HELPING HAND
FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

Zakat Policy

Endorsements



Dr. Abu Zayd
Director
Quran Literacy Institute



Shaykh Yousef Bakeer
Senior Manager, Outreach
Helping Hand for Relief & Development



Imam Jawad Ahmed
Director, WhyIslam
Islamic Scholar & Community Leader



Dr. Jihaad Saafir
Founder & Executive Director, Islah LA
Imam, Educator & Community Leader



Dr. Furhan Zubairi
Dean of Seminary, Institute of Knowledge
Seminary Instructor & University Chaplain



Qari Nouman Hussain
Associate Director & Faculty Member,
Qalam Seminary | Founder, Oasis Chicago



Shaykh Abdool Rahman Khan
Chairman, Shari'ah Council of ICNA |
Member, Fiqh Council of North America



Shaykh Gyasi McKinzie
Islamic Scholar, Educator,
Chaplain & Humanitarian Leader

Zakat Policy
Endorsement



Dr. Abu Zayd is the founder and director of the Quran Literacy Institute. He holds degrees in Islamic studies as well as traditional licenses (Ijazah) in the ten modes of Qur'anic recitation, books of hadith and many Islamic texts. He is the author of Childrens Bequest, a textbook on the science of Tajweed based upon the first English translation of the Arabic classic Tuhfat al-Atfal.

He holds a Bachelors Degree in Islamic Studies from the School of Islamic and Arabic Studies (American Open University), a Masters Degree from the Islamic University of Minnesota under the tutelage of Shaykh Waleed Edrees, a Diploma in Classical Islamic Texts from Cambridge Islamic College, and an Advanced License in Islamic Scholarship (Shahadah al-'Alimiyyah) from Al-Salam Institute, UK under the renowned Dr. Muhammad Akram Nadwi. In addition, he has memorized the Qur'an, received Ijazah in the ten canonical modes of Qur'anic recitation (via al-'Ashr al-Sughra and al-Kubra) as well as the four Variant Modes of Reading (Shawadh), and possesses full auditory chains of transmission in the six books of hadith from scholars worldwide.

His passion is to explore the beauty and breadth of the Islamic scholarly tradition, promote tolerance and a sense of Muslim cohesion, and bring some of the best elements of the classical scholarly tradition to bear on contemporary modes of teaching.

Dr. Abu Zayd
Director
Quran Literacy Institute

His primary sources of scholarly and spiritual inspiration are Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Islahi of India - with whom he has had a life-long association, Shaykh Muhammad Akram Nadwi of the UK, and Shaykh Dr. Waleed Edrees Al-Maneese.

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Shaykh Yousef Bakeer

Senior Manager, Outreach

Helping Hand for Relief & Development

Shaykh Yousef Bakeer is an Islamic scholar, educator, chaplain, community leader, and humanitarian advocate.

Born and raised in Cairo, Egypt, he memorized the Qur'an at a young age and earned his Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies from Al-Azhar University. He also holds an Ijazah in the Qur'an and has dedicated many years to Islamic education, youth development, spiritual guidance, and community service.

As Senior Manager of Outreach with Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD), Shaykh Yousef plays a key role in strengthening HHRD's relationships with scholars, mosques, Islamic institutions, youth organizations, and communities across the United States. His outreach work connects community leadership with HHRD's humanitarian mission and helps expand awareness and support for relief and development programs serving vulnerable communities around the world.

His work with HHRD includes coordinating scholars and community leaders, developing fundraising and outreach initiatives, organizing humanitarian trips and community engagements, and building partnerships with Islamic organizations. He has helped connect donors and communities with programs supporting orphans, children with disabilities, refugees, clean water, education, sustainable development, and families facing poverty and crisis.

Shaykh Yousef has also been actively involved in engaging youth and emerging leaders in humanitarian service. Through international humanitarian experiences, educational programs, and community partnerships, he works to help young Muslims connect faith with service, compassion, leadership, and responsibility toward people in need.

Alongside his humanitarian work, Shaykh Yousef has pursued graduate-level studies in chaplaincy and clinical mental health counseling. His interdisciplinary background allows him to combine Islamic scholarship, pastoral care, community leadership, and an understanding of emotional well-being in his service to individuals, families, and communities.

