

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019



Muslim Student Life  
Syracuse University



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Why “Muslim Student Life” (MSL) at Syracuse University? What is the vision of MSL?**

The “Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University” was established to serve Muslim students in the higher education and to facilitate building a community, learning skills to become participatory global citizens, engaging in meaningful programs and initiatives, while establishing and maintaining a healthy Muslim identity. Our vision is to be the model University-based education center in the United States.

## **What is the difference between MSL and Muslim Student Association (MSA)?**

The “Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University” is a not-for-profit organization, which hires and manages the Muslim Chaplain, and raises funds to sustain the Muslim Chaplaincy in order to serve our students, faculty, and staff and the larger community. The Muslim Student Association, on the other hand, is a student-run organization under the Student Association (SA). It is governed by its student members. MSA is eligible for programming funds through SA, and those programs must be MSA related. The SA mandates an advisor, and the Muslim Chaplain serves as an MSA advisor. Not every student, who identifies as Muslim, is a member of MSA. MSL serves every student, who identifies as a Muslim and works with the broader community both on campus and off campus.

## **What is the difference between Muslim Chaplaincy and MSL?**

There is no difference.

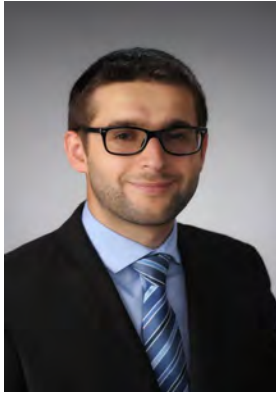
## **Why does Syracuse University not pay for the Muslim chaplain?**

Syracuse University, while providing resources such as space and facilities, does not provide financial support to any chaplaincy at Syracuse University. Syracuse University hosts 9 chaplaincies, including Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. All chaplaincies are sponsored by national or regional religious associations, organizations, and communities. Hence the need for the MSL.

## **Why do we need a Muslim Chaplain?**

Muslim chaplaincy is seen as following the tradition of the prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him, and is a means of supporting a Muslim student community. The US Muslims live in a plural society, and they are confronted with various issues that require ethical agency and spiritual guidance. Chaplaincy focuses on faith issues and crises intervention, and provides religious and spiritual support to Muslims in higher education and people of similar faith. A counsellor or a social worker would not be able to provide such support. The Muslim Chaplain contributes to informing, educating and empowering the future generations of leaders and ambassadors of Islam.

## LETTER FROM THE CHAPLAIN



Our mission is to create an inclusive community and to engage in sincere reflections that result in religious, intellectual, and social growth through educational programs and spiritual guidance based on Islamic principles. To achieve our mission we have created and implemented many programs, initiatives and opportunities for our students to help them achieve growth and development. This annual report provides a succinct summary of these educational and engaging opportunities over the 2018/2019 academic year at Syracuse University.

This year we were able to leverage our relationships both on campus and in the community and continue adding new resources, and educational and developmental opportunities for our students. Our students have continued to excel both academically as well as socially. Their engagement, activism, networking, and entrepreneurial spirit led to creation of new student organizations, events, programs, and collaborations, all which strengthen the Muslim community on campus. Our students are an exemplar for inclusion, diversity, and collaboration making them great ambassadors of Islam and Muslims both on and off campus.

I am proud to share that with MSL's effort and support our students have built a strong **community** that they are proud of and which they call **home** away from home. Considering that Syracuse University, while providing resources such as space and facilities, does not provide financial support to any chaplaincy, the efforts of MSL would not be possible without the support of our alumni and the greater Muslim community. On behalf of the MSL and those who we serve, please accept our heartfelt thanks and gratitude for your support and commitment to our work at Syracuse University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Amir Durić".

Imam Amir Durić  
Muslim Chaplain  
Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University



