

KARAMAH NEWS

APRIL 12 , 2016

Dear Friends,

This Women's History Month, we hosted a series of exciting events highlighting the importance of education as the most effective means to empower women and enable them to uplift their societies and contribute to sustainable development globally. While KARAMAH works all year long to support the rights of Muslim women and advance the gender equitable principles of Islam, we were proud to devote our efforts exclusively to these issues this past month.

KARAMAH's perspective is unique in that it believes in change by the people, for the people. We work from a primarily Islamic and legal framework based on authentic scholarship of Islam and the law. We believe that this framework is the most effective means to guarantee Muslim women their rights and empower them to be true agents of change in their local communities.

As we demonstrated this month during our various events, our endeavors have proven fruitful. Since 2003, alumnae of our Law and Leadership Program have made strides and thrived in their communities. They are educators, activists, and advocates working hard to uplift their communities. However, many challenges persist. A lot of work needs to be done to change engrained cultural practices and attitudes.

During our UN CSW event "The Law and Leadership Summer Program: A New Generation of Muslim Women Change-makers," we showcased the achievements of our strong and accomplished alumnae and talked about how KARAMAH supports women by providing them with knowledge and skills necessary to lead themselves, their peers and the movements they are passionate about.

Women have a central role to uplift our communities and better prepare them for the movement towards justice. With patience, bravery and strong alliances we shall overcome the trials our communities face.

Thank you for being our ally! Thank you for believing in the power of education and for supporting us this past month and every month.

Together, we can work to empower the entire Muslim community inshAllah.

Sincerely,
Aisha Rahman

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Dr. Azizah al-Hibri Speaks About Women's Rights Abroad at Regent University Law School

On March 4, 2016, KARAMAH Founder Dr. Azizah al-Hibri spoke at Regent University School of Law 2016 Symposium on Women's Rights. Dr. al-Hibri addressed the reason why western women's rights movements are perceived to be another form of western imperialism and how to effectively advocate for Muslim women's empowerment. [Read more](#)



CSW Parallel Event: A New Generation of Muslim Women Change-Makers

The theme of this year's CSW 60s session was "Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development." KARAMAH believes that gender equity and women's empowerment are crucial for achieving the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. We believe that, once women know their rights, they become powerful agents of

change - one of the pre-requisites for sustainable development. Therefore, KARAMAH has worked hard for the past 23 years, to change the narrative surrounding gender equity in Islam and to empower Muslim women with knowledge of their faith and the skills they need to affect change in their communities. [Read more](#)



Ms. Rahman Speaks at UN CSW Parallel Event: "Engaging Pro Bono Legal Resources for Women's Empowerment"

On March 19, 2016, and in conjunction with the International Action Network for Gender Equity and Law, IANGEL and AIDS Free world, KARAMAH co-sponsored the panel discussion "Pro Bono Legal Services for Women's Empowerment." During the event, KARAMAH

Executive Director Ms. Aisha Rahman highlighted two important aspects of pro bono legal work: one is the pro bono assistance that KARAMAH receives and second, the pro bono assistance that KARAMAH provides. Ms. Rahman emphasized that law firms and other agencies should commit more than personnel to work pro bono on a particular case. [Read more](#)



KARAMAH at St. Mary College of Maryland Colloquium: "Women as Agents of Change"

On March 23 - 24, 2016, KARAMAH Executive Director Ms. Aisha Rahman joined an interdisciplinary group of scholars and activists at St. Mary College of Maryland to discuss how women across experiences and disciplines are leading movements for social justice.

Ms. Rahman began her talk with a video of a group of schoolchildren singing "Tala al Badru Alayna." The song was originally sung, she explained, by the women and children of *Madinah* who welcomed the Prophet Muhammad (s) to their city after his migration from Makkah. [Read more](#)

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Dr. al-Hibri Speaks About KARAMAH's "Challenging Journey" at her Alma Mater Penn Law

On March 15, 2016, KARAMAH Founder Dr. Azizah al-Hibri spoke at the University of Pennsylvania Law School about "KARAMAH's Challenging Journey." She presented the audience with the rationale behind the founding of KARAMAH; that is to give Muslim women a

chance to speak in their own voices and to provide them with knowledge of their faith and the skills to approach gender issues from a learned perspective. She also spoke about the challenges KARAMAH overcame in the past 23 years to become the well established educational and advocacy organization that it is at present. [Read more](#)

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Ms. Rahman at MNADV Workshop: "Is There a Nexus Between Religion and DV?"

