

# 19th Annual ISNA Education Forum

In collaboration with Council of Islamic Schools in North America (CISNA)

## *Integrating Social Justice in Islamic Education*

**A** = Arabic Language | **I** = Islamic Studies | **L** = Leadership, Board & Principal | **C** = Curriculum Development

### Friday, April 19, 2019

**8:00 - 10:00 AM** Registration for Preconferences

**11:00 - 5:00 PM** Registration for Conference

**5:15 PM**

**Grand Ballroom A**

**Asr Prayer**

**5:30 - 7:30 PM**

**Grand Ballroom B**

**Inauguration Dinner**

Recitation from the Holy Qur'an:

Welcome remarks: **Safaa Zarzour**

Keynote Address: **Dr. "Lynn" Woodworth**

Emcee: **Susan Labadi**

**7:45 PM**

**Grand Ballroom A**

**Maghrib Prayer**

**8:00-9:15 PM**

**LaSalle C**

Sponsored: **Zaytuna College**

**Higher Education for a Higher Purpose**

**Omar Qureshi**

It is well known among Muslim Americans that Zaytuna College is the first accredited Muslim liberal arts college. However, few understand what Zaytuna actually does. What are the liberal arts? What relationship do they have to Islam? Is Zaytuna a seminary? What do students do after graduating? This workshop answers such questions by outlining Zaytuna's history as a college, its educational philosophy, and vision for its graduates. The workshop will inform educators of the kind of education that is ideal for students wishing to enter the college.

**Omar Qureshi** is Dean of Faculty and professor of Islamic law and theology at Zaytuna College, which he joined in August 2017. After obtaining his bachelors of arts in microbiology, he went on to complete his M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction – science education both from the University of Missouri – Columbia. Prior to Zaytuna College, for seven years Omar served as the principal for a parochial school located in Chicago's west suburbs. While in Chicago, Omar completed his Ph.D. in cultural and educational policy studies: philosophy of education at Loyola University Chicago in 2016. His dissertation, entitled "*Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā'ah and the Highest Good of Islamic Education*", dealt with educational institutional identity in the United States. In the religious sciences, Omar has studied texts in Islamic law – Shāfi'ī, Kalām theology, Islamic legal theory (usūl al-fiqh), Qur'ānic sciences and exegesis, hadīth nomenclature, prophetic biography and Islamic history. Currently, Omar teaches the following courses at Zaytuna College: Contemporary Muslim Thought, Metaphysical Foundations, al-Ghazālī, and Islamic Legal Theory (usūl al-fiqh).

**8:00-9:15 PM**

**LaSalle A**

## L

### **Best Practices for Effective School Board Development-Exceptional Board Mussarut Jabeen**

Current research identifies the importance of how and why private/independent schools board should work closely with the school leadership and all other stakeholders. There's an urgent need for school boards to know and understand their roles and responsibilities to educate themselves in order to improve the school culture and student learning. Research findings demonstrate the need for school governance to set short-term and long-term goals for overall school improvement by collaborating with all stakeholders.

**Mussarut Jabeen** holds a master of science degree in educational leadership. She has national mentor certification from NAESP. She is trained by the NC Department of Public Instruction for teacher and principal evaluation, and is an AdvancEd trained QAR Chair. Mussarut is on the board of directors of The Islamic Schools League of America (ISLA) and serves as a co-chair of the annual leadership retreat. She represents ISLA on the board of Council of American Private Education (CAPE). Mussarut visited Finland to understand the phenomenal educational system.

**8:00-9:15 PM**

**LaSalle B**

## C

### **How To Shape A Kind Human (because it's possible).**

**Kaitlin Montgomery and Amina Zouhri**

What does social justice look like through the lens of a Muslim child? Two millennial teachers guide educators to effectively carry out conversations with their students on social justice topics such as: gender inequality, racial challenges and the socio-economic gap. If we meet our students where they are, we can realize that all it takes is some time and a little compassion to teach a life-long lesson on "how to be a kind human."

**Kaitlin Montgomery** holds an MA in teaching and a BA in communication-media from North Carolina State University. She is a certified English language arts and social studies teacher and has three years of experience teaching middle school students. Currently, she works as the 6th and 8th grade ELA and social studies teacher at Al-Iman School in Raleigh, NC.

**Amina Zouhri** holds a BA in child development and family studies from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has a graduate certificate for counseling and is currently pursuing her master's in school counseling from North Carolina State University. She is a certified teacher and has 6 years of experience teaching math, reading/writing, science, social studies and Islamic studies to students in third grade. Currently, she works as the third grade teacher at Al-Iman School in Raleigh, NC.

**8:00-9:15 PM**

**Division**

## C

### **National Center for Education Statistics: Your Data Partner in Improving Educational Outcomes**

**Dr. James "Lynn" Woodworth**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the federal statistical agency tasked with collecting education data in the United States. The mission of NCES is to gather information on the processes and practices of the U.S. education system at all levels and serving all individuals. Additionally, NCES oversees the cooperation of the U.S. education system with international organizations to collect and report comparable data between nations. NCES has established and maintained a trove of data useful to practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and the public. NCES wants to hear from you about your data interests and data needs.

**Dr. James L. Woodworth** is the current Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. Before serving at NCES, Dr. Woodworth worked as lead quantitative research analyst at the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University. He served as

a Distinguished Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas, where he earned a doctorate in Education Policy. Dr. Woodworth also has a master's degree in educational leadership and a bachelor's degree in music education from Arkansas Tech University. Dr. Woodworth served 6 years on active duty in the United States Marine Corps. He was a public school teacher for 11 years before pursuing a research career. Dr. Woodworth's areas of research include charter schools, online education, education finance equity, and teacher performance pay.

