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# Congratulations Malala!

*From the desk of Dr. Azizah al-Hibri*

Assalamu Alaikum!

Malala Yousufzai, a devout Muslim teenager, has become the youngest recipient ever of any of the Nobel Prizes since these awards were established about a century ago. In the dark world of patriarchy, she bravely reclaimed her right to education and freedom in Afghanistan. On a visit to Nigeria, she boldly told Boko Haram who had just kidnapped the Chibok schoolgirls: "stop misusing the name of Islam."



So, despite her young age, Malala properly understood the liberating message of Islam and practiced it.

She bravely fought for her right and the right of her Muslim sisters to an education. But how did Malala get her enlightened understanding of Islam?

To find the answer, we need to recognize (and admire) Malala's own context. Mustafa Qadri, a Pakistani researcher for Amnesty International noted that: "Ziauddin Yousafzai [Malala's father] is a deeply religious man, in the best sense of the term. I remember him

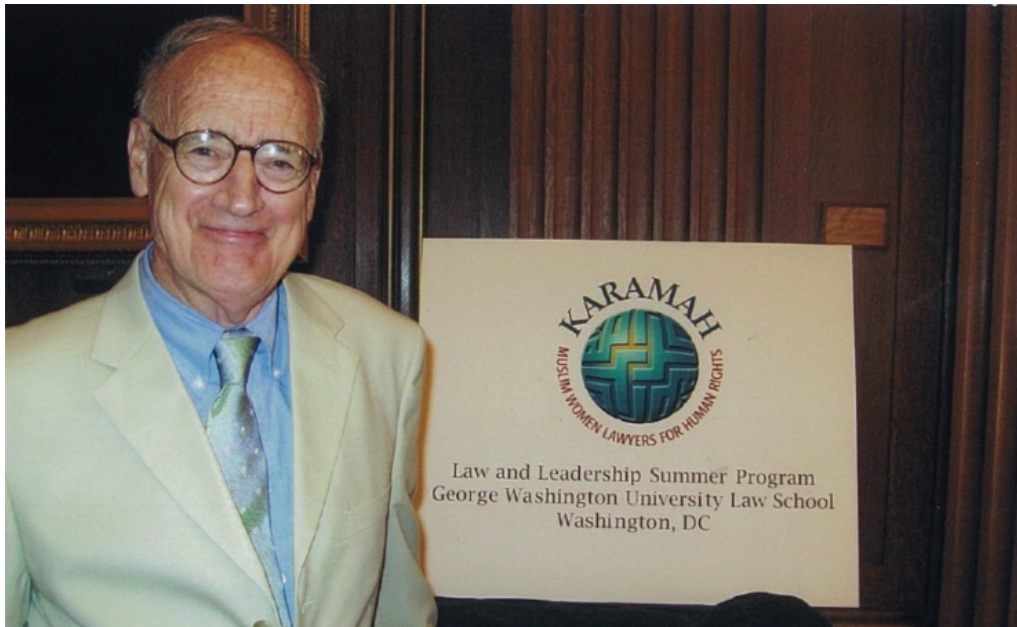
constantly talking about his Islam and that it tells him to get his daughter educated and to make sure that women get the same rights as men. Her father is very brave, very eloquent, as is Malala." Qadri's comments underline the fact that "it takes a village to raise a child."

It is also important to realize, as did Malala, that she is not alone in her courage. Many young Muslim girls continue to go to school every day despite the dangers surrounding them. This is why Malala is fighting not only for education but for peace as well. After meeting President Obama, she said: "I also expressed my concerns that drone attacks are fueling terrorism. Innocent victims are killed in these acts, and they lead to resentment among the Pakistani people. If we refocus efforts on education, it will make a big impact."

Wise words from a young teenager who is wise beyond her years! Congratulations Malala from all of us, your sisters at KARAMAH! We also pay our respects to all the sisters (brothers and parents) around the globe who uphold a gender equitable understanding of Islam, who fight for women's rights, and strive for education in a peaceful world.

Dr. Azizah al-Hibri  
Chair, Board of Directors

## Remembering Professor John Mansfield



In this issue we celebrate the life of John Howard Mansfield (1928-2014), the John H. Watson, Jr. Professor of Law, Emeritus, at the Harvard Law School and member of the KARAMAH faculty of our Law and Leadership Summer Program (LLSP).