On March 1, 2016, KARAMAH Executive Director Aisha Rahman spoke at the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)'s Culturally-Specific Service Provider Round Table entitled "Voices of Multiple Faiths, Forced

Marriage, and Domestic Violence." Ms. Rahman shared insight into cultural and contextual details to better provide support for Muslim communities struggling with domestic violence.

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Afghan Attorneys Discuss Women's Financial Rights in Marriage and Divorce

On March 10, 2016, and as part of KARAMAH's efforts to liaise with activists and advocates who work to promote women's rights worldwide, KARAMAH met with a delegation of Afghan attorneys who shared with us some of the challenges facing women in Afghanistan and which they

are working to overcome. Many women in there cannot obtain their financial rights accorded to them by Islamic Law including inheritance, owning property and receiving a marital gift (*mahr*) upon marriage or divorce. As in other Muslim countries, this is largely due to the encroachment of cultural norms on religion. [Read more](#)

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KARAMAH Hosts Women Leaders from Sri Lanka and the Maldives



On March 2, 2016 KARAMAH met with two amazing Muslim women leaders Ms. Sithy Aneesa Firthous from Sri Lanka and Ms. Aisha Hussain Rasheed from the Maldives. KARAMAH routinely hosts delegations from around the world, using these meetings as a platform to educate about Islam-our core mission. During this visit, our guests particularly wanted to learn from KARAMAH how we advance issues of human rights, particularly gender equity, in an environment that is not open to that

narrative.

[Read more](#)

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Blog Post: "Living my Namesake" by Aisha Rahman

This Women's History Month, I feel compelled to write about the source of my femininity-the source of my faith-the source of my continued commitment to working for social justice and human rights. That source rests solely, and almost exclusively, in my mother. My mother is a

force, and her story is definitely one to be told. I will save that for another time, and focus now on one of the many gifts that my mother gave me-my name. [Read more](#)

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MUSLIM AMERICAN STORIES



My Girlfriends and I Were Cursed and Spat at While Bystanders Watched

On March 3, 2016, my friends and I experienced a horrible incident. After finishing school, we took the light rail headed to Penn Station. There was a man sitting behind us on the train. He started verbally abusing us and cursing us out. My friend turned around to see what's going on, and then turned back. My friends and I wear a headscarf.

The man stood up and yelled, "Why are you staring at me, huh? Why are you staring at me you F***ing Muslim b**ch?!" And then he spat on her. [Read more](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

[APRIL 14: KARAMAH Founder Speaks About U.S. Torture Legacy, Justice, and Redress at "Repairing the Brokenness" Event](#)



Repairing the Brokenness:
**A Faithful Response to North Carolina's
 Involvement in Torture**

April 14th, 2016 - 7:00 pm
 Myers Park Baptist Church,
 1900 Queens Road, Charlotte NC

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APRIL 16- 17: Imams Training: Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence



NATIONAL IMAM TRAINING
 A National Workshop by Peaceful Families Project (PFP)

 **IMAM'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKSHOP**

This training is meant for imams who are sensitive to the existence of domestic violence among Muslim communities, like other faith groups, and hope to become vocal catalysts for anti-abuse advocacy. Successful participants will better understand the dynamics of domestic violence and have new tools for responding to the complex and challenging cases that they may face as leaders.

SAVE THE DATE 2-Day Workshop **TRAINING APRIL 16-17**

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APRIL 23: Aisha Rahman Speaks at Legislative Evening at the Islamic Society of Baltimore


Dr. Zainab Chaudry, CAIR
 "Islamophobia in the 2016 Election & Importance of Voting"


Aisha Rahman, Esq. KARAMAH
 "Understanding your Islamic and legal rights: the Karamah approach"

Tajbik Sheikh, Student
Ghadeer Mansour, Student
 "Eid Holidays & Bullying in Schools"

2016 LEGISLATIVE EVENING
BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

SATURDAY APRIL 23, 2016
5:00 PM
AT THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE

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Submission Deadline for LLSP 2016 Applications Extended!

[Apply now!](#)



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www.karamah.org



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