CAMPUS



## THE WORLD

32

Served students from 32 countries



## THE CAMPUS

1<sup>ST</sup> IFTAR ON  
THE QUAD

Attended by more than 200 students, faculty, staff,  
and community members



Collaboration  
with



11

COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS

Served more than



1400

FREE Friday lunches

Provided

120+

One-on-one  
COUNSELING SESSIONS

Worked with more than



300

MUSLIM STUDENTS

Audience of our  
(Co)Sponsored EVENTS

1800+

Partnered with



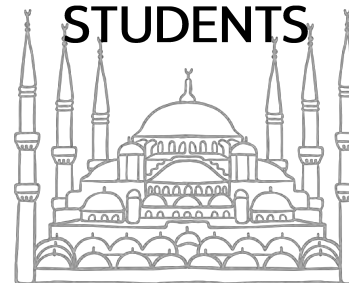
12

STUDENT  
ORGANIZATIONS

Summer  
Opportunity in  
TURKEY for

5

STUDENTS



>100

STUDENTS

engaged in

ISLAMIC  
STUDIES

1<sup>ST</sup>

MUSLIM HOUSING

In collaboration with

TURKEN  
Foundation

“The Muslim Chaplaincy at Hendricks Chapel is increasingly visible and vibrant. Through the innovative vision of Imam Amir Duric, in addition to the excitement generated by an outstanding group of student leaders, the expansion of Muslim life at Syracuse University allows us to foster and support an inclusive, accessible campus of opportunity for a richly diverse student body.”

- Rev. Brian Konkol, Ph.D.  
Dean of Hendricks Chapel

## TESTIMONIALS



Finding out about the Muslim Chaplaincy at Syracuse University, has been one of the highlights for me as a student. In previous institutions where I studied or worked, I have never encountered such a position and commitment from the institution to diversity and inclusion, as well as developing a community for Muslim students. I feel a strong sense of belonging through Muslim Chaplaincy and the activities I have been able to be a part of. I was surprised and excited to have this service available to students and happy to be a part of such a great community.

Maria del Mar Aponte Rodriguez



Everyone talks about identity and how college plays a big role in finding one's identity. It is especially challenging when one finds themselves in a place where otherwise they would not belong. I grew up in Ghana, a place where I was constantly surrounded by people who practiced the same faith as me. I heard the call of the Adhan, I attended Qur'an class and I was able to practice my faith in an open manner. Moving to America, I was fortunate enough to live in New York City, and again I found myself in a community where many Muslims lived. Going away for college, I realized I was losing a part of my identity that I had known my whole life. I knew deep down I didn't like this feeling. I found out about MSL, worked with the Chaplain on learning the Qur'an, and engaged the on-campus MSL community, which enabled me to maintain my identity as a Muslimah and also a student.

Layla Halalou





The Muslim Student Association (MSA) and the Muslim community of Syracuse University has benefited from the Muslim Chaplaincy in many ways. MSA as an organization, has grown a lot within the past few years because of chaplain Imam Amir Duric. To me, chaplain is not only our advisor but also is our mentor. I was able to develop leadership skills because of him and he also boosted my confidence in leading the MSA. Chaplain attended almost all of MSA e-board meetings providing us guidance towards planning and executing events. We were able to invite some renowned guests like Azhar Usman and Mohammed Amer because of Chaplain's recommendations and encouragement and his efforts to getting us in touch with them. Chaplain has also helped MSA in collaborating with other organizations on campus to put up successful events. Consequently, this is the second consecutive year that the MSA has been recognized as the number one organization on campus for diversity and inclusion. Chaplain helped us form a bridge between the MSA and the local Muslim community by having community night events that brought us closer to the local community. Chaplain started a series of lectures called understanding Islam which has benefited a lot of students, faculty, and staff, both Muslim and non-Muslim, in increasing their knowledge about Islam. Muslim Chaplaincy has positively influenced the MSA and the Muslim community which highlights the importance of its existence on campus.

Nawal Ahmed  
President (Spring 2019)  
Muslim Student Association



The mission of MSA is to carry out educational and social programs that will further advance Syracuse University's knowledge and appreciation of Islam and Muslim heritage. At the same time facilitate networking, educating, and empowering the students of today to be citizens of tomorrow's community.





Turkish Student Association (TSA) participates in various social and cultural activities across the campus to raise the awareness of the Turkish culture and heritage. TSA's missions are to build network among its members and the SU community, to foster a relationship with other campus organizations, and to encourage the student body to be more involved with Turkish culture. This helps to foster an atmosphere of cultural acceptance and diversity among the university community. The TSA also organizes open seminars and lectures by inviting guest speakers from wide variety of disciplines.



I think I see the Islamic chaplaincy as a means of supporting a community that is a minority in a plural society that is confronted with various issues from co-existence to discrimination.