Professor Mansfield was a distinguished scholar of the old school. He authored important works in the areas of comparative and constitutional law. At KARAMAH he lectured on Islamic family law in American courts. Professor Mansfield took special interest in *Aleem v. Aleem*, a case that was adjudicated in Maryland at the time. After Maryland's highest court decided the case, Professor Mansfield gathered additional facts, and then wrote in 2008 the article "[Marriage in Pakistan- Divorce in Maryland](#)," which is on the KARAMAH website. He followed this article with [a sequel in 2009](#) which is also posted. After 2010, Professor Mansfield's health made it difficult for him to continue teaching at LLSP. Yet Professor Mansfield and his wife Maria Luisa Fernandez, an Islamic art expert, never failed to inquire about the KARAMAH students.

On October 12<sup>th</sup> of this year, a memorial celebration took place at the Harvard Law School in honor of Professor John Howard Mansfield. We were there to share in the celebration, and his photograph with the KARAMAH students was on display. While there, we learned that Professor Mansfield's library was donated to the National Law School of India University (Bangalore, India) while his Morris chair was donated to the Harvard Law School's special collection, where it now resides at the Caspersen Room. Oliver Wendell Holmes used this chair in his home and following his death it found its way to Felix Frankfurter, for whom Professor Mansfield clerked, and ultimately to Professor Mansfield himself.

We at KARAMAH are grateful for having someone of the caliber of Professor Mansfield teach at our Law & Leadership Summer Program. He left behind a lot of enlightened and motivated young Muslim women, and a better understanding of Islamic law in American courts and First Amendment jurisprudence. We miss him deeply and pray that he rest in peace and that Mrs. Mansfield finds comfort in all the love and appreciation surrounding the memory of her husband.

For more on Professor Mansfield's life and accomplishments, [see here](#).

## **-Notable Achievements-**

### **Vice President Raheemah Abdulaleem Wins Historic Case**



[In a historic settlement](#) on September 8th, the Department of Justice entered into an agreement with the School District of Philadelphia, which resolved a religious accommodations lawsuit filed in March of 2014. Our own Raheemah Abdulaleem, Esq., the KARAMAH Vice President/Secretary, was instrumental in helping the government win the landmark settlement. Serving as senior Justice Department Lawyer in the Civil Rights Division, she fought on behalf of a veteran Muslim security officer working for Philadelphia public schools.

The case alleged that the security officer was disciplined for wearing a beard, despite efforts to obtain reasonable religious accommodations. It is important to note that when he requested an accommodation to the grooming policy, the school district denied his religious accommodations request and then disciplined him for violating the policy. The complaint also alleged that the district maintained a discriminatory policy, because it routinely denied all accommodation requests to the grooming policy.

We are proud of the work of Ms. Abdulaleem, as it serves to uphold KARAMAH's belief in equity for all, regardless of religion, gender or other differences. We hold hope for a future in which prejudice and ignorance are eradicated. These have been major factors in denying people dignity and liberty. We at KARAMAH are proud of the work of trailblazers like Ms. Abdulaleem and wholeheartedly congratulate her efforts.

## New Scholarship on Islam: *Featuring Dr. Zainab Alwani*

We are proud to announce the most recent work of KARAMAH scholar, Dr. Zainab Alwani. Dr. Alwani's article, ***Maqasid Qur'aniyya: A Methodology on Evaluating Modern Challenges and Fiqh al-Aqalliyat***, was published in September of this year in *The Muslim World: Special Issue on "Judaism and Islam in America."* This work was part of a joint four year project by Dr. Alwani and Professor Burton Visotzky of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Within the special journal, there are eleven short articles, four from Muslim scholars, and seven from Jewish scholars. The special journal examines how to remain true to theological values and beliefs within the modern context. Among the topics of focus were the continuation of *ijtihad*, interpretation of the Qur'an, and the *maqasid* of philosophy and ethics.