**8:00-9:15 PM**

**State**

**I**

**Continued - Nuraniya Workshop**

**Bring Your Students Closer to the Holy Qur'an**

**Dalia El Deeb, Marwa Thabet, and Mona Hemid**

**9:30-10:00 PM**

**Madison**

**L**

**Informal Principal and Board Member Networking Session**

Kick back, connect, have those long sought vital conversations, or just network with mentors who can answer questions and share their tips for successfully running their Islamic schools. This is your chance to catch up with professional colleagues and make new friends among peers.

**Saturday, April 20, 2019**

**7:45-8:45 AM**

**Grand Ballroom B**

**Light Breakfast, Networking & Activities**

**Emcee: Leila Shatara**

*(To accommodate all paid registrants, we request that no food leave the breakfast area and to be conscious in avoiding waste. Thank you.)*

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**LaSalle C**

**A**

**Are You Ready with a Plan B?**

**Fatima Raafat**

This presentation is to inform teachers about what's trending in the educational field. We present the latest technology and methodology in how to engage students in the learning process with hands-on activities to perform in the session and then apply it in their classroom. The audience will learn how to be prepared with a Plan B if their technology didn't work or their original plan failed to serve its purpose. Also, they will take away many teaching resources for in/out class activities. They will learn how to utilize the simplest tools to make learning fun for all grade levels.

**Fatima Azzahraa Raafat** holds a masters degree in foreign language education from The University of South Florida and holds a graduate certificate in foreign language teaching culture and content from the same university. She has taught Arabic, Qur'an and Islamic studies for more than 15 years in the Tampa Bay Area. She taught all grade levels and is an active member in ACTFL and FFLA. Ms. Fatima has been teaching Arabic, Qur'an and Islamic studies for Universal Academy of Florida since 2007. Currently, she is an applying Ph.D. student at University of South Florida. She is interested in technology in education and second language acquisition.

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**Madison**

**I**

## **You Are the Curriculum: The Art of Influence**

**Arshad Anwar**

Islamic Studies teachers are handed an immense task: teach children the religion and make them well-behaved and pious Muslims. Often, we approach this in the wrong way by thinking the curriculum is in the books. The prophetic teaching of Islam is building strong relationships and leveraging them to positively influence others. This session covers the art and science of influence and how the Sunnah and modern research give us the best approach to make real, lasting impact.

**Arshad Anwar** holds a BA (Honors) in Islamic studies with a specialization in tafsir & Quranic sciences from the International Islamic University, Islamabad and a masters in educational leadership from Concordia University. He taught Quran, Arabic & Islamic studies for over three years across grades 1 – 8, and also served as the head of department for religious studies. Currently, he has served as the resident Imam of the Roswell Community Masjid for the last four years and continues to engage and educate Muslims and non-Muslims of all ages focusing especially on youth in their middle, high school, and university years. Imam Arshad has a passion for connecting Islam's spiritual teachings to the social sciences and in contextualizing the teachings of Islam to our lived reality.

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**LaSalle A**

**L**

### **Islamic Schools as Change-ABLE Organizations: Research-Based Strategies**

**Sadeq Al-Hasan and Susan Labadi**

In meeting the needs of the future, we can't afford to stagnate within stale paradigms. Yet, many educators and educational leaders are entrenched in doing things the way they have always done them and are resistant to change. Change is a challenging process since humans are creatures of habits and fear departure from the status quo. This interactive session will empower the audience with research-based approaches and practical steps on how to become an effective Change Agent at their school.

**Sadeq Al-Hasan** is one of the founders of Al-Arqam Islamic School in Sacramento, California and served on its board for 13 years. Additionally, he is the former president of Masjid Annur Islamic Center (Sacramento), a youth advisor, board member of Consultants for Islamic School Excellence ([www.goCISE.org](http://www.goCISE.org)), and the executive director of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA). Professionally, he is a hardware security computer engineer with the Intel Corporation.

**Susan Labadi** has been training teachers and administrators for 15 years and created Genius School, Inc. to develop Islamic schools, brand and develop marketing strategies for companies in the halal industry, and to develop entrepreneurs. Susan has managed the website, social media, and editing and writing for The American Halal Association. She writes articles for Thomson Reuters' Salaam Gateway (Dubai) site, sits on the board of the American Muslim Consumer Consortium ([www.muslimconsumer.org](http://www.muslimconsumer.org)), and is an advisor/trainer for Consultants for Islamic School Excellence ([www.goCISE.org](http://www.goCISE.org)), and Define 360 ([www.define360.online](http://www.define360.online)). She earned her M.A.T. in secondary social studies from National-Louis University, a B.A. degree in psychology and sociology from Northern Illinois University, and is the chairperson for the ISNA Education Forums in Chicago and Orange County.

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**LaSalle B**

**C**

### **Islamic Myths Exposed: Advocating for Inclusive spaces for Exceptional Learners**

**Sabria Mills**

In recent times, our Islamic schools are being flooded with students with a wide range of instructional needs. As Muslims, we can no longer avoid the topic of developing inclusive spaces for exceptional learners in our schools. As advocates of children with exceptionalities, it is clear that we must first be willing to have an honest conversation about the many misconceptions we have towards children with disabilities. During this presentation, participants

will have an opportunity to interact with different learning disabilities through the eyes of exceptional children. Empathy and understanding must be the premise for creating the need for more inclusive spaces in our schools. Through this presentation, participants will have an opportunity to discuss current myths within our Muslim community and align proof from the Quran and Sunnah to dispute these misconceptions. Additionally, they will explore a variety of different disabilities by completing simulated tasks and activities. We will end this presentation with a discussion on inclusion and develop a plan of action for our Islamic schools.