His passion is to make Islamic knowledge accessible and relevant while mobilizing communities toward meaningful service. Through his leadership at HHRD, he continues to build bridges between scholars, institutions, donors, youth, and humanitarian causes in order to strengthen the culture of compassion and service.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement



Imam Jawad Ahmed
Director, WhyIslam
Islamic Scholar & Community Leader

Imam Jawad Ahmed is an Islamic scholar, educator, and community leader with more than two decades of experience in Islamic education, dawah, and community service. He earned a Bachelor's (Honors) degree in Usool al-Din (Islamic Sciences), specializing in Tafseer and Hadith, from the International Islamic University in Islamabad, Pakistan. He also earned a Bachelor of Science in Physical Sciences from the University of Maryland and received certification and a teaching license in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt.

Over the years, Imam Jawad has served as an imam and religious director at several New Jersey Islamic institutions and previously served as Director of Religious Studies at Al-Ghazaly Islamic High School. He has been deeply involved in educating adults and youth through khutbahs, lectures, mentorship, and community programs.

Imam Jawad is one of the pioneers of the national 1-877-WhyIslam dawah initiative and has played a major role in its hotline and outreach efforts for more than two decades. His work has included training and managing dawah volunteers and personally helping hundreds of individuals take Shahadah through conversations about Islam. He has also served as a longtime mentor within ICNA's Young Muslims network.

He currently serves as Director of WhyIslam and continues his religious leadership and educational work in New Jersey. His service reflects a longstanding commitment to sharing authentic Islamic knowledge, mentoring the next generation, strengthening Muslim communities, and presenting Islam with wisdom and compassion.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement

Dr. Jihad Saafir is an imam, educator, scholar, and community leader whose work focuses on faith, education, social restoration, and community development. He is the founder and executive director of Islah LA, a Muslim-led organization serving South Los Angeles through initiatives that strengthen families, education, civic engagement, and economic empowerment.

Dr. Saafir earned a Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and Leadership from Bayan at Claremont School of Theology in 2014 and later completed a Ph.D. in Practical Theology at Claremont School of Theology. His academic and teaching interests include Muslim adolescent identity formation, leadership development, Islamic education, religion, and community development.

He has served as a resident imam and as a founding leader of Islah Academy, a K-8 Islamic school in Los Angeles. His previous service includes work as a chaplain at the California Institute for Women and as Imam of Masjid At-Taqwa in Altadena, California. Through Islah LA, he ha z helped develop a model of Muslim community service rooted in social justice and responsive to the needs of South Los Angeles.

Dr. Saafir's leadership has been recognized beyond the Muslim community. He received the KCET Local Hero Award in 2018 and was recognized by the South Coast Interfaith Council as its 2022 Faith Leader of the Year.



Dr. Jihaad Saafir

Founder & Executive Director, Islah LA
Imam, Educator & Community Leader

His work reflects a commitment to developing young people, strengthening communities, and connecting Islamic values with meaningful service and civic engagement.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement



Dr. Furhan Zubairi

Dean of Seminary, Institute of Knowledge
Seminary Instructor & University Chaplain

Dr. Furhan Zubairi is an Islamic scholar, educator, author, and chaplain who serves as Dean of the Seminary at the Institute of Knowledge (IOK) in Southern California. He began his pursuit of Islamic knowledge at IOK in 1998, studying Arabic and the foundational Islamic sciences while beginning his memorization of the Qur'an.

He later traveled to Karachi, Pakistan, where he completed the memorization of the Qur'an at Jami'ah Binoria. After returning to the United States, he earned a B.S. in Biological Sciences from the University of California, Irvine in 2005. He subsequently studied Arabic in Egypt and completed a formal 'Alamiyyah degree (M.A. in Arabic and Islamic Studies) at Jami'ah Dar Al-'Ulum in Karachi.

Dr. Zubairi holds numerous ijazat in the six canonical collections of hadith, as well as the Muwatta of Imam Malik and Imam Muhammad, and has received certification in Islamic Finance. He also completed a Ph.D. at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization at the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

In addition to his leadership at IOK, Dr. Zubairi serves as a seminary instructor and university chaplain, including service to students at UC Irvine. He regularly delivers khutbahs and lectures throughout Southern California. He has authored several works on tafsir, hadith commentary, and foundational Islamic disciplines, including books in the IOK Curriculum Series. His teaching combines traditional Islamic scholarship with a commitment to making sacred knowledge accessible and relevant to contemporary Muslim communities.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement

Shaykh Gyasi McKinzie is an Islamic scholar, educator, chaplain, and community leader with more than two decades of experience serving Muslim schools, mosques, organizations, and humanitarian initiatives. Born in Washington, D.C. and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, he accepted Islam while in high school.

