



## Ithna-asheri Muslim Association of the Northwest

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# IMAN Annual Report of Activities 2009-2010

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# 1 Executive Committee Report for 2009/2010

IMAN Executive Committee expresses gratitude and thanks to its membership for the opportunity given to it to serve and to complete the term ending September 30th, 2010. This report outlines our progress and activities since October 2009. 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 2009/2010 was another incredible year in the growth of richness of activities being offered and pursued by the IMAN community as detailed in later sections of this report.

The following observations augment what is covered in sub-committee reports.

The following were the IMAN Executive Committee members for 2009/2010:

Mohamed Jawad Khaki	President
Sameer Tejani	Vice President
Sanaa (Joy) Carey*/Sameer Tejani	Secretary
Kristen Jawad*/Meisam Aliroteh*	Assistant Secretary
Mohammad Nikjoo	Treasurer
Moustafa Nouredine*	Observer

\* Br. Meisam Aliroteh and Br. Moustafa Nouredine were appointed by the board to serve on the EC following the resignations by Sr. Sanaa Joy Carey and Sr. Kristen Jawad.

## 1.1 Executive Committee Priorities

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

In addition to the priority focus discussed below, IMAN community has had to respond to various contemporary issues such as the controversies around Islamic Center in Manhattan, NY, burning of the Qur'an in Florida and continued wave of intolerance towards Islam and Muslims in North America. It is clear we need to continue building bonds of understanding with other local communities as we have been since our formation.

Significant executive committee bandwidth was also expended in trying to resolve what turned out to be irreconcilable differences in organizational direction and governance model. Despite these difficult challenges, IMAN continued to function as a stable organization providing valuable services to its membership and community at large.

### Sustainability

IMAN community like any other community has had to weather the effects of a bad economy. As is evident from the local social services disbursement from the financial report, we have had more applications for assistance than years past. We encourage all to be generous and help us serve the needy as we ride out the tough economic times.

We are encouraged by increasing contributions to the operational expenses at IMAN. Our goal is to have sufficient funds for one year's expense which we seem to have met this year. However, we also need to plan for creating sufficient reserves for maintenance and renovations. As covered in the Facilities subcommittee report, we can incur major expenses at any time (e.g., moisture leak we had in the lower floor) which resulted in significant expense.

IMAN Community has witnessed more new people step up to serve in key positions. As a growing organization with increasing demands and expectations of it, IMAN needs to continue developing leadership capacity and also put in place a succession plan for long term sustainability. A few key people at IMAN have been devoting their services for several years now and they carry with them critical organizational history and know how. We encourage more members to volunteer in different subcommittees which is how we will develop the necessary leadership capacity to sustain the organization for the long term.

### **Children and Youth**

As a community we must make the children and youth a priority. Whilst historically there is enthusiasm for youth programs during Ramadhan and Muharam, this enthusiasm is not sustained through the rest of the year. Programs committee has developed a proposal that we recommend for the coming year. We are encouraged to see the youth of the community coming together to organize themselves and participate in activities. We are also encouraged with the parent participation in the school.

IMAN subcommittees should figure out a way to engage the youth in various activities and encourage them to participate. In addition we would like all parents to offer ideas, act as mentors, and volunteer to lead and coordinate and also participate in these various activities.

### **Operational Excellence**

During the last year, several subcommittees updated their terms of references to document the organizational learning and experience of the past few years. The annual review and revision of terms of reference is a good practice that needs to be adopted by all subcommittees as part of nurturing a culture continuous self-improvement. This will also help enhance our day to day operational guidelines so that they are in keeping with the actual running of the organization.

As our organization grows and matures, we need to devise formalized policies, procedures and recommend a code of conducts for all our members, volunteers and office bearers.

Coordination between different sub-committees needs to improve.

The IMAN website has been redesigned. We have received positive feedback on the structure and layout. We still need to provide additional content to make it easier for people to find reliable and dependable information on Islam, Muslims and IMAN. This is an area with huge potential to impact the broader Seattle community's understanding of Islam and Muslims.

The treasurer has also been posting monthly financial statements on the notice board to provide financial transparency on an on-going basis in addition to annual reporting done at the AGM. Alhamdulillah, we have seen some new people stepping up to help in the different aspects of running IMAN. We need to continue recruiting, developing and retaining talent.

