10. Need to implement a method to ensure the safety of the children, and to discipline and prevent them from running in the hallways, hurting themselves and damaging IMAN property.

### Opportunities

1. There is a need for programs that are specially tailored for the youth and children. The amount of participation from this age group is not satisfactory and IMAN needs to provide them with programs that are interesting and well suited.
2. We have a mounted camera in the main hall which simplifies live broadcasting of our Muharram/Ramadhan programs. Next step is to provide live transmission of all of our daily programs. We also need a simplified solution for archiving these recordings.

3. There is an opportunity to reach to the broader community and we need a more comprehensive set of programs geared towards this. An example would be providing more interfaith programs and inviting people of various faiths more often.

### Recommendations

1. Consider changing the format of the IMAN programs in order to encourage more participation. Some ideas for considerations are:
  - a. Moving Sunday school to Saturdays and combine Friday programs with the school on Saturday:
    - i. Should eliminate many conflicts with extra-curricular activities of the kids (soccer for example) and enable more kids to come to school.
    - ii. Should allow more people to join the programs on a weekend.
    - iii. Presents the opportunity for better merging of the school programs with IMAN programs.
  - b. Only have Friday programs on the weeks where we need to commemorate Wiladahs and Wafats. For all other Fridays we only conduct the Maghrib/Isha prayers as any other night of the week.
  - c. Combine the Friday programs with Thursday programs such that we would have Dua Kumail recitation followed by short speech/reflection from Quran or Nahj-ul-Balaghah, and finish with light refreshments.
  - d. Etc.
2. Increase committee membership/participants by recruiting from the parents of IMAN school kids:
  - a. Help with planning of children activities, especially for Ramadan and Muharram.
  - b. Obtain credits towards school volunteering hours.
  - c. Bridge the gap between PC and parents, and allow for brainstorming content that is more youth oriented.

## 2.3 Social Services Committee

### Members

- **Hamed Esfahani:** Chair, caseworker.
- **Samad Faghih:** caseworker.
- **Mohammad Nikjoo:** Treasurer.
- **Amer Kuba:** Committee member, caseworker assistant.
- **Sarah Rizvi:** Special case consultant.

### Accomplishments

1. Received and processed **56** unique applications for Social Service Aid
  - a. Many of the applicants required help and follow-up numerous times throughout the year.
  - b. **49** Applicants were approved to receive aid (based on how qualified their financial status was and whether they provided the needed information to the committee caseworkers)
    - i. Served **220+** Household members. **120+** Children
  - c. About a third of the applicants were returning applicants from previous years.
  - d. Majority of applicants are families with 1 or more children.
  - e. Families come from: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Tanzania, U.S., Kenya, Somalia, Afghanistan, and others.
  - f. Immigrant families, refugee families, single mothers, unemployed, disabled, domestic violence cases, homeless.

- g. Distributed over **\$100,000** for Social Services causes.
2. Caseworkers made over 160 visits to the families' homes
3. We have reduced emphasis on the Food bank donations in the last three years. We have encouraged those who are interested to donate food to purchase food cards instead. Most applicants prefer to receive food cards, even if they are in small amounts (\$5, \$10, \$20).
4. Identified local needy families (sayyid and non-sayyid) before Eid-ul-Fitr and distributed Fitra funds (Approx. \$6,800).

### Challenges

- Short staffed with caseworkers
- Increased number of applicants
- Increased demand for housing needs
- Increased amount of funds that each application is requesting (compared to previous years)
- Helping applicants with complicated cases that require ongoing follow-up at various times of day, including during regular business hours

### Opportunities

- We had a diverse set of applicants from various backgrounds and different areas in Seattle area
- Based on the feedback we get from the applicants, IMAN Social Services is becoming more known to the larger community. Applicants were referred to IMAN by other Masjids and organizations.

### Recommendations for next year

- Do a better job of informing IMAN Community about Social Services activities and contributions.
- Continue building on existing connections and build new connections with the local Social Services organizations, such as shelters, food banks, tent city.
- Expand volunteer capacity in Social Services Committee (new members and more involvement from existing members).
- Forecasted budget need for next year \$55,000.