When I first moved to the States, I wondered if I would find a place for myself or would fit in. Then, I found great friends and met amazing people. I was not only welcomed but also completely embraced by every single person that comprised the Muslim chaplaincy. I will never forget how the chaplaincy has made me feel like I'm home and for this I am grateful. I believe it contributes to

my experience on the campus with a refreshing and revitalizing hope for a better tomorrow. It creates cultural spheres that sustain relationships among the Turkish people and the Muslim community. Creating these spaces maintains connections to our peaceful tradition and foster dialogue among various groups.

With its full commitment to inspire learning and advance knowledge, the chaplain and the chaplaincy represent a way of strengthening our community. Based on its dedication to foster inclusion and cultural acceptance on the campus, this institution manages not only to sustain but also allow to flourish a community where individuals from all walks of life can live, learn, and enjoy life and the pursuit of knowledge together. This sense of belonging that chaplaincy created makes us indeed a unique community, united by its connections to a peaceful tradition. Only this sense of community will help us to make changes and to carve our space into a bigger Syracuse community. I am sure everyone can find the support they need like me. The Islamic chaplaincy is truly our community, supported by and for us. Thank you! May Allah keep us smiling!

Şule Aksoy  
President 2018-2019  
Turkish Student Association





The idea of the Student Association for Enlightenment and Inspiration (SAEI) was actually born at the weekly 'What's brewing with Chaplain' coffee chat. Through engaging conversations and idea exchange, students identified a gap, a need, to serve a broader segment of students that tend to seek more inspiration and spiritual education, empowerment, and networking opportunities.

Our Chaplain, Imam Amir Duric, helped us navigate the process of creating a student organization, connected us with resources, and assisted whenever and wherever needed. Our mission complements the work and goals of several student organizations on campus; therefore, when we launched our first program 'Rumi & Baklava', we launched it in collaboration with four other students organizations (Central Asia and the Caucaus Student Union, Iranian Student Association, Muslim Student Association, and Turkish Student Association). The first 'Rumi & Baklava' event attracted more than 50 students.

Trough my experiences, I recognize that Muslim Chaplaincy is a necessary resource and crucial support for the students as it truly understands and addresses student specific needs and challenges related to their experiences in higher education.

I am grateful for the Muslim Students Life and Chaplain at Syracuse University and look forward to continue building and strengthening our community on and off campus as students and alumni.

Thank you!

Ahmet Çelik  
President 2018-2019  
Student Association for Enlightenment and Inspiration



Student Association for Enlightenment and Inspiration (SAEI) aspires to be a platform that would promote open and enlightened discussion around diversity, inclusion and spirituality and increase the awareness of knowledge, wisdom and spirituality as three different dimensions of human nature that cannot be separated.

## STUDENT SUCCESS



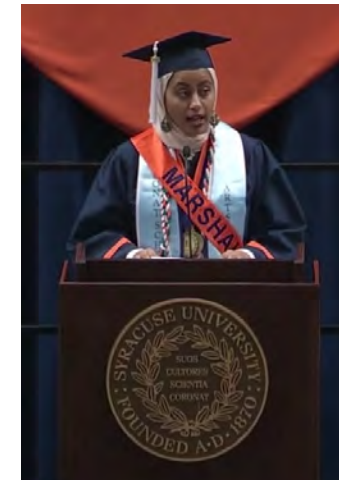
Dina Eldawy '19, an international relations major in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, a citizenship and civic engagement major in the Maxwell School and a member of the Renée Crown University Honors Program has been named as a 2019 Syracuse University Scholar, the highest undergraduate honor that the University bestows. Dina also has been named a 2019 recipient of the prestigious Marshall Scholarship earlier this academic year, and thus became the second Marshall Scholar in Syracuse University history.

We had an honor to have Dina as the keynote speaker at 2019 MSL Annual Fundraising Dinner where she spoke about the empowerment and extent of the impact that Muslim Student Life and Muslim Students' Association had on her as a Syracuse University Muslim student.



Iliass Aouani, ACC record-holder, has been recognized as the 2019 Atlantic Coast Conference Outdoor Track and Field Scholar-Athlete of the Year and led the sports' All-ACC Academic Teams in June 2019.

Aouani, a civil engineering major from Milan, Italy, set a new mark in the NCAA men's 10,000 meters and placed first in both the men's 10k and 5k at the ACC Championships in March 2019.









# PRORAMS





## UNDERSTANDING ISLAM SERIES AT BIRD LIBRARY

This annual six-week long series, organized and taught by Imam Duric in collaboration with Syracuse University Libraries and Hendricks Chapel has attracted over 70 participants of different faiths and backgrounds over the last couple years. The participant's goals were to better understand Islam and to engage in dialogue with Muslims.