### **Resource Center**

The Resource Center subcommittee has been formed and clear terms of reference established. . For the resource center to achieve the vibrancy that is necessary, more members in the community must step forward to bring this to life. There is a great need for reliable information on Islam and Muslims.

### **Increase Relevance – towards living Islam**

Several new programs and activities were undertaken this year to appeal to diverse audiences details of which can be found under subcommittee reports and Additional Activities. We greatly increased our speaker pool to bring exposure to a diversity of views and topics.

### **Resident Aalim**

IMAN Board has taken on the task to define the qualities and qualifications for a resident aalim who can serve the spiritual and religious needs of our community. Given the discussion so far, this is a task that will require careful planning and extensive search process and will require some time to complete.

### **Diverse multicultural Islamic community**

IMAN continues to thrive as a diverse multicultural Islamic community following the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt as evident from the diversity of the programs, audiences and speaker pool.

### **Matrimonial**

Other than performing Aqd-Nikah services, this is an area that hasn't gotten a lot of attention given our current capacity. Establishing a matrimonial match making will require networking with various Islamic communities (in North America and around the world).

## **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 Haiti Earthquake Relief and Pakistan Flood Relief, 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. However, we continue to see cases where bereaved families insist on burying at cemeteries in Bellevue, Issaquah and Lynnwood. In those cases we have assisted with ghusl, kafan and salaatul mayyit for the deceased. We need to work with these cemeteries to establish a Muslim burial section.

[imanfuneral@yahogroups.com](mailto:imanfuneral@yahogroups.com) e-mail list has been set up and is operational. This list includes several people from IMAN and IECS. We encourage more people to sign up to volunteer.

#### 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 established a process to streamline 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.

[imannikah@yahogroups.com](mailto:imannikah@yahogroups.com) e-mail list has been set up and is operational. Br. Sameer Tejani and Br. Jawad Khaki are the people who currently officiate the Aqd Nikah ceremonies.

#### 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 redesigned website also has updated information about upcoming programs. Social media offers new opportunities to keep the community updated about events and activities at IMAN that should be explored. We need to improve and/or establish on-boarding process to help new people into the community to learn about our organization, activities and ways they can participate and volunteer.

## 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 2009-2010 began in the middle of September with the following individuals serving in the sub-committee:

- **Homa Azadi** (Principal)
- **Rouhollah Rahmani** (Vice Principal)
- **Mehboob Ali Khaki** (Administrator)
- **Shahina Piyarali** (Treasurer)
- **Tanzeela Merchant** (Secretary)
- **Moustafa Nouredine** (Parents' liaison)

#### **Accomplishments**

- **Classes:** The primary goal of the school is to conduct regular Islamic classes for students. We had over 80 students this past year, and established seven classes for each age group in Quran Reading, Prayer, Akhlaq, Fiqh, Quranic Studies, and Islamic History. We also had a supplementary class for older students to catch up on basic knowledge of Islam.

- **Curriculum:** A curriculum guide was formulated to map out the goals for students through each age group. Teachers were presented with a set of learning goals that needed to be reached by the end of year. But we did not have standard text books for each class and the learning goals were not enforced at the executive level. These are gaps that we will be addressing for this next school year.
- **Finances and Tuition:** We moved finances to a spreadsheet for better tracking and regular tuition was collected from students. Families that could not afford tuition were granted scholarships.
- **Activities:** Several activities were planned during Muharram, Hajj, and Milad-un-Nabi. The school celebrated Eid-ul-Adha. This year a boys youth club was also established, and a sisters youth club was planned (but not executed).
- **Teacher training:** We conducted 2 sessions to train teachers, from a professional educator.
- **Recognitions:** The school conducted an end of the year awards ceremony for its students.
- **Parent Volunteers:** For the first time this year, parent were required to donate 20 hours of their time throughout the year to volunteer for the school. This was a tremendous success, although there are still gaps that we need to address to make the process more efficient. There were monthly parents' meetings where various issues about running the school were discussed.
- **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.
- **Regular Meetings:** The school committee met once monthly to plan and execute school projects and daily tasks.
- **School-wide testing:** There were three testing periods during the school year where students are evaluated on what they have learned. This has helped with aligning the whole school with exam weeks.
- **Safety:** The first fire drill was conducted, which went very smoothly. More drills need to be scheduled so as to improve safety.