## 2.4 Facilities Committee

### Members

**Hossein Rezaee:** Chair

**Hamed Esfahani:** Committee member

**NOTE:** For 2014-2015 fiscal year, Br. Hossein Rezaee will be stepping down as the chair of the Facilities committee due to work and family commitments requiring more of his time and attention. IMAN EC would like to thank Br. Rezaee for his service and we are grateful that he continues to help the committee whenever possible.

Br. Hamed will also be stepping down as a committee member.

There is a need for someone to lead the facilities committee and recruit more members to contribute.

### Accomplishments

- Arranged for professional carpet cleaning for all of upper level rooms

- Hired a company to do regular spraying of the building perimeters to prevent spiders and ants from coming inside (a problem we have for a couple of years now).
- The HVAC system internal filters were cleaned periodically and the external fillers (on the roof) replaced.
- Arranged janitorial service visits to do professional cleaning at least once a month. Extra cleaning was arranged for Ramadhan and Muharram.
- Maintained landscape areas throughout the year, and found temporary worker during summer months to water.
- Hired, scheduled, and made payment arrangements for professional services such regular window cleaning, landscaping, water plants, and repairs.
- Malfunctioning faucets in men's and ladies' bathrooms were fixed.
- Provided service for ongoing maintenance issues such as fixing leaks, cleaning HVAC filters, fixing light fixtures, door adjustments, renewing alarm license with City of Kirkland, responding to alarm calls, installation of decorative display pieces and other items requested by school or other subcommittees.

### Challenges

- Responding to a series of requests from various sub committees to make changes to the facilities, or purchase/install new furniture or fixtures (prioritizing outstanding tasks with limited sources).
- Encouraging community members to treat IMAN facility as their own home and help with maintenance.

### Opportunities

- Serving the community by providing a clean, organized, safe, and uplifting environment for our community. A facility that we can all be proud of and feel at home when attending programs.
- Growing the committee and enlisting more volunteers' help.
- Starting of IMAN Cleaning day effort. Planning to continue this on regular basis as a way of enlisting community support throughout the year.

### Recommendations for next year

- Increasing more community involvement & awareness in keeping the facilities clean and safe.
- Investigate addition of security cameras at the entrances.
- Paint parking lot curbs (yellow) and parking slot lines (White).
- Prepare Rental Agreement (RA) form.
- Refine our annual budget estimate for ongoing maintenance cost.
- Encourage facility committee members to assume a greater responsibility on the day to day maintenance and up keeping of the building.
- Improve signage throughout the building (interior).
- Arrange for carpet cleaning for the upper level.
- HVAC external duct insulation maintenance and up keeping.
- Arrange a regular "General Cleaning Day" every three to six months.
- Inspection and service of fire and security alarm system.
- Several of the faucets need to be repaired or replaced.
- Ladies bathroom floor drain leaks to downstairs when there is standing water.

## 2.5 Resource Center Committee

### Members

- **Syed Ali Mansoor Naqvi:** Chair
- **Faezeh Azim:** Volunteer

### New member for 2014-2015:

- **Mohsen Vakilian:** Volunteer

### Accomplishments

- All the books in the library have been labeled and entered into the online catalog, with help from Sr. Faezeh. From this catalog books can be searched, put on hold, and checked out by a librarian.
- The library is now open for borrowing books, with the online catalog running on LibraryWorld.com.
- A video library page has been added to the IMAN website, to make available the video resources we have on our IMAN Vimeo and Youtube catalogs.

### Challenges

- There are no other people on the resources committee, and there have been inconsistent volunteers, which makes progress slower. We need new folks with fresh ideas, and more bandwidth to help follow through on the original objectives of the committee and start new ones.

### Opportunities

- Br. Mohsen Vakilian has an excellent idea about taking books from the library and electronically cataloguing them on Google Books. This will require finding good candidate books, getting the requisite copyrights from owners, and then following Google Docs submission process.
- Once we have some digitally scanned books at Google Docs, follow up with Br. Jafar Shamim to do something similar with Amazon Kindle books if possible.
- There is content from IMAN programs and Sunday School, that we can make available to the students, parents and community via the IMAN website. We should add this content to the website.
- Add Librarian as a post that can be filled by Sunday School Volunteers who can help check-out and return books

### Recommendations for next year

- Work with IMAN school committee to add a librarian position that can finish cataloging the donated library books, and help with borrowing books.
- Get feedback for purchasing new titles for the library
- Improve IMAN video library catalog with video recordings from the speakers at IMAN.
- Improve IMAN website with information and content from IMAN programs and Sunday School, e.g. slides, PDFs etc.
- Finish the resource sections on the IMAN website. Work with IMAN School Committee to help with that.