**Sabria Mills**, M.Ed. is an educational leader of over ten years. She currently works in Gwinnett County, Georgia in the field of Special Education. She has worked to establish diverse programs for exceptional learners in Islamic schools across Georgia. She recently worked as a RTI and 504 Coordinator at Al-Falah Academy in Lilburn, Georgia. In this role, she worked to identify and support students at academic risk. Additionally, she worked as an advocate and service provider for students with disabilities. She recently established a non-profit organization, MACE - Muslim Advocates of Children with Exceptionalities with a team of educators, activists, and parents to bring awareness and resources to children with exceptionalities. MACE is dedicated to creating inclusive spaces for exceptional Muslim children in our schools and masjids.

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**Division**

**C**

**Using Performance Tasks to Address Social Justice**

**Tahsina Siddiqui and Aisha Ashraf**

As teachers, one of our everyday challenges is to give our students a greater purpose to their learning. When we explicitly teach them how they can be advocates of social justice and help bring about meaningful change to the world, then we are able to fulfill our greater purpose as teachers. This presentation will give teachers ideas for social-justice driven performance tasks that they can replicate in their schools and classrooms.

**Tahsina Siddiqui** has been teaching for eight years, having previously taught English in New York City and South Oak Cliff, Dallas. She holds a master's degree in education policy & leadership from Southern Methodist University and a bachelor's degree in English and secondary education from CUNY Queens College in New York. She has been affiliated with Brighter Horizons Academy for five years, where she has served as the English department head for four years and a teacher for six. Currently, she teaches 9th, 11th, and 12th grade English, including AP English Language and AP English Literature. Throughout her career, she has taught 8th grade English, 9th grade English, and 10th grade English in New York City and Dallas, Texas.

**Aisha Ashraf** holds a BA in history and a minor in Islamic studies from George Mason University. She has nine years teaching experience and two years experience teaching AP World History. Ms. Aisha teaches civic engagement to 10th graders and U.S. history to 11th graders at Brighter Horizons Academy, where she is in her third year.

**9:00-10:15 AM**

**State**

**C**

**Strategies for Struggling Readers**

**Reshelle Abdul-Malik**

The 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading test results demonstrate that "...sixty five percent of all U.S. fourth graders scored "below proficient," which means that they are not reading at grade level" (NCBLA, 2018). We discuss the importance of individual reading conferences, show examples of individual reading conferences, and how you can implement them in your classroom.

**Reshelle Abdul-Malik** holds a masters in teaching language arts and social studies from Georgia State University. She has taught for nine years both domestically and abroad in public, private elementary, middle schools, and colleges. She is a certified language arts, social studies, and ESOL teacher in the state of Georgia. She currently

works as the intervention coordinator at Al Falah Academy in Lilburn, GA and as an administrator for Makkah International Institute, an educational consultation organization.

**10:45-12:00 PM**

**LaSalle C**

**A**

**Applying Methods of Bilingual Education to Improve Mastery of Arabic and Qur'an**  
**Rehenuma Asmi**

This session will share several methods used in bilingual education that can improve student mastery of Arabic and the Qur'an. During the workshop, we will cover theories of monolingual and bilingual language learning, popular methods used in second language learning, their effectiveness, and ways these methods can be applied to the teaching of Arabic and Qur'an in Islamic schools and weekend schools. Workshop participants can expect to take away practical strategies for teaching a second language and how to scaffold Arabic language development to meet the needs of students. We will also discuss how to increase the status of these subjects throughout the school curriculum and how to motivate students to see it as an important part of their lives.

**Rehenuma Asmi** has a Ph.D. in anthropology of education from Columbia University Teachers College where she completed her doctoral research on Qatari school reform and language policies. She has taught in elementary schools in the U.S., Qatar, and with undergraduates at Allegheny College in the programs of education and religious studies.

**10:45-12:00 PM**

**Madison**

**I**

**Classroom Practices for Building the Prophetic Character**  
**Hafiz Ikhlas Ansari and Jahangir Mahmud**

Teachers enjoy the status second to only those prophets, whose Teacher was Allah SWT Himself. Teachers have inherited this noble task from the noblest of all creation, and shoulder the responsibility of sufficing for the students. Teachers' actions and methodology will determine whether the students in care shall swim with ease in the troubled waters of this world and enjoy Paradise in the Next, or drown in confusion and purposelessness in both. Since our Prophet SAW was sent as our teacher, there are so many lessons teachers can learn and adopt in the classroom setting. We will discuss the methodology and the Sunnah in today's classroom, as mentioned in the book entitled *How the Messenger of Allah Taught his Students: The Sunnah in Today's Classroom*, authored by Shaykh Jahangir Mahmud.

**Hafiz Ikhlas Ansari** is a graduate of Madrasah Al-'Arabia Tajweedul Qur'an, who earned a double masters in Islamic studies from Karachi University and information system & computer science from National University of Singapore. Currently he is pursuing his Ph.D. in Islamic studies. Hafiz is an experienced educator with over twenty years of involvement in teaching the Qur'an, Islamic studies, and IT courses. He has traveled extensively and participated in many national and international conferences pertaining to Islamic studies and education. He is also associated with various interfaith groups to promote peace, harmony, and dispelling misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. Currently, Hafiz serves as a faculty member of MCC Academy and Imam at MEC Masjid in Morton Grove, Illinois where he also resides with his family.