*"I was drawn to the series out of a desire to better understand a religion with which I had previously had little contact, and which I considered to be often misunderstood. In following the series, I learned about Islam not only through the weekly meetings with Mr. Duric, but through experience in listening to prayers, reading excerpts from the Qur'an, and visiting a local mosque. I highly recommend this series to anyone interested in deepening their knowledge of Islam in a welcoming and friendly environment."*

Katelyn Bajorek '20  
College of Arts and Sciences

*"I was born Muslim, but I still benefited greatly from the "Understanding Islam" series because it both reinforced Islamic ideas and also opened my mind to information I had not known previously. The environment was very welcoming, individuals of all backgrounds came together to learn about Islam from wonderful Muslim representatives from the community. Now more than ever, with the widespread Anti-Muslim rhetoric, it's important that the true values and teachings of Islam overshadow the preconceived stereotypes that media portrays. This series offers insight to the true teachings of Islam. I highly recommend this series!"*

Shewa Shwani '18  
SUNY ESF



## RECEPTION AT CHANCELLOR'S HOUSE

It is always an honor to visit the Chancellor Kent Syverud and his wife Dr. Ruth Chen. This year we were blessed with a such opportunity once again, and we are grateful to the both of them for enormous hospitality and delicious halal food. Receptions like this one are directly connected with the students' positive experience at Syracuse University, and help Muslim students reclaim their identity and be proud of who they are. Chancellor Syverud emphasized that this house belongs to them; they freely performed a daily prayer there and departed excited after Chancellor's remarks, **"We are called to say, we will not let any people in the world make us feel that we do not belong... I need your help, and I need the help of all the people of Syracuse, black birds and all, to help make Syracuse what it can be... and I appreciate you being here and bearing witness... You're a part of the Syracuse Community and this is your home."**





This year the Ramadan fell on three school days, and each of these days we had iftars (dinners) on campus. More than five hundred guests attended these iftars. Particularly meaningful and historic was the Iftar on the Quad on May 8, the first Iftar of such kind at Syracuse University, and it gathered over two hundred students, faculty, staff, and community members. In addition to Muslim Student Life, these Iftars were co-sponsored by Turkish Student Association, Hendricks Chapel, Muslim Student Association, Iranian Student Association and Central Asia and the Caucasus Student Union.



# RAMADAN



## FRIDAY LIGHTS: Surah al-Kahf, Jumu'ah, Coffee, Lunch, Tafsir Class

Given that Friday is a special day of week for Muslims, we are happy to enlighten it with many different programs and initiatives. Our intent is to start with the light of chapter Al-Kahf (The Cave). Students get together before Friday prayer and collectively enjoy recitation of this chapter. The Friday prayer and sermon follow. In the meantime, all visitors of Hendricks Chapel enjoy free coffee at People's Place, which is an act of Muslims' hospitality. Right after Friday prayer and sermon we break bread together and explore common and different grounds with each other given the fact that we served Muslim students from 32 countries this academic year. The lunch is served to everyone, Muslims and non-Muslims. This is a great opportunity to build healthy relationships, develop positive attitudes towards each other, and build a community. This academic year we served more than 1400 free lunches to Syracuse University students, faculty and staff. After the lunch, the students were able to enjoy Tafsir Class and explore different themes and meaning of the Qur'an with Ahmet Celik, a PhD student in Department of Religion.



## WHAT'S BREWING With MUSLIM CHAPLAIN

Morning coffee at Cafe Kubal is brewing every Wednesday morning. According to many students, these coffee get-togethers were something special as they led to new ideas, initiatives, and eventually to a start of a new student organization, the Student Association for Enlightenment and Inspiration. Students were excited for every single meeting that would introduce a new theme of discussion and open doors for a great conversation. Initially, the Cup of Joe with Chaplain started with reverts to Islam, our sisters and brothers, who decided to start a new journey of their life. However, their attractive personalities pulled together many other students, who engaged in productive discussions on various themes.

## FUN NIGHTS: Bowling , Trivia, Poetry, and Movies

All these activities were ice breakers, and helped students connect with each other while staying in a safe and healthy environment.