## 2.6 Hospitality Committee

### Members

- **Kaniz Khaki:** Chair
- **Ali Sheriff:** Committee member
- **Hayatullah Haidar:** Committee member

### Accomplishments

- Successfully supported various events at IMAN - Muhurram majlis, Ramadhan programs, Eid programs, and special events.
- Continued community involvement without formal volunteer enlistment.
- Increased engagement with youth volunteers:
  - Started training youth volunteers in hospitality tasks with the goal of handover some hospitality responsibilities next year.
- Improved organization:
  - Published draft of ToR defining hospitality roles and responsibilities and services.

### Challenges

- Improve organization - Define Terms of Reference, and implement it.

### Opportunities

- See challenges above.

### Recommendations for next year

- Continue strengthen organization by encouraging and engaging younger members of the community to participate in Hospitality Committee activities.
- Complete training of youth volunteers and start handing over some of the hospitality responsibilities to them.

## 3 Additional Activities

### 3.1 Together We Build

Together We Build is an interfaith coalition of Christians, Jews, and Muslims seeking to find common ground and learning from one another as we work together to build houses for low-income families in East King County. In the past 12 years, each year we had sponsored two weeks of building together with Habitat for Humanity. In conjunction an interfaith service at one of our churches, synagogues or Islamic centers has been held. Each year there has been a one-day youth program on the build site. In addition, we have raised enough money to pay for the marvelous lunch served each day at the Habitat build, and sent additional funds to Habitat for Humanity. You can find more about Together We Build on <http://togetherwebuild.org/>.

Success of this cross group initially was because of the continuing and enthusiastic support from the leadership of the participating Jewish, Christian and Muslim congregations. TWB was originally formed as a response to the 9/11 events, and continues to be an example of what each of our faiths truly

teaches. We each have our differing beliefs, and certainly many points of both politics and religion on which we disagree. None of these, however, is a cause for violence. Together we assert that our various positions will be advanced and reconciled only through understanding, dialogue and good example. That is the message of TWB and the message we bring to the community in this year of remembrance. Each year, we have come together, both in prayer and in work, to bring this message forward. In the process we have been enriched by our association. We have also become a key component in Habitat for Humanity's efforts, working two weeks each year and collectively raising funds.

Sr. Robina Qureshi has been serving on the TWB Steering Committee, representing IMAN. This year TWB had 2 projects simultaneously working on the building relationships with the interfaith communities. The original members of the TWB had worked on the preparing a meal for the homeless while few new congregations had worked on the Habitat for Humanity construction site.

With TWB members (Aldersgate, First Congregational Church, TBT and IMAN) Sr. Robina Qureshi helped plan and served meals to 65 homeless people at the Tent City 4 at Temple B'Nai Torah. It was successful and well received by all the congregations. Furthering the outreach/interfaith efforts we may have other projects in the future with the same group.

Together We Build is in need of new leadership, if we are to continue the work that has been going on for over 13 years now. Several of the volunteers who have led the TWB effort over the last several years have changes coming in their lives that suggest they should take a step back. Besides, any program that is to sustain itself needs to have some turnover to avoid burnout. That is the position we are now in.

It is very important for IMAN and the local Muslim community in general to continue to support and participate in the TWB effort.

### **3.2 Outreach Efforts**

The IMAN Community has continued to reach out to provide reliable and dependable information about Islam and Muslim to counter the concerning wave of Islamophobia. Reliable sources of information about Islam and opportunities for others to interact with practicing Muslims are desperately needed if Americans are to have a greater understanding and respect for Islam and for Muslims. We continue to build awareness as well as relationships with more organizations in the Greater Seattle area in the process.

Bridge building to our Muslim brothers and sisters following other schools of thought is essential to nurturing a harmonious diverse Muslim community in the Greater Seattle area. Effort initiated last year by Br. Jawad Khaki where he reached out to MAPS needs to be continued with MAPS as well as other Islamic (Shia and non-Shia) Centers.

