



— THE ISLAMIC SPEAKERS BUREAU —

YEAR IN REVIEW

— 2013 —



EDUCATION

Education is vital to understanding and building bridges. This year, the ISB has worked with a number of schools and organizations to help increase understanding of Islam and the Muslim communities. We have

- Partnered with several Georgia libraries in planning and organizing the "Bridging Cultures Bookshelf on Muslim Journeys," a program which introduce books, films, and digital media on Islam to library patrons and the broader community;
- Participated in the "2012 State Convention Leadership Training," a diversity conference organized by the Georgia Parent Teacher Association (GPTA);
- Helped children celebrate Eid ul-Fitr, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan, and Eid ul-Adha, the holiday marking the Muslim Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) as part of the "Meet the Holidays Programming" at Atlanta's Imagine It! Children's Museum.
- Provided speakers to conduct the "Diversity Seminar for Educators" for students enrolled in the Global TESOL (teachers of English to speakers of other languages) certification program at a number of local colleges, preparing educators to communicate effectively with Muslim students; and
- Provided youth speakers at Oglethorpe University's Community Fair and presented "Understanding Muslims" to the Florida Coastal Law School.

FAITH COMMUNITY

Understanding different religious faiths – the truth, not the myths – is essential to bringing people together. With this in mind, this year the Islamic Speakers Bureau of Atlanta

- Participated in a discussion at the 2nd annual National Baptist-Muslim Dialogue in Boston (MA), part of an effort to improve relationships between the two faith communities;
- Participated in "Creating Safe Spaces for Interfaith Work through Commitment to Universal Principles";
- Conducted presentations on working with Muslim patients and their families at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Scottish Rite;
- Participated in an interfaith panel sponsored by the Care and Counseling Center of Georgia, for caregivers, nurses, and chaplains from healthcare institutions around Metro Atlanta;
- Led a presentation to staff of the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy to help them serve clients from the Muslim community in a more culturally sensitive manner;

- Presented "An Overview of American Muslims and Their Faith" to the Alpha Delta Kappa (ADK) Educational Leaders in North Fulton County;
- Conducted presentations about the observance of Ramadan to staff and students participating in the Georgia Governor's Honors Program;
- Participated in the Kids4Peace, an interfaith annual summer camp that brings together Muslim, Christian, and Jewish youth from the U.S. and Jerusalem;
- Participated in the second annual panel and discussion organized by Oglethorpe University COEXIST chapter, working to promote understanding of Jews, Christians, and Muslims through education, dialogue, and research;
- Joined the American Jewish Committee ACCESS Atlanta (AJC-ACCESS Atlanta), Children of Abraham- Emory, and Open Jewish Project for a round table discussion and a film viewing at the Temple commemorating the "5th Annual Weekend of Twinning,"
- Joined a number of faith communities in celebrating Thanksgiving 2012;
- In partnership with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), created and sponsored a women's interfaith workshop, "Being an Ally: Standing Up to Prejudice and Discrimination,"
- Participated in the screening of two films at the 2013 Atlanta Jewish Film Festival;
- ISB participated in "Barriers & Bridges: Integrating Faith, Science & Policy to Promote Health," an interfaith health summit addressing challenges to disseminate health messages in interfaith communities;
- Co-hosted an interfaith Iftar, the breaking of the fast during Ramadan, with the Istanbul Cultural Center, and
- ISB youth volunteers joined Emory University's Youth Theological Initiative (YTI), an annual Day of Interfaith Youth Service.

IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Building bridges between communities means working together to help others. The ISB partnered with numerous groups this year in a variety of projects and we

- Joined other faith organizations in Fayette County participating in the annual Summer Lunch Program;
- Participated in a panel discussion on women's rights, "Islam, Sharia and Society: The Case for Women's Rights," organized by Clarkston Interfaith Group and Muslim Youth;

- Participated in the "National Day of Service and Remembrance" in honor of 9/11, and assembled care packages for local shelters and the homeless including Promise Place and Fayette Samaritans;
- Joined SHARE Atlanta in the annual Atlanta Day of Dignity, an effort led by the Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA);
- Continued tradition of delivering gift baskets as an expression of appreciation from the Muslim community to Peachtree City police and fire stations for their service and dedication;
- Joined with two Fayetteville churches to provide Thanksgiving dinner meal ingredients to the families whose children participate in the summer lunch programs;
- Working with the Muslim community of Atlanta together to launch "Being Your Neighbor's Keeper Food Drive," a food drive to help those in need;
- Organized the Muslim community in support of the annual Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) Hunger Walk/Run, and
- Participated, along with others from the Atlanta Muslim community, at Emory Presbyterian Church, in assembling meal bags for parents whose children are hospitalized at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA).



IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Metro Atlanta is truly an international community, and this year, the ISB had the opportunity to meet and work with representatives from around the world, as we

- Hosted, at the request of the U.S. Department of State and the Georgia Council of International Visitors (GCIV), high-level delegations from Chad and Saudi Arabia, with presentations explained that the U.S. is built on the very foundation of diversity of culture and religion, and that the American Muslim community is tightly interwoven into the American fabric;
- Partnering with the Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam to host scholars from the American Academy of Religion (AAR), participated in a week-long seminar providing training for theological educators to meet their ongoing scholarly and curricular development needs;
- Hosted two Imams visiting the U.S. from Conakary Guinea, West Africa, and presented "A History of Muslims in America," and
- Hosted a group of 20 international scholars studying religion in America, where they learned about the Civil Rights Movement, the history of religion in Atlanta, and the diversity of the city's population.



IN THE MEDIA

- Atlanta Magazine featured ISB communications manager in "Ramadan Ends with Friends and Abated Hunger: Feasting After Fasting," a story on family traditions during Muslim holidays;
- ISB speaker discussed Ramadan in an interview with WCLK radio;
- The Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters (AIB), teamed up with the ISB to produce a sixteen-part series on Islam, "Meet Your Muslim Neighbor;"
- The Reporter Newspaper reported on a panel discussion in which ISB speakers were participants in their article, "Pace Academy Panel Discussion Explores Faith Tradition."

ISB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOUMAYA KHALIFA HAD A BUSY AND EXCITING YEAR:



- Named by the Huffington Post as one of five people across America "inspiring peace;"
- Named Outstanding Georgia Citizen;
- Received the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)-Atlanta "Director's Award" for her community leadership, and was honored during a national ceremony at the FBI Headquarters in Washington, DC;
- Was recognized for her service on the Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters (AIB) Board of Directors, an interfaith, spiritual and educational television and internet network, during the Allen Award ceremony;
- Was featured in a Girl Scout's multi-faith peace project, and
- Received the Alif Institute of Atlanta's 2013 Arab-American High Achiever's Award.



THE ISLAMIC SPEAKERS BUREAU
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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Founded in August 2001, the Islamic Speakers Bureau (ISB) achieves its mission through education and community engagement. We work through our volunteers to provide hundreds of presentations, training seminars and workshops, and panel discussions annually in schools, colleges and universities, law enforcement agencies, healthcare facilities, and community organizations as part of cultural diversity curricula and programs. Reaching hundreds of groups and thousands of individuals a year at the grassroots level, ISB is building bridges among Americans of all backgrounds.

The Islamic Speakers Bureau, as part of its mission to build bridges between communities, provides experienced speakers for your group, school, or organization on a variety of topics, including "Getting to Know American Muslims and Their Faith," "Exploring Muslim Traditions and Practices," "A History of Muslims in America," and "Muslim Women in the U.S. and Around the World," as well as custom presentations for children and adults. Seminars are available to members of the law enforcement, healthcare, education, and business communities. The ISB also offers a workshop in "Meaningful Conversation," providing tools and proven techniques to empower people in engaging in meaningful interfaith dialogue.



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