## WEEKLY CLASSES

Goal of weekly study circles was to bring smaller groups of students together where they have opportunity to gain deeper understanding of certain topics through collective reading, discussion and reflection. Usually, halaqah was facilitated by Chaplain, a student or another person who were able to ignite critical thinking about selected topics.

**Qur'an Classes** - An intent of those classes is to meet students' needs and accompany them on this holistic journey with the Book of God.

**Hifz Program** is the program intended for memorization of the Qur'an.

**Tafsir Class** helps students understand the Qur'an better and become familiar with the both, traditional and contemporary hermeneutics of the Qur'an.

**Small Group Discussions** are intended to bring students together, to explore various themes, to develop critical thinking and engagement with philosophy, religion and spirituality in different ways.



## MARRIAGE SERVICES

Chaplain Duric has received several requests by Syracuse University alumni and students to marry them according to the Islamic principles either in local masjids or on campus. The Chaplaincy has established great relationships with local communities and the Hendricks Chapel to accommodate the wedding wishes of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.





## EVENTS

### Welcome back Dinner & Eid Celebration

This was the first event of the academic year. More than 120 students joined the dinner and Eid celebration. The freshmen students were able to meet with their peers and mentors and kick off the semester in good company. MSA leadership introduced themselves to all guests and presented the plan for the upcoming academic year.



### Civic Advocacy and Leadership Workshop

As a continuation of the lecture about American Muslims and the Struggle for Human Rights, Dr. Sinanovic facilitated a workshop next day on civic advocacy and leadership. Considering that Muslim students are the leaders of tomorrow, this day long workshop helped students recognize and develop their leadership skills, but also use them properly for civic advocacy.



### Public Lecture

Dr. Ermin Sinanovic was the first guest lecturer in the academic 2018/19 year. He delivered a public lecture, “American Muslims and the Struggle for Human Rights.” This gave attendees an excellent picture about Muslims in America, their past, present and future. At the same time, this lecture was a great motivation for all students to stand not just for themselves, but for what is right all the time.





### Public Lecture and Visit of Imam Omar Suleiman

Imam Omar Suleiman visited Syracuse University in October of 2018. He gave a lecture on “Reclaiming Our Identity” where he spoke about importance of our roots, being grounded in faith and being a positive example in society. Having in mind that Imam Omar Suleiman is an American Muslim scholar, civil rights activist and speaker, as well as considered one of the most influential Muslims in America by CNN this was one of the high impact events for Muslim students on campus. They felt empowered and encouraged to claim their identity with certainty, and to make a positive contributions to the society.



### Ahmed Badr

Ahmed Badr, a 20-year-old writer, social entrepreneur, poet, and former Iraqi refugee working at the intersection of creativity, displacement, and youth empowerment, visited Syracuse University. Ahmed was a guest at our Jummah prayer in November, 2018, where he gave a short talk and networked with students during the lunch. After Jummah, he gave lecture about "Rewriting Tragedy: Empowering the Displaced" at Syracuse University, and led a storytelling workshop at the North Side Learning Center.



### Celebrating mid-Sha'ban with Shi'a Students



### Tackling Stress and Depression



Anisa Diab, a Licensed Counselor who specializes in mental wellness and working with Muslim clients, did a workshop on handling stress and preventing depression. This lecture and workshop helped student learn how to recognize and assess the symptoms of stress and depression, and offered them some practical tools that are helpful in dealing with it.



### Never Take Your Faith for Granted by Mufti Sabahudin Ceman

Sabahudin Ceman, the Head Imam and Mufti of the Islamic Association of Bosniaks in North America, delivered a lecture on the topic of “Never take your faith for granted”. Given his expertise in Islam, engaging interfaith communities, leading a diverse community, and leadership of the Bosnian-American community, Mufti Ceman led a very insightful conversation with our students and guests. Given the historical significance of Islam and Mufti Ceman’s expertise in this area, he delivered a lecture on his own experience from the concentration camp during the genocide in Bosnia and how suffering can build people’s faith.

### A Comic Exploration of Free Will and Destiny by Azhar Usman

Azhar Usman, a Muslim comedian, was a guest to Syracuse University. Azhar served as a writer for Hasan Minhaj’s speech at the 2017 White House Correspondents Dinner and is also a consultant/producer on multiple Netflix original stand-up specials. In addition, he has performed stand-up sets on Kevin Hart’s LOL Live and Comedy Central Arabia. It was an honor for the MSA and Muslim students to host Azhar Usman who performed a stand-up comedy titled “A Comic Exploration of Free Will and Destiny.”