**Jahangir Mahmud (SJM)** is a teacher, trainer, motivational speaker, and Islamic research scholar based in Pakistan. His speeches have helped change perspectives not only in Pakistan's tri-stream education, but around the globe. Pursuant to his education in the Middle East, Cambridge, and Lahore, he was given license (ijazah) from scholars in religious sciences as well as in the four Sufi orders. He is an author and editor of nearly two dozen textbooks, including best-selling textbooks on Islam for the University of Cambridge syllabus. He is the author of *The Vision of an Islamic School* and has penned case studies and research papers. His most appreciated book is called *How the Messenger of Allah Taught his Students: The Sunnah in Today's Classroom*; this has been translated in several languages and is also his flagship training topic.



**10:45-12:00 PM**

**LaSalle A**

**L**

**Creating A Positive School Climate Through Remembrance**

**Leila H. Shatara**

As school leaders, we struggle to maintain positive morale among staff and positive school climate throughout the school. With a constant re-focusing of our hearts, we can maintain our connection to the Quran and Sunnah. Consistent reminders through spiritual development for staff can help create a more positive atmosphere where adults are focused on the real purpose of Islamic schools and being role models for students. School leaders do not have to be scholars in Islam to implement these simple activities that can have a profound impact on the school culture.

**Leila H. Shatara** is currently a Ph.D. candidate in educational leadership and research methodology at Florida Atlantic University. Ms. Shatara was a public school teacher and then an Islamic school principal, having served in Education for over 20 years. She has been an educational consultant for Islamic schools for the past 6 years, providing professional development for boards, principals, and teachers. She currently serves as president of the Council of Islamic Schools of South Florida, the vice president of Florida Islamic Schools Association, and vice president of the Council of Islamic Schools in North America. She has also served on the Education Forum Programming Committee for the past 5 years.

**10:45-12:00 PM**

**LaSalle B**

**C**

**Islamic Reproductive and Sexual Health Education**

**Amber Khan, MD**

One of the greatest challenges our youth face in today's time is understanding their sexuality. From their physical and mental changes to society's sexual pressures, to their spiritual obligations, youth feel a great sense of confusion. Who they turn to for help in understanding reproductive and sexual health is limited to secular resources, even within Islamic school health classes. While this provides a great benefit, it leaves out the Islamic component. Come learn how we as educators can better answer our Muslim youth in providing knowledge on their physical, mental, social, and spiritual health needs.

**Dr. Amber Khan** has devoted her medical training to health promotion and preventive medicine in various underprivileged communities. She served as a health educator at several schools and community centers focusing on nutrition, physical education, self-esteem, drugs and alcohol, common medical illnesses, preventive medicine, reproductive health, and sexual health. She is currently the chairperson of the Education Committee for the Islamic Medical Association in North America (IMANA). She teaches preventive health education at the Detroit free clinic, HUDA. She also provides Islamic health talks for MYNA, ICNA, and ISNA. She leads discussions on women's health, mental health, spiritual health, and is a volunteer Muslim chaplain at women's correctional facilities. She holds an associates degree in Islamic Studies from Mishkah University.

**10:45-12:00 PM**

**Division**

**C**

**Deen for ALL: an Introduction to Inclusive Islamic Learning**

**Nadiya Shafi, MD**

Islam is a religion for all of humanity. As the prevalence of developmental disability increases, more and more Muslims seek faith-based instruction for their children with special needs. Join us for an introduction to a unique Islamic curriculum that is universal and accessible to children of all abilities-utilizing a hands-on approach,

repetition, augmentative and alternative communication devices, and the concept of errorless learning. Participants will be shown materials used and video of our curriculum in action.

**Nadiya Shafi** is a board certified pathologist, having graduated from the University of Louisville in Kentucky. She is also mother of a child with autism and has thus been involved with teaching children with disabilities for the last ten years. She has led the Houston chapter of MUHSEN for the last three years and is an advocate for acceptance and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in her community. Nadiya directs the Sakina Sunday School program for children with disabilities, where she has worked with the MUHSEN team to develop the special needs Islamic curriculum that is being implemented in MUHSEN's weekend Islamic school programs across the United States.

**10:45-12:00 PM**

**State**

**C**

**Science Done Right! Hands On, Minds On!**

**Qamar Madani**

This workshop will give teachers ideas on making Science engaging for students with a variety of hands-on activities, games, puzzles and projects. Students learn the most from applying knowledge and the highest form of learning is creating experiences with the knowledge/content at hand. Science is best learned for enduring understanding when students are involved in their learning experience. Join this session if you are as excited as I am to teach science in the out-of-the-box kind of way. This workshop is intended to provide educators immediate strategies to implement the very next day in their classrooms.

**Qamar Madani** is a certified Texas middle school and high school teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in Biology from University of Illinois. She has been teaching for 10+ years at Brighter Horizons Academy (BHA). She is currently the science department head and leads a team of 5 teachers. She has taught grades 7th-11th in her tenure with BHA. Ms. Madani is a proud mother of 6 children, with two of them graduating from BHA and currently holding alumni status.

**12:00-1:30 PM**

**Grand Ballroom B**

**Luncheon Program**

Sponsors' Presentation

MYNA & CISNA Announcements

Host - **Safaa Zarzour**

**1:45 PM**

**Grand Ballroom A**

**Dhuhr Prayer**

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**LaSalle C**

**A**

**Challenges and Strategies to Improve Classical Arabic Language Instruction**

**Walid Hawana**

Teaching Arabic is essential to many high school and college students nowadays in the U.S. and the world. Although dialects teaching is appropriate for special purposes, or functional Arabic, for travel, business, military, education, or research, classical or formal Arabic is the most important one to teach our students. To start early and clearly avoiding mistakes of dialects allows students to continue to higher levels of Arabic in the future. Foreign languages always start with teaching formal language to students, away from dialects.