## Challenges

- **Curriculum:** The curriculum needs to be more standard. We need standard books and to enforce the learning goals for each class.
- **Parents committee:** We need to reach a higher level of participation from a broader set of parents. How to encourage/enforce this is a key challenge.
- **Youth Club:** Through a grass roots effort, IMAN now has a youth club for boys, for out of school activities. There was effort to establish one for girls, but it was not complete.
- **Teacher training:** This next year, we plan to establish teacher training once a month.
- **Prayer class:** The prayer class was too loosely enforced this past year. Students and parents would not consider this class as part of the school day and many would leave early or not participate. We will be enforcing praying class as part of the regular and required schedule.

- **Integration into the IMAN Community:** The parents and students need to be more integrated into the IMAN community. This includes participation in the Friday programs and establishing other programs as well.

### 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.
- Many Sunday school parents do not participate in other programs at IMAN. We need to find ways to create an environment for parents to be able to participate in other IMAN programs so that the children get an opportunity to enforce what they learn during the Sunday school.

### Recommendations

- Parents working together with students during the week to ensure that the education imparted on Sundays is reinforced during the rest of the week.
- Getting adequate training for teachers to best impart their knowledge and inspire the students to seek more.
- Enforcing school policies around attendance so as to not interrupt classes.
- Interaction with other IMAN sub-committees to get parents and students more involved with different aspects of IMAN, so that the learning goes beyond the time spent at Sunday school and combines it with other programs at IMAN.
- Parent support group: Create an environment where parents can meet regularly to support each other and the school.

The school would like to thank all the teachers and volunteers who dedicated their time in making 2009-2010 a successful year. The school committee for 2010-2011 nominated at the end of the school year was as follows:

- Rouhollah Rahmani (Principal)
- Farhat Tejani (Vice Principal)
- Zina Alnoor (Administrator)
- Shahina Piyarali (Treasurer)
- Tanzeela Merchant (Secretary)
- Moustafa Nouredine (Parents liaison)

The new school year started on September 26th. 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

- **Meisam Seyed Aliroteh**, Chair
- **Jawad Khaki**
- **Moustafa Nouredine**
- **Syed Mohammad Wasti**
- **Alireza Hannani**
- **Hoda Adel**

## Accomplishments

1. The following regular programs were conducted during the last year:
  - a. Maghrib/Isha prayers every night at IMAN.
  - b. Dua Tawassul Program on Tuesday evenings.
  - c. Dua Kumail program followed by Reflections from Nahjul Balaghah on Thursday evenings.
  - d. Friday Jumuah prayer and evening program.
  - e. Fajr prayer on Sunday mornings followed by Dua Sabah and breakfast.
  - f. Wiladah and Shahadah of the Ahlul Bait per Islamic calendar.
  - g. 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. Br Hassanain Rajabali's presentations were well received by young and old alike.
  - 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
3. Conducted a successful Ramadan program:
  - a. Sayed Hadi Al-Qazwini was our guest speaker for the month drawing lessons from Prophet Yusuf A.S.
  - b. Fiqh sessions conducted on Sundays were appreciated by many but the attendance could have been better.
  - c. Detailed calendar of events to the community one week in advance ensured smooth running of the programs and better participation.
  - d. Daily Iftar and guest speaker attracted the highest attendance ever.
  - e. Variety of programs such as Quran recitation for men and women in Arabic and English, dua recitation, and programs for children catered to different audiences.
  - f. All-night program on the eve of 23rd included sohur and ended with Fajr prayer with great participation.
  - g. Highest ever attendance at Eid prayer and breakfast.
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.
  - b. 9/11 interfaith Quran reading service at the Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church.
  - c. Intra-faith events throughout the year attracted participation of other Muslim communities.



5. Revised and updated a major portion of the Terms of Reference.
6. Recruited new committee members and have a new committee in place.
7. Arranged for live broadcasting of various events such as Muharram, Ramadhan, and interfaith programs.
8. Updated the PowerPoint presentations for few daily Duas with accompanying video clips to have more engaging programs.