Given (the often) negative coverage of news and events around the Muslim world combined with unfortunate misinformation about Islam and fear of Muslims, IMAN interfaith and intra-faith outreach are important areas to expand IMANs activities. In our continued efforts, we would like to maintain priority in engaging with other faith organizations with hands-on experiences especially for our youth



and seniors. There are few options being considered but we need volunteers support from the community to move forward. We have options to help build Care Packages for the homeless, Ladies Day and Evening Circles, Pea-Patch or a farm Gleaning and Park Trail Maintenance are just few ideas that need more of your support.

### **Accomplishments**

#### **Islam 101 Presentations and Discussions with various groups hosted at IMAN:**

- IMAN maintains an open door policy to all its programs and activities. Numerous students from local schools and colleges have visited and participated in IMAN programs throughout the year.
- IMAN hosted the following organizations;: Lord of Life Lutheran Church (01/05/2014), Forrest Ridge 6th Graders (3/14/2014), Covenant Shores Residents (09/2014), Bellevue College Students (11/07/2014)

#### **Talks on Islam and/or Muslim Perspective given off-site**

- Br. Jawad Khaki visits local area churches and educational institutions on as need basis. During the last year this included: Forrest Ridge 6th Grade Class (03/03/2014), Northlake Unitarian Church (09/28/2014), and Bellevue College Students with Sr. Kaniz Khaki (10/14/2014)

#### **Who Is Hussein**

During the last 12 months, IMAN members, under the able leadership of Sr. Fatema Hirji, Br. Mustufa Jafri and Sr. Robina Qureshi carried out the "Who is Hussain" campaign for 1435 AH and 1436 AH. IMAN community members distributed bottled water outside college campuses and made care packages including toothpastes, toothbrushes, deodorant, lip balms, hand sanitizers, socks and soap.

#### **Community networking**

Br. Jawad continues to represent IMAN in the following forums:

- Together We Build Congregational Leaders
- Coordination with F.I.R.E (as his schedule permits)
- Inter-religious Coalition to Abolish Human Trafficking through the Lens of Compassion (as his schedule permits)

### **Challenges**

Over commitment of the IMAN members inclined toward outreach to many other activities in the running of IMAN.

### **Opportunities**

- Several events have been scheduled at the IMAN Center as well as off premise presentation and classes in 2015. Educating our neighbors and colleagues on Islam and Muslim continues to be a key opportunity in which more IMAN members can participate.

- Improve resources available on the <http://iman-wa.org>

### Recommendations

- When qualified people with a strong commitment and time available can be identified, classes related to specific Islamic beliefs and practices should be offered on a regular basis.
- There need to be well thought out, well supplied and easily accessible resources available for visitors, those interested in learning about Islam or Muslims, and for new converts.
- Stimulating discussion among IMAN members interested in these areas is recommended as a means for clarifying outreach interests, level of commitment, and resources needed. Recruitment of IMAN members to be involved in outreach efforts must be done in the context of their existing commitments. Individuals interested in reaching out tend to be the same members who are already heavily involved in multiple IMAN activities.
- There is a continuing need for improved coordination between Muslim Communities as part of Greater Seattle Council of Muslim Communities.

## 3.3 Philosophy Study Circle

### Members

- **Hamed Esfahani** – Facilitator

### Accomplishments

- The Philosophy Study Circle met regularly on Wednesday evenings, with 5 to 9 participants.
- After completing several books on Islamic Philosophy in the last few years, the PSC group decided at the end of last year to transition into study of Al-Mizan Tafsir (exegesis) of the Holy Qur'an by Allameh Seyyed Tabatabai. We use the English translation as a primary source of our reading and we refer to the Arabic and Farsi texts when further inquiry is needed.

### Challenges

- Our key challenge is to approach the philosophical material in a way that the participants can engage with and digest. Much of the material is challenging and mentally intense, and so we have a constant pedagogical problem.

### Opportunities

- The key opportunity that we identified was to improve our knowledge of Islam and the Holy Qur'an through the study of Al Mizan by Allameh Tabatabai, one of the foremost philosophers of Islamic Philosophy.
- Insha'Allah our study of Islamic philosophy during course of last few years will serve us as a tool to better understand and navigate through Al Mizan.

### Recommendations

- Continue building awareness about the program within IMAN and provide a forum for continuing studies of Islamic philosophy open to the community.