**Walid Hawana** earned his BA in English Literature from Beirut, Lebanon (1974). Earned his Ph.D. in education and MS in English linguistics from Iowa State University (1980). He was a professor of education in Kuwait (10 years),



Saudi Arabia (4 years), and Libya (3 years). He served as adjunct professor in Iowa (Des Moines Area Community College) (6 years), and as high school principal in Texas and NY (10 years). He established a new school in NY (Bright Hope Center), teaching k-12 and tutoring Arabic language, ELA, and mathematics (3 years). Currently he is employed as an adjunct professor, teaching Arabic language at Union College and Hudson Valley Community College, and teaching English at Schenectady Community College (5 years). Walid also wrote several college textbooks, and translated books from English into Arabic.

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**Madison**

**I**

**Religious and Civic Identity Development through Purposeful Projects: The case of Project Wayfinder  
Murat Ozturk**

To address the missing piece of “purposeful commitment” in youth religious identity development, a purpose building curriculum toolkit, developed in Stanford University, is modified with Islamic sensitivities. This Islamic purpose building content is being delivered in a class of 17 Islamic high school students for an academic year. An overview of the modified content, relevant literature of identity development and purpose building, observations in class and projects developed by students will be discussed in the presentation.

**Murat Ozturk’s** involvement with youth entails both academia and field experience. On the academic front, he is an ABD Ph.D. at Rutgers University working on “Religious and Civic Identity Development of Muslim American Youth”. In addition to research, he taught college level courses related to Muslim American youth. On the field end, he co-founded and consulted six youth organizations related to different culture groups and offers community seminars on various topics like Youth Religious Identity Development, Digital Addictions, and Screen Smart Community Models.

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**LaSalle A**

**L**

**Teaching about Religion in a Polarized Age  
Benjamin Marcus and Usra Ghazi**

Islamic schools and Muslim educators can institutionalize religious literacy education and teacher training in their communities by strengthening their partnerships with local governmental organizations, such as boards of education and other municipal entities. We will begin by reviewing strategies for engaging religious, civil society, and governmental organizations in a local community. Then we will discuss national consensus statements about best practices vis-à-vis education about religion, and we practice utilizing the concepts and tools in last year’s groundbreaking *Guidelines for Teaching About Religion* published by the National Council for the Social Studies.

**Benjamin P. Marcus** is the Religious Literacy Specialist with the Religious Freedom Center of the Freedom Forum Institute, where he has developed religious literacy programs for public schools, universities, U.S. government organizations, and private foundations in the U.S. and abroad. In February 2018, Marcus was accepted as a Fulbright Specialist on religion and education. He chaired the writing group for the Religious Studies Companion Document to the C3 Framework, a nationally recognized set of guidelines used by state and school district curriculum experts for social studies standards and curriculum development. In 2015, he served as executive editor of the White Paper of the Sub-Working Group on Religion and Conflict Mitigation of the State Department’s Religion and Foreign Policy Working Group. He earned an MTS as a Presidential Scholar at Harvard Divinity School. He studied religion at the University of Cambridge and Brown University, where he graduated magna cum laude.

**Usra Ghazi** is an interfaith leader, public servant, and aspiring diplomat with over a decade of experience in interreligious youth work in the non-profit sector. She is currently the director of policy and programs at America Indivisible and a senior fellow at the Religious Freedom Center of the Freedom Forum Institute. As an IFYC staff member, she managed a strong partnership with the President’s Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge. She has served as a policy advisor and Franklin Fellow at the U.S. Secretary of State’s Office of Religion

and Global Affairs and as a policy fellow for the City of Boston in the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement where she influenced new policies and programs that effectively engage faith communities. She holds a master's degree from Harvard Divinity School in Religion and Politics and currently serves as a strategic designer at The Collaboratory – the design and innovation hub of the U.S. Department of State's Education and Cultural Affairs Bureau.

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**LaSalle B**

**C**

**Developing Critical Thinking Skills to Foster Autonomy and Authentic Learning**

**Sufia Azmat**

Critical thinking is crucial to success in today's society. Students with these skills are better able to understand the "why" as opposed to just understanding the "what" and thus make decisions for themselves. These skills can be taught throughout all subjects by utilizing in-depth questioning and discussion methods. This session will offer attendees practical suggestions for lessons and assessments to improve learning outcomes using Depth of Knowledge levels and a variety of teaching techniques.

**Sufia Azmat** is Executive Director of CISNA, which specializes in Islamic school accreditation. She is a certified teacher with over 20 years of experience in education. Her administrative roles include serving as middle school division head, principal, and head of school at several K-12 schools. She is an education consultant whose workshops include Bullying Prevention, Effective Communication, and Improving School Climate. Ms. Azmat has been asked to speak at national and international education conferences including the International Congress on Islamic Education in Istanbul, Turkey. She is currently enrolled at Bayan Claremont School of Theology in the Islamic Education and Leadership Program.

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**Division**

**C**

**Teaching Social Justice and Islamic Values in the Social Studies Classroom**

**Kalthoom Bouderdaben**

In today's political climate, being aware of history, the rights of citizens, the duty of citizens, as well as governmental rights and duties is imperative. Social studies has the unique ability to teach both social justice and Islamic values, but one of the biggest problems students face is boring material. By making social studies reflective and engaging, more students can retain and apply the knowledge and essential skills this subject has to offer. Therefore, interactive and engaging methods are needed to aid the retention of social studies knowledge. These methods also create critical thinkers and self-aware citizens.