### **Challenges**

1. Need more female presence in the committee
2. We need to grow our speaker pool.
3. Need to use opportunities throughout the year to improve recitation during Muharram & Ramadan.
4. Need to continue finding diverse, stimulating, and motivating content for various programs.
5. 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.
6. Need to devise programs that are specially tailored for the youth and children.
7. 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.
8. 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 need a better and simplified mechanism for providing live broadcasting of our programs. By simplifying this step we can 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. Recruit two more members for the committee.

2. Explore options of having remote speakers in order to grow our speaker pool, and to provide more diverse content.
3. Create a pool of local reciter for various Islamic occasions and events such as Ramadan and Muharram.
4. Create special programs at IMAN for children and youth. The following are a few ideas that can be explored by the Program Subcommittee as well as other subcommittees at IMAN:

1. Fun events for the youth
  - After school activities (indoor and outdoor)
  - Sports & activities teams
  - Monthly birthday party for kids and the religious figures in that month
  - Nasheed group
  - Cooking classes
2. Complimentary educational activities
  - Tutoring for regular school homework
  - Competitions on Hifz Quran and Recitation
  - Daily Madrasah (after school and/or before Isha prayer)
  - Book club → emulate from the life of the Ahlul Bayt
  - College preparation & counseling (writing essays, choosing classes, SAT classes, ...)
    - Create opportunities for the college youth to share experiences with others
  - Youth speaker development program – toastmasters program for the youth
  - 20-30 min programs per week focused on Quran (in addition to School)
  - Talk about historical events (e.g., stories about Imams, etc.)
  - Parental education events/classes
    - Understanding the American education system
    - Classes for the new Muslims
3. Enriching existing programs to make them appealing to youth
  - Stories (Qur’anic & about religious characters) for the kids while the main lecture is in progress
    - Engage the kids by for example asking them to make a play/painting/etc. about the topics that are covered in the stories
  - Motivational guest speakers for the youth
  - Once a month, an event for parents-kids-IMAN School (e.g., Sat Oct 30<sup>th</sup>, 3-6pm about Hajj)
4. Nurture a culture of service:
  - Ask the kids to do Adhan, Dua, etc.
  - Delegate responsibilities to organize to older youth
  - Assign them with task such as serving food, cleaning up, etc.

- Cooking at the shelter (every month send one kid from school for shelter cooking)
- 5. IMAN Youth (teen) group
  - Run by the teens but guided by the adults
  - Organize by age groups and let the groups decide on the activities they want to do
  - Summer internships & Study/Volunteer locally/abroad programs
  - Debate teams (Discuss landmark/controversial/contemporary issues)
  - Newsletter club
  - Cross community (interfaith & intra-faith) networking & programs to foster relationship between youth
  - Mentoring & support network

## 2.3 Social Services Committee

### Members

- **Homa Azadi:** Co-Chair, caseworker.
- **Hamed Esfahani:** Co-Chair, caseworker, treasurer.
- **Sumaira Qureshi:** Committee member, food bank lead.
- **Alireza Hannani:** Committee member, Feed the Hungry program coordinator.
- **Arash Abdi:** Volunteer.

### Accomplishments

1. Received and processed 26 applications for Social Service Aid
  - a. Many of the applicants required help and follow-up numerous times throughout the year. Some families had as many as 7 cases opened during the year.
  - b. 21 Applicants were approved to receive aid.
  - c. About 60% of the applicants were returning applicants from previous years.
  - d. Majority of applicants are families with 1 or more children.
  - e. Distributed over \$25,000 for Social Services causes.
2. Continued running the food bank as in previous years, however, most of the food this year was donated to local food banks and Tent City. Most applicants prefer to receive food cards, even if they are in small amounts (\$5, \$10, \$20).
3. Identified local needy families (saweed and non-saweed) before Eid-ul-Fitr and distributed Fitra funds.
  - a. Fitra funds were distributed to 8 local families, with over 20 children.
4. Cooked warm meals for over 300 people at the Sacred Hearts Shelter in Seattle. A group of volunteers from IMAN participated in cooking dinners 10 times throughout the year (same as 2008-2009).
5. IMAN Social Services was a contributing member of the Day of Dignity event, in which many Muslim organizations throughout Seattle area cooperate to feed the homeless in Seattle.
6. Purchased and collected warm cloth from community members during winter and delivered to local tent city.