### 3.4 Graduate School Scholarship Fund

IMAN provides a host of community services to anyone who is in need, and now it includes educational scholarships for Graduate Students. Creation of this scholarship was an effort that started in 2011 and became more widely advertised in 2012. The Dr. and Mrs. Amir-Hossein Naini Graduate School Scholarship Fund is a graduate scholarship fund that will award up to \$5000 to a qualified Muslim student attending an accredited institution of higher learning in the United States. Applications for scholarship awards from this fund will only be open to those who are U.S. citizens, have permanent legal resident status in the United States or have a valid student visa to attend graduate school in the United States. This scholarship fund exists to assist students seeking a graduate degree in the United States who have shown the potential for great vision, leadership and professionalism in serving Muslim and non-Muslim communities. We ask and encourage you to share this information with those Muslim students who have professional and personal ambition to be a source of inspiration to all, including the Muslim community. For more information, please see: <http://www.iman-wa.org/scholarships>.

Dr. and Mrs. Amir-Hossein Naini, in whose name this scholarship has been established, are Iranian immigrants who came to the United States to pursue an advance medical education in the 1950s - a time when there was little community support available for such individuals. Having chosen to practice medicine and reside in the state of Washington for over 50 years, they raised three children, all of whom achieved doctorate level degrees.

This was the second year we started receiving applications. Two applicants were selected to be interviewed in person this year, out of which one female applicant who is pursuing a graduate degree at Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences was awarded \$5000.

## 4 Executive Committee Recommendations for 2014/2015

Our recommendations for the coming year are presented below.

### 4.1 Volunteer capacity

A non-profit community organization like IMAN thrives because of its volunteers. There is no shortage of novel and exciting ideas that can be worked on. We need to reach out to more people and encourage them to volunteer their time and ideas to help plan and organize activities (current and proposed). We are also open to ideas on how we can inculcate the value of volunteerism in our children and have them more involved in helping at IMAN. We look forward to a strong volunteer base at IMAN as part of a thoughtful spiritually vibrant, caring sharing community.

This year we explored the idea of hiring an administrator to reduce the workload on our volunteers for some routine tasks that need regular attention. The EC compiled an inventory of tasks and their corresponding time estimates from all subcommittees, focusing on tasks that can be delegated to an administrator. After presenting this information to the IMAN Board, the Board has approved the idea of hiring a part-time administrator for 20 hours per week with a budget of about \$17,000.

Below is the job description of the position that we recommend to fill immediately in the upcoming year:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Computer literate in Word and Excel and understanding of QuickBooks is preferred
- Excellent telephone etiquettes
- Good time management skills
- Dependable and thorough
- Available to be present at IMAN Center in person several hours a week

## 4.2 Children and Youth

Keeping with the foundational focus of our organization, the top priority for IMAN has to be in the development of our children and our youth. A few steps were taken in the past year, and a lot more can be done to engage with our children and youth. Integration with school and outdoor community activities are some of the ideas that are being planned this year. In addition, all subcommittees need to explore how they can engage more with the children and youth. Community members also need to be recruited to help plan and lead activities that involve our children. When designing programs throughout the year, including the weekly Friday evening program, we need to keep the children and youth in mind as top priority. In addition to ensuring that we have enriching programs for adults, in the upcoming year we need to have activities and programs tailored for children (age group 5 to 14 years). We should explore having a variety of activities that are more youth oriented and promote interaction and sense of community amongst the youth.

## 4.3 Increased Scholarly Presence

As mentioned in 2011-2012 AGM report on the topic of *Resident Scholar* (section 1.6), and further discussed during last year's AGM, significant time and energy has been dedicated to further explore the idea of having a resident scholar at IMAN. Many options were evaluated and valuable insights were gained from those discussions. It has become clear that realizing the goal of having a resident scholar requires a great deal of upfront financial and volunteer capacity. Furthermore, we are stretched thin with regards to both of these aspects. Based on the insights we gained from the discussions in 2012, we believe it is possible to make progress towards this goal with the capacity that we do have. We decided that we can start with more manageable steps such as augmenting our existing programming with more regular and frequent visits by scholars. This way, we can take incremental steps towards our ultimate goal of having a continuous scholarly presence at IMAN. With guidance from the Board, the EC increased the programming budget last year in order to achieve this objective. The EC proposes that this remains as one of the top three priorities for the upcoming year.