**Kalthoom Bouderdaben** holds a BA in political science and creative writing from Houston Baptist University and a masters degree in political science from University of Houston. She has 5 years of experience teaching general academics and Islamic studies to students in grades 3 to 6. Ms. Bouderdaben has been the lead ELA teacher for Houston Peace Academy for two years and has been affiliated with Houston Peace Academy since 2013. Currently, she works as the ELA teacher for 4th-6th grade at Houston Peace Academy.

**2:00-3:15 PM**

**State**

**C**

**Using Technology in Mathematics Classrooms to Promote Equity**

**Reema Alnizami and Nikki Rana**

Prior to the use of Dynamic Geometry Software (DGS) in teaching geometry, representations of geometric figures were almost limited to static figures found in textbooks or drawn by students or teachers. When a shape is created in DGS, students can explore a large number of examples in a very short time, which could be thought of as a

construction of a general case. On the other hand, constructions using traditional methods (e.g., on paper or on a board) result in creating a small number of cases. Therefore, using DGS in instruction can enhance students' ability to generalize. Overall, using DGS along with meaningfully-designed tasks and classroom environment allows the users to dynamically explore many geometric shapes, helps them with discovery and generalization, enhances spatial visualization skills, and helps them understand relationships between different geometric concepts, all in a fun and investigative environment. Come to learn about a variety of research-based tools and techniques that can make the difference for your students' learning.

**Reema Alnizami** earned a Ph.D. in mathematics education from North Carolina State University (NCSU) in December 2017. Currently, she is working as a research associate in the Department of Teacher Education and Learning Sciences at NCSU. She has a firm belief that differences between individuals should be celebrated, and that teachers should plan and teach lessons that are responsive to students' backgrounds and knowledge in order to provide access to mathematical knowledge for all students. Her main interest is in teacher professional development. Particularly, she is interested in helping teachers incorporate up-to-date technologies into their mathematics classrooms in ways that can promote access to high-quality learning experiences for all students.

**Nikki Rana** earned an Ed.D. in curriculum and teaching from Northcentral University in 2015. Currently, she is an educational consultant providing professional development opportunities to educators. Previously, Dr. Rana has served in numerous educational capacities including: K-12 principal, assistant principal, instructional resource teacher, testing coordinator, literacy coach, special education teacher, and school improvement committee data chair. Her main interest is in teacher professional development in order to create unique learning opportunities for all students, in both the regular education and special education setting by incorporating technology into the instructional experience.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**LaSalle C**

**A**

**Innovative Strategies in Teaching Arabic Through Social Justice Concepts**

**Sanaa Jouejati**

We encourage Arabic teachers to explore and consider different methodologies in addressing social justice issues and social justice in Islam while teaching Arabic. Through the participation in an Arabic book club, students read storybooks selected from a list, and investigate social justice concepts within each story. Starting with a written summary of the book they read, presenting to their class, answering questions posed by classmates, and culminating in a student-led community exhibit, we share the strategies and resources. This is an interactive session presented in both Arabic and English (if needed), which addresses Arabic, Qur'an, and Islamic studies and builds students' self-esteem and knowledge of social justice.

**Sanaa Jouejati** holds a BA in psychology from the University of Toledo, Ohio, and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Northcentral University, San Diego, California. She is a certified Arabic teacher and has over 20 years of experience teaching PreK-12. Mrs. Jouejati is an online Arabic language teacher and consultant, a Qur'an teacher holding an Ijaza in Qur'an, director of Ohio Arabic Language Institute (OALI), and a teacher trainer on integrating technology in teaching languages.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**LaSalle B**

**I**

**Mindfulness in the Classroom: Teaching Children Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation**

**Wadud Hassan and Leiya Hasan**

The purpose of effective parenting, teaching, or discipline is not obedience or control; rather it is teaching students tools to engage in deep self-awareness and self-regulation to become the best version of themselves. This workshop is designed with that purpose in mind and will consist of the following three modules:

1. How to Model Mindfulness

2. How to Teach Mindfulness

3. How to Use Mindfulness for Discipline and Behavior Management

**Wadud Hassan**, M.Ed., is co-founder & chief leadership coach of Define 360 ([www.define360.online](http://www.define360.online)), earned certification in leadership & principals training from Harvard University, IDEO, and the Neuroscience Academy, is a strategy and organizational design consultant with Enshera ([www.enshera.com](http://www.enshera.com)), and partner in Diversity Wealth ([www.diversitywealth.com](http://www.diversitywealth.com)). He was a teacher, co-founder and principal of 3 K-12 schools in Dallas. Wadud completed his M. Ed from Vanderbilt in leadership & organizational performance. He is passionate about emotional intelligence research, mentoring youth, and the importance of faith based mental health and life skills coaching. He currently leads the training and development of a diversity infused servant-leadership development program at a major city in Dallas, led the R&D of the Founders to CEO Succession Leadership Development Program at the Nashville Entrepreneurship Center, worked with the Metro Nashville Public Schools on Human Capital Diversity Strategy.