## NIGHT OF NASHEEDS & END OF YEAR BANQUET



Ammar Charaf and Imam Dzermal Crnkic made the end of year banquet a favorite MSA event for over 120 Muslim and non-Muslims students. Their performance of nasheeds and recitation of the Qur'an along with delicious food found a special place in the hearts of our students as they celebrated a successful year.

## STUDENT PHILANTHROPY



Muslim Chaplaincy, MSA and Office of Engagement Programs of Hendricks Chapel collaborated with "We Rise Above the Streets, recovery outreach, Inc." to prepare lunches for our homeless friends in the streets of Syracuse. We Rise Above the Streets' mission is to help people break the cycles of homelessness and crime that many of the homeless in Syracuse, NY face daily.



## ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER

The Annual MSL Fundraising Dinner took place on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and was a celebration of the accomplishments of the 2018/19 academic year. Students shared how meaningful and important to them is to have a stable chaplaincy and a chaplain who will accompany them on one of the most important life journeys. In addition, 2019 Tanweerul Haq Excellence Award was introduced and presented to the founder of Muslim Student Life, Inc. Tanweerul Haq, who exemplified a selfless service to the students. From now on, one person who follows his footsteps in service to students will be recognized every year. Dean of Hendricks Chapel, The Rev. Dr. Brian Konkol was a special guest of the night; Dina Eldawy '19, Marshall and One University Scholar delivered a keynote speech while Muslim Chaplain, Imam Amir Duric recited verses from the Qur'an.





# COMMUNITY





## TURKEN FOUNDATION

### Chaplain Bridges

Chaplain Duric participated in the Chaplain Bridges program by Turken Foundation and joined more than 20 chaplains on a professional development and community building trip to Turkey, where he also met with Syracuse University alumni.



### Student Housing & Youth Bridges

This year MSL partnered with Turken Foundation to offer affordable student housing for Muslim students. Three apartments in close proximity to campus were made available for students to rent.

Additionally, MSL was able to assist five students from Syracuse to attend the Youth Bridges program by Turken Foundation. A free trip for Muslim students from the USA. The goal of the program is to promote a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding between students through education and cultural experiences.



*Being a part of the 2019 Youth Bridges was one of the absolute highlights of my summer. As a recent college graduate who has never traveled abroad before, this program allowed me to leave my hometown and step into a Muslim country with a completely different culture. Being able to pray every prayer at a different mosque every day among the friendliest neighborhood cats, purchase beautiful handmade jewelry at a grand bazaar, or constantly have access to top quality halal food are just some aspects from this trip that I got to experience that can't be done back home. Being able to share these experiences with close friends, as well as a group of newly made friends is what made this trip even more valuable. For that, I would like to thank the Turken Foundation for granting me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and explore a country that did nothing but welcome me.*

Maryam El-Hindi '19

*Having the opportunity to visit Turkey was a dream come true. Many of my friends who had visited including friends who are from Turkey had always suggested that I visit Turkey. Therefore being blessed with this opportunity, I am more than happy that I took it. Visiting great historic sites, Masjids, cities, towns, eating Turkish food and hearing the Adhan for every prayer was heartwarming and truly something I'm glad I got to experience. My only regret is that I was not able to stay longer. However, inshallah I plan on visiting Turkey again in the future. To Turken Foundation, I cannot say this enough, thank you for everything!*

Tahir Iqbal '19



## THE THIRD ANNUAL SYRACUSE COMMUNITY IFTAR

Muslim Student Life at SU was actively involved in planning, sponsoring, and organizing the Third Annual Syracuse Community Iftar. Chaplain Duric was the catalyst for bringing the larger Muslim community together and led the organization of this beautiful event in collaboration with Syracuse University, Al Huda Mosque, the City of Syracuse, ICNA Outreach Center, CNYRISE Center, Masjid Isa Ibn Maryam, MSL, Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, InterFaith Works, Molina Healthcare, and others. More than 600 guests from various backgrounds and faith traditions attended, shared meals together and exchange contact information with the goal to build a greater community. Iftar (Ramadan dinner) was served after remarks and a presentation on Islam and Ramadan.