## Challenges

1. Short staffed with caseworkers
2. Increased number of applicants
3. Increased amount of funds that each application is requesting (compared to previous years)
4. Helping applicants with complicated cases that require ongoing follow-up during regular business hours

## Opportunities

1. We had a diverse set of applicants from various backgrounds and different areas in Seattle area
2. 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

1. Recruit one or two additional caseworkers.
2. Do a better job of informing IMAN Community about Social Services activities and contributions.
3. Continue building on existing connections and build new connections with the local Social Services organizations, such as shelters, food banks, tent city.
4. Provide more opportunities for members of the community to help with Social Services needs, even if they are not members of the committee. Privacy concerns need to be addressed carefully in these cases.
5. Work on long-term and sustainable plans to help those who are in need of jobs, not just emergency help.

## 2.4 Facilities Committee

### Members

- **Hamed Esfahani:** Chair, main point of contact.
- **Meisam Aliroteh:** Committee member, A/V, Access to building.
- **Arash Abdi:** Committee member.
- **Hossein Rezaee:** Committee member.
- **Alireza Hannani:** Committee member.
- **Samad Faghieh:** Consultant to the committee (not a member).

### Accomplishments

- Recruited 2 new members.
- Replaced the entire flooring for the lower-level multi-purpose room. Removed Bamboo floor with and installed water resistant material that can withstand the moisture levels of the concrete slab.
- Installed pedestal sign along State Street (permit from City of Kirkland was obtained late last year).
- Installed permanent shelves in the upper level storage room.
- Hired professional cleaning crew for monthly cleaning maintenance of the building.
- Investigated long-term solutions for repairing the parking lot surface. Obtained 2 professional estimates.

- Investigated solutions for fixing the standing water problem by the east side of the building. Hired contractor to fix the landscape sloping issue this fall.
- Investigated and obtained professional bid for installing a ceiling mounted camera for recording & broadcasting live programs. To be implemented in fall of 2010.

### Challenges

- Fixing the moisture damaged floor in the multi-purpose room, while keeping school operational.
- Responding to a series of requests from various sub committees to make changes to the facilities, or purchase/install new furniture or fixtures.

### Opportunities

- Establishing this new committee and getting new members of the community involved.
- Having the opportunity to provide better service to the larger community in the new facilities:
  - More classes on Sundays
  - More requests for Memorial services
  - Larger and better organized gatherings for Eids

### Recommendations for next year

- Increasing more community involvement & awareness in keeping the facilities clean and safe.
- Work out the Terms of Reference for subcommittee.
- Estimate an annual budget and ongoing maintenance cost.
- Encourage more involvement from committee members by having regular meetings.
- Work with IMAN EC & Board to develop a rental policy.
- Paint touch-up maintenance needed throughout the building.
- Investigate addition of security cameras at the entrances

## 2.5 Resource Center Committee

### Members

- **Mohammad Nikjoo:** Chair
- **Afshan Abbas**
- **Jawad Khaki**
- **Mehboob Khaki**
- **Meisam Seyed Aliroteh**
- **Mohammad Fani**
- **Syed Ali Mansoor Naqvi**
- **Syed Mohammad Wasti**

### Accomplishments

- Terms of reference for resource center have been drafted and approved by the board
- Catalogued all existing books in the library
- Sub-committee has been formed
- Facebook page created to share material on-line
- Vimeo archive of >250 hours of resources on Qur'an, Nahjul Balagha and articles on interfaith topics
- Design for About Islam tab on IMAN web site completed

- Contact established with King County Kirkland Librarian
- Defined categories for book collection in the library
- Identified IT needs for library
- Identified target destination for Urdu books

### Challenges

- Develop relationship with respected authorities on Islam and Muslims
- Volume of work to review new material suitable to share with others
- Volunteers to operate the on-premise and on-line library collections
- Community member motivation in helping establish the library

### Opportunities

- Develop relationships with other libraries
- Archive all programs at IMAN
- Serve broader community base of Muslims and non-Muslims
- Provide a useful service for IMAN members: Children, Youth and adults
- IMAN Resource Center could be a useful resource for Sunday school

### Recommendations for next year

- Solicit donations to help develop the IMAN Resource center
- Help recruit volunteers to manage and operate on-line and on-premise library resources
- Promote IMAN Resource Center

## 3 Additional Activities

### 3.1 Hospitality

#### Members

- **Ali Sheriff:** Co-Chair.
- **Kaniz Khaki:** Co-Chair.