**Leiya Hasan** has eleven years of experience in education, technology, and management. She completed her leadership training at Harvard and MBA at Vanderbilt. Leiya is a marketing strategist and graduated from AT&T's leadership development program after serving in operations, financial analysis, and marketing roles. Leiya is passionate about Define 360 bringing world class content and communication methods to effectively transfer our research into actionable, life-changing knowledge. Leiya is a startup veteran having graduated the prestigious Jumpstart Foundry at the Nashville Entrepreneur Center as a co-founder of Boomalang, a language learning app that matches English and Spanish language learners.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**LaSalle A**

**L**

**Islamic Schools: Are They Preparing Children for Life Ahead?**

**Faiqa Mahmood**

We present research findings from the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU)'s latest report *Weekend Islamic Schools: Are They Preparing Children for Life Ahead?*. This report was developed from a convening hosted by ISPU and the John Templeton Foundation to identify needs and challenges facing Islamic schools. We will present practical recommendations in five core areas: curricula, professional development, school administration, inter-organizational learning, data collection and resource dissemination, and innovation and technology.

**Faiqa Mahmood**, researcher at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, has been instrumental on the Reimagining Muslim Spaces study. Ms. Mahmood has conducted research for think tanks in DC, Egypt and Lebanon. Her work for ISPU focuses on issues facing the American Muslim community. Her writings have appeared in *Foreign Policy's* South Asia Channel, Harvard Kennedy School *Journal of Middle Eastern Politics and Policy*, *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, and *Georgetown Security Studies Review*, among others. Ms. Mahmood graduated from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**Madison**

**C**

**Transforming into Inquiry-Based Classrooms**

**Rasha El-Haggan**

Inquiry-based classrooms move away from the traditional model of the teacher-centered classroom where the teacher is the sage on the stage. In an inquiry-based classroom, the students are the center of the classroom and the teacher becomes the guide by the side. In theory, this idea is wonderful and many Islamic schools realize that this is the direction education is taking us. However, how do we actually create inquiry-based classrooms? How do we develop and implement Units of Instruction that are based on inquiry? What does an inquiry-based classroom look like or feel like? In this customizable workshop, teachers are taught the elements of inquiry, how to design a unit of inquiry, and how to transform their classroom into a student centered environment.

Rasha El-Haggan has 12 years of experience as an educator working in independent, faith-based, public, and international schools. As an advocate of student-centered classrooms, Rasha dedicates a large portion of her time to training teachers and leading schools to design and implement transdisciplinary curricula that promote conceptual, inquiry-based methods. Rasha has a BA in English from the University of Maryland and an MA in education from Johns Hopkins. Currently, she is Academic Dean at Sandy Spring Friends School in Sandy Spring, Maryland.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**Division**

**C**

**Social Justice Warriors**

**Rania Lawendy and Asma Ahmadi**

Teachers do not teach subjects; we teach people. Education should not happen in a vacuum; rather, it should be an agent for social change. Classrooms have become places where students learn about things they do not use in their life outside of school, and learning about social justice is one way to bring life to those classrooms by giving students the power to become social agents. This presentation will help schools see themselves as the place for students to learn to become active citizens. The presenters will explore six elements of the social justice curriculum design for the elementary classroom. Furthermore, it will help teachers to rethink what teaching and learning looks like and how to equip students with the skills and tools to see themselves as potential players in the political world.

**Rania Lawendy** has a masters in educational leadership. She is one of the founders of the Kitchener Masjid, Islamic Centre of Waterloo, Masjid Aisha, and Al Huda Weekend School. She is currently serving as the principal of MAC Maple Grove School as well as chaplain at University of Waterloo.

**Asma Ahmedi** has a Ph.D. in critical policy, equity and leadership studies. Her research, in the past eight years, has been looking into Muslim students. She also has worked as an instructor at Western University at the preservice Teacher Education Program. Asma is a certified teacher and a certified principal in Ontario with over 10 years of experience working in classrooms, and she served as part-time principal of Alfurqan School in Kitchener, Ontario. In the past seven years, she has been working as an education consultant for Islamic schools and Islamic school leaders. Asma is a mother of three boys: Omar, Abdullah, and Eissa, and she lives in Mississauga.

**3:45-5:00 PM**

**State**

**C**

**Language, Literacy & Culture of Minority Students in the Classroom**

**Aamena Saleh**

Using a study focused on English Language Learners' (ELLs) school experiences and identity development, this session will explore the interplay between ELL students' language(s), literacies, and cultures (LLC), and those LLCs which dominate schools in America. Using well-established research in combination with this study's results, the session will be centered around ways in which differentiated instruction, culturally-relevant pedagogy, and social justice education can be used to support the academic success, identity development, and overall well-being of minority students.

**Aamena Saleh** holds a Ph.D. in learning sciences from Clemson University and a masters of education degree in educational psychology from Wayne State University. Dr. Saleh is well-versed in various topics in education, including different theories of learning, socially just education, multi-literacies of students, and research methodologies in education. As the daughter of immigrants and the product of Islamic schools (primarily Islamic Foundation School) her passion is in the education of those who come from minority or ELL backgrounds, as well as the examination of their school experiences. Dr. Saleh hopes to work towards a greater understanding in this regard with the aim of creating or modifying programs to transform the educational environment and experience

of minority students into one that helps to ensure their academic and holistic success. She has taken a brief respite to devote herself to motherhood.

**5:15 PM**  
**Grand Ballroom A**  
**Asr Prayer**

**5:30-7:30 PM**  
**Grand Ballroom B**  
**Celebration Banquet**

Recitation from the Holy Qur'an:  
Welcome remarks: **Tayyab Yunus**  
Keynote Speaker: **Mehdi Hasan**

**Mehdi Hasan** is the award-winning presenter of 'UpFront' and 'Head to Head' on Al Jazeera English, born and brought up in the UK but now based in Washington D.C. He is the former political director of *The Huffington Post UK*, a regular contributor to *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*, and the author of two books. Mehdi has been included in the annual list of the 500 'most influential' Muslims in the world and his Oxford Union speech on Islam and peace went viral in 2013, amassing several million views online. He has interviewed, among others, Edward Snowden, Ehud Olmert, Imran Khan, and General Michael Flynn.

