

Summer Newsletter- 2015

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**Donate
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Dear Friend,

"Say, O Lord, increase me in knowledge"
(Qur'an, 20:114)



The disheartening status of world affairs around us and the mind numbing ignorance our *ummah* faces today are evidence of the detrimental impact of ignorance. We at KARAMAH continue to believe that education is critical to change hearts, minds and communities. This summer, KARAMAH continued its core mission to educate through a variety of programs, most importantly our flagship Law and Leadership Summer Program.

This summer, we hosted 20 remarkable leaders from around the world. We developed their leadership and conflict resolution skills, and enlightened their minds with authentic knowledge of Islam. Indeed, we learned as much from these amazing women as they did from us. Working with them, we at KARAMAH believe that these women will start a ripple effect that will change our respective communities.

I want to sincerely thank you for your support and for believing in our mission. Without your support, this great work wouldn't have been possible. This makes you one of us and makes our success your success. Let's celebrate our achievements together.

Sincerely,
Aisha Rahman
Executive Director, KARAMAH

**Another Successful
Law and Leadership Summer Program Concludes**



"One day in, this program had already changed my life." This is what Dilfuza Abdulhasan told KARAMAH on the second day of The Law and Leadership Summer Program (LLSP). These few but immensely significant words sum up the premise of our work. For the past 13 years, KARAMAH has brought together amazing Muslim women from all over the world to Washington, DC where they learn from acclaimed Islamic scholars, leadership mavens, and the leading expert on conflict resolution from an Islamic perspective.

Each of these leaders went home carrying with her dreams, aspirations and a strong will to affect change. With the skills and knowledge these leaders gained during these 3 weeks, they're ready to continue the unstoppable cycle of change begun at LLSP. It is with immense pride that we introduce to you our most recent alumnae class of 2015. We welcome them to the KARAMAH sisterhood, and we are looking forward to continue hearing their strong voices and seeing their achievements.

[For more info on this year's LLSP, participants and classes, click here.](#)
[See LLSP 2015 pictures here](#)

Highlights From National Leaders at LLSP 2015



Retired Army General David Irvine spoke on the issue of [U.S. sanctioned torture](#) and the duty and obligation of leaders to speak out against injustice.



[Ms. Lynn Rosenthal](#), former Advisor on Violence Against Women at the White House, delivered the keynote address at LLSP 2015. She inspired the participants by sharing her personal story and how it led her to affect change.



Ms. Manar Waheed, Deputy Policy Director for Immigration at the White House Domestic Policy Council, motivated the LLSP class at their graduation with her story of changing careers and taking risks. Ms. Waheed is now impacting policy change for marginalized communities and immigrants at the White House.

***We shall not be silenced:
Muslim Leaders Make their Voices Heard***



Zakiya Shareef-Givens, motivated by LLSP, performed a poem she penned during the program. The audience demanded an encore!

Maya Angelou said: "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." And there is no better way to reach people's feelings than telling a compelling story. On the 10th anniversary of KARAMAH's Law and Leadership Summer Program (LLSP), we decided to commemorate our flagship program by inviting the broader community to meet and learn from our amazing class. For the past three years, KARAMAH has hosted "Strong Voices, Strong Communities" at local café, Busboys and Poets. This program has become an invaluable part of LLSP.

This year, a diverse, enthusiastic crowd of over 100 people were in attendance at Busboys and Poets where 8 women from the Class of 2015 shared their stories of struggle and perseverance and their vision for the future of their respective communities. Speakers at "Strong Voices, Strong Communities" moved the audience by the courage they exhibited standing on stage in front of a full room and sharing their personal stories. With strong voices, composure and poise, they captured the audience and kindled in them sparks of motivation to step out with steadfastness in pursuit of their rights and the betterment of their communities.

[Read more](#)

[Stay tuned for more videos of these performances in future newsletters](#)

***'Say Peace'
"No one Wakes up Thinking S/He is The Bad Guy"***



On August 15-16, 2015, KARAMAH collaborated with Ikram: Foundation for Empowerment of Muslim Women to present the two day Skill-Building and Intervention Skills Training Workshop "Say Peace" which is one in a series of workshops organized under the banner: "Promoting Healthy Marriage and Preventing Divorce in our Communities." The workshop was held at the Fairfax Institute and was presented by KARAMAH's Senior Advisor on Conflict Resolution Dr. Amr Abdalla.

The workshop provided the participants with an understanding of the dynamics influencing conflicts within marriage in our communities and introduced them to strategies of conflict mapping and analysis and peaceful approaches to conflicts. Dr. Abdalla presented an approach based on Islamic principles and peace studies that helped participants develop skills for peacefully coping with conflicts within marriage and also intervene as a third party in marital conflicts.

[Read more](#)

Ms. Rahman Highlights Religious Freedom Issues facing Muslim Women in Berkley Center's Conference



On July 16th, 2015, KARAMAH's executive director, Aisha Rahman took part in a panel discussion on "Religious Freedom and Women's Rights" at Georgetown University's Berkley Center. The panel was part of a day-long conference titled "Religious Freedom: Rising Threats to a Fundamental Human Right." Ms. Rahman highlighted the issue of the headscarf ban as a major plight that afflicts Muslim girls and women in some European countries. France, as a case in point, bans the display of "conspicuous" religious symbols in public schools, which prevents many Muslim girls from wearing their headscarves to school. For Muslim girls who believe that wearing the headscarf is a religious mandate, this law is a flagrant infringement upon their religious freedom. Ms. Rahman also drew attention to the non-recognition of the Islamic marriage contract in the UK and its ramifications on Muslim women's financial rights in marriage and upon divorce.

[Read more](#)
[Watch Panel Discussion here](#)

Burma: Rohingya Muslims and Religious Freedom in Peril ***By Engy Abdelkader***



Our nation's founders viewed religious freedom as a natural right, one with which each of us are born and which governments are responsible to protect. The wisdom and brilliance informing our founding fathers' commitment to freedom of religion continues to be lost on so many political, religious, and community leaders even today. Representative is Burma. The country suffers from a steady stream of credible accusations alleging [genocide](#), [ethnic cleansing](#), and [crimes against humanity](#) targeting Rohingya Muslims. The religious and ethnic minority group has survived [decades-long persecution](#). And, things simply aren't getting better. In fact, the [humanitarian](#) and [human rights](#) crises are worsening. In the streets, some naked [Rohingya children](#) play with sewage, leaving them exposed to deadly diseases. Many are forced to perform [hard labor](#) to alleviate their family's economic plight. Others have been [abandoned](#).

[Read more](#)

Legal Services To Domestic Violence Survivors



Family Law Attorney: Julia Bizer, Esq.

Client testimonial:

"I want to say thank you again for all the support and fight for me at the hardest time of my life. You are amazing and I pray for you[r] success [and] to be bless[ed]. There [are] no words to even explain how thankful I am to have you guys helping m[e] through this."

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 4-7: Come See Us this Weekend at the ISNA Convention!



We are very excited to be attending ISNA's 52nd Annual Convention taking place on September 4-7 in Rosemont, Illinois. Meet us at booth #318 to learn about how KARAMAH advocates for human rights in the US and globally and ways for you to be involved with us. You can also submit preliminary applications to intern at KARAMAH or attend our 2016 LLSP.

All This is Possible Because of Your Support Continue Supporting KARAMAH



KARAMAH ON THE WEB



KARAMAH: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights is a nonprofit organization committed to promoting human rights globally, especially gender equity, religious freedom and civil rights in the United States. It pursues its mission through education, legal outreach and advocacy.

Have any questions or concerns? Email karamah@karamah.org