He graduated from the Islamic University of Madinah, Faculty of Dawah and Usool al-Deen, and holds a Master of Theological Studies from Vanderbilt University. His academic training, together with decades of community service, has shaped his work in Islamic education, spiritual leadership, youth development, and outreach.

Shaykh Gyasi has served as Imam of the Muslim Society of Memphis and as a chaplain at two federal prisons in Memphis. He has also served as Youth Director of the Youth and Dawah Center, taught Islamic Studies, and worked as a school counselor. His teaching and mentorship have focused particularly on strengthening faith, developing Muslim identity, and supporting young people and converts to Islam.

He has also maintained a longstanding relationship with Helping Hand for Relief and Development, contributing to marketing, outreach, fundraising, and humanitarian awareness. His humanitarian work has included engagement with programs supporting orphans, children, clean water, skills development, and vulnerable communities internationally.



Shaykh Gyasi McKinzie

Islamic Scholar, Educator, Chaplain & Humanitarian Leader

Through scholarship, chaplaincy, education, and humanitarian service, Shaykh Gyasi continues to connect Islamic knowledge with compassionate community leadership and practical service to humanity.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement



Shaykh Abdool Rahman Khan is an Islamic scholar, educator, and community leader with decades of experience in Islamic jurisprudence, education, da'wah, interfaith dialogue, and community service. He is the Chairman of the

Shari'ah Council of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) and a member of the Fiqh Council of North America.

He graduated from the Islamic University of Madinah, Faculty of Shari'ah (Islamic Jurisprudence), where he specialized in Islamic inheritance. He also studied at the University of Guyana, graduating in English and earning

a Diploma in Education. His combination of formal Islamic scholarship and educational training has shaped a long career of teaching and leadership.

Shaykh Abdool Rahman previously served as Principal of the Guyana Islamic Institute and Al-Rahmah School in Baltimore, Maryland. He has also served as a resident scholar and khateeb at the Islamic Foundation in Villa Park, Illinois, and has held leadership roles in Islamic education and tarbiyah within ICNA. In addition to his scholarly and educational work, Shaykh Abdool Rahman is actively involved in religious dialogue and contemporary social issues. His service includes helping Muslim communities navigate questions of Islamic law, family and community life, social responsibility, and religious practice in the North American context.

Shaykh Abdool Rahman Khan

Chairman, Shari'ah Council of ICNA | Member, Fiqh Council of North America

Through his work with ICNA, the Fiqh Council of North America, educational institutions, and Muslim communities across the country, Shaykh Abdool Rahman continues to contribute to Islamic scholarship, leadership development, community education, and constructive interfaith engagement.

Zakat Policy
Endorsement

Qari Nouman Hussain is an Islamic scholar, Qur'an educator, imam, and community leader. Born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, he memorized the Qur'an before traveling to South Africa to pursue advanced studies in the Islamic sciences at Darul Uloom Zakariyya.

He graduated at the top of his class in 2009 and holds ijazat in several Islamic sciences, with a specialization in Qur'anic sciences, including tajwid and the 'asharah qira'at - the ten modes of Qur'anic recitation. His scholarship is grounded in a strong commitment to helping people develop both a sound understanding of Islam and a meaningful relationship with the Qur'an.

For more than 15 years, Qari Nouman has served Muslim communities in Chicago and Milwaukee. His work has included service as an imam and resident scholar, hifz teacher, high school instructor, chaplain, and leader in interfaith and civic initiatives. He brings a warm, accessible approach to teaching that resonates with youth, families, and professionals.

He currently serves as Associate Director and a faculty member at Qalam Seminary, where he teaches and mentors students in the Islamic tradition. He is also the founder of Oasis Chicago, a community space dedicated to social-spiritual experiences, learning, and connection for young professionals and families.



Qari Nouman Hussain

Associate Director & Faculty Member, Qalam Seminary | Founder, Oasis Chicago

Through his recitation, teaching, and community leadership, Qari Nouman continues to make the beauty of the Qur'an and the Islamic tradition accessible, relevant, and rooted in service.