**7:45 PM**  
**Grand Ballroom A**  
**Maghrib Prayer**

**8:00-9:00 PM**  
**Dearborn**  
**CISNA General Assembly Meeting-** All are welcome!

**Sunday, April 21, 2019**

**9:30-10:45 AM**  
**LaSalle C**

**A**  
**Articulation Points of Arabic Letters (Makharij Al-Huruf)**  
**Norma Abu-Tarboush**

Learn how to use the point of articulation of letters, the place from which the sound of a letter originates, and how to pronounce the letter correctly.

**Norma Abu-Tarboush** is founder of Read & Ascend Learning Center and director of tajweed programs at The Mosque Foundation, Chicago. She obtained a Sanad and several Ijazas to teach different Qiraat, (recitation) from the Institute of the Society for the Preservation of the Holy Quran. Norma is a certified trainer for "Al-Noraniya Method" from Al-Farqan center in Jeddah. She has a BA in accounting, Jordan.

**9:30-10:45 AM**  
**Madison**

**I**  
**AADAPT: An Islamic Based Behavior and Character Education Program**  
**Sabura Rashad**

Behavior management is a critical issue for every school. There are various disciplinary strategies and theories, but none integrate the character and conduct that we aspire to develop in our Muslim youth. Muslim schools need to



implement programs that reinforce Qur'an and Sunnah while incorporating the most effective research-based strategies for positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS). What follows is an Islamic PBIS program (AADAPT) developed and revised into an easily adoptable format.

**Sabura Rashad** has more than 20 years of experience as an educator, trainer, and administrator specializing in school development and improvement. She has designed and facilitated workshops on behavior management, data analysis and assessment, instructional strategies, technology and STEM integration, and response to intervention (RtI). Drawing from her wealth of experiences as an instructor and administrator, she has worked with Muslim schools, charter schools, and with home-school programs to achieve their goals for growth and excellence. She believes that a positive outlook and thorough research are important factors to the development of effective educational facilities. This motivates her to constantly learn, create, and disseminate relevant and innovative methods of instruction and administration.

**9:30-10:45 AM**

**LaSalle A**

**L**

**Screen Addictions and a Model for Islamic Institutions to Lead the Path Building a Screen-Smart Community.**

**Murat Ozturk**

This presentation aims to cover the fundamental literature on screen addictions (e.g., gaming, social media) and to offer a model for Islamic institutions to have a central role in facilitating screen smart schools, families, and communities by taking the sociological dimensions of the problem into account with specific examples on the case of an Islamic school. Rather than an absolute abstinence from screen time, a mindful use and smart space approach is offered with analogies to a diet approach by distinguishing “nutritional” screen time from the “junk” screen use.

**Murat Ozturk's** involvement with youth entails both academia and field experience. On an academic front, he is an ABD Ph.D. at Rutgers University working on “Religious and Civic Identity Development of Muslim American Youth”. In addition to research, he taught college level courses related to Muslim American youth. He co-founded and consulted six youth organizations related to different culture groups and offers community seminars on various topics like Youth Religious Identity Development and Digital Addictions & Screen Smart Community Models.

**9:30-10:45 AM**

**LaSalle B**

**C**

**Teaching Them Where They Are: Differentiation Tools & Techniques**

**Linda Qatanani and Narjis Nichole Abdul-Majid**

Teachers and school administrators have to constantly stay abreast of the latest technological and educational tools and strategies to address the growing needs of today's diverse classrooms. Do you feel like you have the necessary tools to reach all of your students where they are? If not, join 2 educators for 1 PowerPoint presentation to discover 12 practical tools and techniques for creating dynamic classrooms using differentiation.

**Linda Qatanani** is School Counselor at Islamic Foundation School (IFS) in Villa Park. Linda earned a masters in counseling at Governors State University and became a licensed professional counselor (LPC) as well as a national certified counselor (NCC) in 2014. This is Linda's third school year at IFS where she provides services for middle and high school students. Linda teaches a weekly seminar regarding academic study skills and college/career planning to students in grades seventh through twelfth.

**Narjis Nichole Abdul-Majid** is Writing Coordinator at Islamic Foundation School in Villa Park. Narjis earned her BA in English literature and MA in humanities from the University of Louisville. This is her 1st year as writing coordinator for elementary through 12th grade. Narjis has previously taught in both elementary and secondary schools in addition to teaching at the university level. She is also part-time lecturer in the departments of Pan

African Studies and Humanities at the University of Louisville and Philosophy department at Indiana University Southeast where she has taught for over 10 years.

**9:30-10:45 AM**

**Division**

**C**

**Fostering Meaningful Academic Classroom Conversations**

**Patricia Hanson**

This session will focus on the need to provide opportunities for our students to practice and develop their academic oral language. Participants will participate in a variety of activities and learn strategies that can be incorporated into their classroom to help students have meaningful conversations about academic topics. Increasing the quality and quantity of academic conversations can build students' understandings of vocabulary and grammar, critical thinking, literacy and understandings of content (Zwiers, 2018).

**Patricia Hanson** holds a Ph.D. in urban education from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. Her areas of licensure are English as a second language, Spanish, psychology, and principal. She has worked in Wisconsin public schools for more than 20 years, working with English learners in grades K-12. She currently works at the middle school level.

**11:00-12:00 PM**

**Executive Forum**

**Closing Session**

Meet our ISNA staff and Education Forum Planning Committee. Join us as we wrap up and welcome your feedback and suggestions to make next Education Forum even better!