*"The opportunity to host this Ramadan Dinner on campus is both an honor and delight. Not only will such fellowship provide an opening to learn from our Muslim leaders, but it will also serve as a distinctive and significant reminder that our collective future depends upon whether or not people that navigate religion differently can develop the aptitude to cooperate. As religious and spiritual diversity continues to grow in Syracuse and beyond, my hope is that such occasions to transcend boundaries will provide greater understanding and contribute toward our common good."*

- Rev. Brian Konkol, Ph.D.  
Dean of Hendricks Chapel

## DEMYSTIFYING ISLAM: PANEL WITH REMEMBRANCE SCHOLARS

The MSA and 2018-2019 Remembrance Scholars were collaborating to host a panel discussion on Demystifying Islam. Panelists included Mark Cass, Chaplain Imam Duric, Imam Alfiki, Dr. Yusuf Soule, Ghufuran Salih, and Hassina Adams. Over 50 students of various backgrounds attended and participated in a rich discussion on Islam. Night was concluded with delicious Insomnia Cookies!





## NETWORKING & EMPOWERMENT

### Community Nights

This year we held several Community Nights at local masjid and centers to include Islamic Society of Central New York, Syracuse Cultural Center & NAS Learning Center, and Islamic Cultural Center of Bosniaks. The goal of these Nights is to provide our students the opportunity to connect and network with local community.



### ICNA-MAS Convention

Second year in row 8 students led by Chaplain Duric went to ICNA-MAS Convention in Washington DC. This was a great opportunity for religious, spiritual and intellectual growth, and networking with other Muslim students and American Muslim leaders.





### Rumi and Baklava

The Student Association for Enlightenment and Inspiration held three sessions event of Rumi along with baklava and tea in collaboration with Muslim Student Life, Muslim Student Association, Turkish Student Association, Iranian Student Association, and Central Asia and the Caucasus Student Union. These were nights of poetry where students read, recited, and discussed Rumi's poetry as a bridge between East and West. Professor Stephen Kuusisto, an American Poet, opened the first poetry evening, and Prof. Emin Lelic led the third session.



### NSLC & ACTS Dinners



### Ramadan Iftar





### Interfaith Shabbat/AVI Shabbat and Kahoot with SU Hillel

Jewish and Muslim students organized this event and made it into a transformative experience for many students. While playing Kahoot, the students learned about Jewish and Muslim traditions, calendar, holidays, common practices, and Kosher and Halal. Shabbat dinner was served afterwards where all students shared a Kosher and Halal meal. This resulted in new friendships, and deepened relationships between two organizations and its members.



### New Zealand: Honest Discussion on Islamophobia

Shocked with the New Zealand tragedy, only a few months after the Pittsburgh shooting, Muslim students organized a panel and discussion, as a way of coping and understanding the tragic that is rooted in xenophobia. The panel consisted of Muslim students who led the discussion and answered questions from the audience. Muslim students also held another open discussion event for Muslims in the MSA room just a few night prior to this one.





### New Zealand Vigil

In collaboration with the Muslim Chaplaincy and Muslim Student Association, Hendricks Chapel hosted a university-wide candlelight vigil on Tuesday, March 19, to honor lives lost in the terrorist attack at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.





## INTERFAITH INITIATIVES

Muslim students and Muslim Chaplain were actively involved in various interfaith panels, discussions, workshops, and presentations. Overall, the Muslim students and the Muslim Chaplain used any opportunity to engage others to build common grounds.



## IMAM AMIR DURIC



The board of the Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University is proud of our Chaplain Imam Duric and wishes him the best on a successful completion of the Masters in Religious Studies with the focus on Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, and obtaining a Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy from Hartford Seminary. Hartford Seminary was the first accredited and still has the highly reputable Islamic Chaplaincy Program. Congratulations Imam Duric, may God bless you and your continuous studies!

## SUPPORTING OUR MUSLIM STUDENTS

“INFORMING, EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING  
THE FUTURE LEADERS AND AMBASSADORS OF ISLAM”

The “Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University” was established to enable our children, Muslim children, to build a community, learn skills to become participatory global citizens, engage in meaningful programs and initiatives while maintain and build a healthy Muslim identity.

We would like to thank our donors for their generous gifts and continued support, without you any of the work that has been accomplished within the last academic year and so far would have not been possible.

Thank you!

If you would like to help us continue our tradition of servicing Muslim students and representing Islam in its true light at Syracuse University by making a gift to the Muslim Student Life at Syracuse University, please contact us at [msl@syr.edu](mailto:msl@syr.edu) or visit <http://mslatsu.org> to give online.





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