#### Accomplishments

- Successfully supported various events at IMAN - Muhurram majlis, Ramadhan programs, Eid programs, special events.
- Lot of community involvement without formal volunteer enlistment.

#### Challenges

- Better organization - Define ToR. Grow core team. Organized list of volunteers. Organized process and services.

#### Opportunities

- See challenges above.

#### Recommendations for next year

- Define ToR

- Grow core team
- Organize process and services.

## 3.2 Farsi School

### Members

- **Ghadeer Baghai** - Principal
- **Hamed Esfahani** - Administrator
- **Hossein Rezaee** - Parent Liaison
- **Mohammad Nikjoo** - EC Liaison/ Treasurer

### Accomplishments

- With limited advertising we've had at least 55 students registered every term since establishment of school in March 2009.
- Parents and students continue to be enthusiastic and cooperative about the Farsi School.
- There were a total of 4 regular classes for ages 5 to 17 and three adult classes.
- We had 6 experienced volunteer teachers and 8 assistants.
- The focus of teaching has been mainly on basic Farsi: Reading, writing, and speaking.
- Secured a large shipment of textbooks from overseas.
- Recruited new volunteer teachers.
- Conducted a survey and received good responses with relatively high participation from Parents, Students, and teachers.

### Challenges

- Number of interested students to register continues to grow, which is a pleasant surprise and challenge.
- Forming and group of experienced volunteer teachers.
- Filling the empty teaching positions as a result of two teachers leaving.
- Compilation of text books from various sources, within U.S. and overseas.
- Timing limitations presented by having to coordinate with other school activities at IMAN on Sundays.
- Long term succession plan for recruiting leadership.
- The school administration was short staffed.

### Opportunities

- An opportunity to create a safe atmosphere for children in our larger community to engage with one another.
- An opportunity for a more diverse set of families to get to know the IMAN Community and also bond with their Islamic heritage.
- An opportunity for IMAN Center to become a learning center for larger community.
- An opportunity to serve the educational interests of the greater Seattle community.

### Recommendations for next year

- Conduct a survey to collect feedback from students/parents/teachers.
- Teacher training.
- Have more opportunities for parents and teachers to communicate and share ideas.

- Formalize existing processes and enforce policies to create a professional and serious teaching environment.
- Have a standardized testing for new student's placement.
- Farsi language proficiency to qualify for a foreign language college credit.

### 3.3 Qur'anic Arabic Classes

#### Members

- **Rayyan Jaber** – Class Facilitator

#### Accomplishments

- The class facilitator and a core team of students meet regularly at the IMAN center.

#### Challenges

- Lack of a good reference text book:
  - While having weekly class presentations made sure the content is very relevant to the participants, this takes way too much time from the facilitator. It also makes it harder, due to time constraints, to give homework, reinforcement material, etc. for the participants to practice with at home.
- Relatively low attendance rate:
  - Low attendance rate could also suggest that there is not a lot of interest in the community to learn the Arabic language. It's hard to be conclusive here since no official survey was conducted.
  - It is a challenge because it is hard to sustain a program when the number of interested people is too low.

#### Opportunities

The classes encouraged the participants to connect what they are learning with Qur'anic verses and supplications they recite after prayers, etc. Indeed, this is the main long-term goal of the classes, and is a key opportunity for IMAN center to be an educational beacon to both Muslims and non-Muslims in the greater Seattle area.

#### Recommendations

- While the sample text books surveyed so far do not seem to be good enough to be used as standard textbooks at IMAN, we need to look for more books, or start compiling previous lecture notes to a book that would be available at registration time, if such classes are to be offered again.
- It is beneficial for IMAN library to have reference materials, such as Arabic/English dictionaries and different (prominent) translations of the Holy Quran (with the original Arabic verses printed side by side).



### 3.4 Al-Mizan Study Group

#### Members

- **Abdul Quddus McCarthy** – Class Facilitator

#### Accomplishments

- The Al-Mizan class has been held consistently every week.
- There has been a core group of people who have also been attending the weekly sessions.