Dr. Alwani's article on ***Maqasid Qur'aniyya*** discusses a paradigm her father, Dr. Taha Jabir al-Alwani, sets forth. The article focuses on Dr. Taha al-Alwani's thought and works on the concept of *al-maqasid al-qur'aniyya* (the Qur'anic objectives). In her piece, Dr. Alwani "clarifies his methodology, for how to interact with the Qur'an, the *sunnah*, and the *turath* (the Islamic legacy), as well as describes his

approach to *al-maqasid al-qur'aniyya*." In this article, Dr. Zainab Alwani furthermore expounds upon her father's methodology and extends it to issues of gender and family. Dr. Alwani says about her father's work, "al-Alwani's understanding of the Qur'an and *sunnah*, which enables him to read and examine

the *turath* with a critical eye, reveals the need for a new way to review this legacy."

To mark the publishing of this historic work, there will be a luncheon-colloquium on November 18th at the Jewish Theological Seminary (3080 Broadway, New York, NY) celebrating the conclusion of the four year project.

KARAMAH warmly congratulates Dr. Alwani on her successful publication of such an important work.

## -Upcoming Events-

# Third Annual "Love Like the Prophet" Events

### Islamic Society of Washington Area

2701 Briggs Chaney Rd, Silver Spring, MD  
6:30-8 pm on October 18th, 2014  
Featuring: Dr. Zainab Alwani & KARAMAH Staff

[To RSVP, click here.](#)

### Busboys & Poets

1025 5th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001  
6-8 pm on October 29th, 2014  
Featuring: Dr. Azizah al-Hibri, Qudsia Raja & KARAMAH Staff

[To RSVP, click here.](#)

We are so happy to be hosting yet another year of the Love Like the Prophet series, a dynamic set of community lectures and conversations about the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) traditions of love and harmonious families. We will be providing a scholarly perspective on the prophetic model of relationships in Islam, focusing on ways to discuss problems, take action, and resolve conflict. We will also discuss available social services in the Washington, DC area.



On October 11th, a Love Like the Prophet event took place at Masjid Muhammad. The room was packed with audience members all interested in learning more about the Prophetic model of love, and how domestic violence was reflected in their community. Aisha Rahman once again took the stage, along with Imam Talib of the Nation's Mosque: Masjid Muhammad, Nazli Chaudhry of Domestic Harmony Foundation, and Mariam Durrani. [Read More.](#)





KARAMAH's Executive Director Aisha Rahman took the stage at the Providence Recreation Center on October 10th to launch the third annual series, [Love Like the Prophet: Ending Domestic Violence in Muslim Communities](#). Co-sponsored by MakeSpace, the room overflowed with 75 attendees, all intently listening to the speakers share their stories and insight on domestic violence within Muslim communities. Ms. Rahman shared the stage with Imam Zia of [MakeSpace](#), Nazli Chaudhry of Domestic Harmony Foundation, and Marium Durrani, a KARAMAH staff attorney. [Read More](#).

## Muslim Mediation Initiative *Registration Now Open!*

### **The Muslim Mediation Initiative** For Imams & Community Leaders

Sat, November 8 or Mon, November 24 || 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

El-Hibri Foundation Building  
1420 16<sup>th</sup> St. NW  
Washington, DC 20036

In the current Muslim American context, many families seek the counsel of imams and community leaders when facing issues within their marriage or home. Because of the Islamic belief that marriage is sacred, the pressure is on religious leaders to provide guidance that will ensure the best resolution for the marriage and family. Coupled with this pressure, is the fact that many imams are inadequately equipped to facilitate healthy and constructive conversations.

As a result, KARAMAH has curated an innovative program: the Muslim Mediation Initiative (MMI). We have carefully put together a curriculum developed by KARAMAH staff and scholars in our Jurist and Leader Network. The ultimate objective of the initiative is to train participants to serve as mediators and dispute resolution specialist with culturally relevant methods for working with Muslim clients in the community.

[Registration is now open, and closes on October 20th.](#)



## Law and Leadership Summer Program 2014 Recap

It is with great happiness that we present our 12th class of the Law and Leadership Summer Program. Though we miss them, we are excited about their next steps. They are a talented group of leaders, and we are sure that they will affect substantial change in their respective communities.

The summer program featured a diverse faculty, each of whom brought a wealth of knowledge and understanding to the participants over the course of three weeks.

[Read More](#)

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](mailto:karamah@karamah.org).