#### Challenges

- The attendance for this class has been pretty low from the IMAN community members.

The regular participants of this class have decided to move this class outside of IMAN because of low participation from regular IMAN community members (see Challenges above). Furthermore, they also wanted to reach out to the general public. As of August 2010, this class is being held elsewhere.

### 3.5 Outreach Efforts

Several members at IMAN continue to participate in various activities in the larger interfaith community of Greater Seattle.

The IMAN Community, like other Muslims in North America, has had their plate full as they responded to the fallout from:

- Controversies surrounding Islamic Center in Manhattan, NY
- Controversies surrounding Burning of the Qur'an
- Continued wave of misinformation about Islam and Muslims
- Violence from different parts of the world

Given the unfortunate misinformation about Islam and fear of Muslims, IMAN outreach is an important area to expand. Both 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.

#### Accomplishments

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

- Various youth and adults from Greater Seattle Churches and other non-Muslim communities for Iftar and other occasions throughout the year
- >63 students from Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart
- Bible Study group from Emmanuel, Mercer Island
- American Association of University Women

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

Br. Jawad and other members of the IMAN Community participated as speakers in several programs listed below:

- Eastside Catholic Interfaith Service
- 9/11 Interfaith reading of the Qur'an at Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church
- International Day of Peace on 9/21/10 at Eastside Friends Meetinghouse, Bellevue, WA
- Camp Brotherhood "Celebrate Challenge" 10/2/10 Panel Discussion between Br. Jawad, Father Tracey and Rabbi Mirel

### **Community networking**

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

- Serves on the Executive Advisory Board for the School of Theology & Ministry
- Engage other faith and civic organizations in Greater Seattle to promote a pluralistic vision of America that incorporates all ethnic and faith communities.
- Speaks at various community forums as called upon
- OneAmerica, Muslim Advocates, Department of Homeland Security to improve treatment of Muslim US Citizens at US Borders
- Several meetings with Bob Walsh and other representatives from OneWorld 2011 to identify areas of cooperation One World 2011 aims to boost cultural understanding between the U.S. society and the Islamic World. One World 2011 will hold a series of events such as: trade bazaar, interfaith conference, youth exchange, art & culture program, sport activities. The initiative will be inaugurated in Seattle, Washington between the dates 11<sup>th</sup> of September and 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2011 and the second would be held every two years in an overwhelmingly Muslim country after 2011. The participation of the representatives of Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, England, USA and Yemen is foreseen.

### **Challenges**

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

### **Opportunities**

- A key opportunity for Muslims to become more active and visible in the larger community.
- Provide reliable information on Islam and Muslims to counter continued misinformation.

### **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 should also 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. Efforts to form this group need to be revitalized.

### 3.6 Philosophy Study Circle

#### Members

- **Rouhollah Rahmani** – Facilitator
- **Hamed Esfahani** – Backup Facilitator

#### Accomplishments

- Our class complete the philosophy book "*The Essential Syed Hossein Nasr*", which we had been reading for over 1 year.

#### Challenges

- Our key challenge is to approach the philosophical material in a way that the participants can 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 Allah and his creation through the study of Mulla Sadra, one of the foremost philosophers of Islamic Philosophy.

#### Recommendations

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

## 4 Executive Committee Recommendations for 2010/2011

Our recommendations for the coming year are presented below.

### 4.1 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. The Programs Committee, with input several people in the community, has proposed ideas that span multiple areas and committees that should be explored, further developed and prioritized. Community members need to be recruited to help implement those that make the priority list.

## 4.2 Volunteer capacity

A non-profit community organization like IMAN thrives because of its volunteers. There is no shortage of cool and exciting ideas that can be worked on. There is also no doubt that good ideas will attract resources and a following to ensure success. But this all begins with a giving spirit. Per the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (S) the most useful in the eyes of Allah (SWT) are the one who are most useful to the people. Long term success of our local community, of IMAN and of Muslim Ummah as a whole depends on people who will give of themselves and grow in the process. We look forward to a strong volunteer base at IMAN as part of a thoughtful spiritually vibrant, caring sharing community here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

## 4.3 Operational Excellence

To continue meeting the needs of the community and growing demands, IMAN needs to maintain its focus on operational excellence. This includes well written procedures, policies, decision making process and a culture of continuous improvement.