



# The Message

A Publication of The Muslim Community Center, Chicago, IL

Vol. 47a | No. 11 | Safar, 1438 | November 2016



## President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I pray that Inshallah the new Islamic year brings peace, blessings, health and happiness in your lives.

MCC annual dinner is right on the corner. If you still have not bought the tickets to participate in the annual dinner, please buy your tickets on MCC website ([mccchicago.org](http://mccchicago.org)). The dinner is on Saturday, November 5, 2016 at White eagle Banquets. We are expecting more than 400 community members

In its October meeting, the MCC board approved the start of High school classes at MCC Academy, one grade at a time. The board requested the Education Committee and Full Time School Council to come up with a strategy, kind of high school, financial requirements and curriculum development.

We had a first of its kind, "Chicago Open House" at MCC location on Saturday, October 15, 2016, and "Open Mosque day" at MEC on Sunday, October 16, 2016. Both events were very successful. Especially, MCC location got more than 300 visitors that day. Both the Mosques were open to our non-Muslim neighbors to learn about Islam and Muslims. Our dedicated teams at both centers made this event successful. Guests were briefed about Islam while taking them on a Masjid tour. Visitors also observed Asr prayer.

Taking advantage of an old resolution passed by the MCC General Body, and changed City of Chicago rules, MCC board is applying for the permit of building a mezzanine at MCC Prayer hall as a better place for sisters to pray. The application has been submitted for city approval.

MCC elections for the year of 2016 will be held on Sunday, December 11. Nomination process is in full swing. Elections will be held for 5 general directors, one women category and one youth director. Please pay your membership dues if you have not, and participate in elections. MCC continuously strives for new programs and we encourage you to participate in these programs. You can look at the TV monitors for *(Continued on page 2)*



## Open House Chicago

Every so often you experience a moment in time when you really feel part of something big. This was the case on October 15, 2016 when the MCC participated in Open House Chicago (OHC), an annual event organized by the Chicago Architectural Foundation since 2010. Two hundred sites throughout Chicagoland are chosen based on their architecture, design, history and cultural significance. Given the rich history of the Elston Avenue building which began as a beautiful old theater called the Rivoli Theater in the 1920s, then later become a thriving banquet hall called Antoine's until finally becoming one of the oldest and largest masjids in Chicago in the 1980s, MCC was a draw for over 200 curious non-Muslims, who marveled at the architectural features and original chandeliers, door knobs and other design motifs throughout the first floor. The MCC Interfaith & Outreach Committee arranged for tour guides who grew up attending MCC, a whole host of senior members who founded the masjid and several youth who offered chai and snacks, henna, a peak at artifacts from around the world and answered questions. Our beloved Imams, Hafiz Ikhlas and Mufti Nazim Mangera, personally introduced themselves to visitors after their tours. From the staff at MCC who made the masjid look clean and beautiful to the volunteers who set up attractive and informative tables of activities and displays, the team spirit was palpable, mashaAllah, and, InshaAllah, was evident to the attendees. Several visitors thanked us for offering them the opportunity to see what goes on inside the masjid. On that day, MCC was really a part of Chicago and Chicago felt genuinely welcomed inside MCC.

*Anjum Ali*

## MCC Annual Dinner on November 5

The MCC Annual Dinner "Promoting Positive Community Building" will be held on Saturday, November 5 at 7pm at White Eagle Banquets. Keynote speaker will be Azhar Azceez, President of ISNA. Tickets for individuals are \$75, for students \$35, and for a table of ten \$650. Babysitting for ages 4-10 costs \$20. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.mccchicago.org](http://www.mccchicago.org).

## MCCA Registering New Applicants

MCC Academy encourages prospective families to apply early for a seat to any program, full-time or part-time early childhood, elementary or middle school. To apply, please stop by the office or you can download the application from [www.mccacademy.org](http://www.mccacademy.org). We have openings now and for the next school year however early application is encouraged to better ensure a seat in the program of your choice.

### New Part-time Early Childhood Program:

Feedback on our new MCCA part-time early childhood program has been phenomenal. Among parents whose children attended the program last year, we have received many accolades about the class structure, how much the students learned, and how pleased they were with the lead teacher, Mrs. Sabiha Patel, and her assistant Mrs. Rania Abdulbari. This new program for 4 and 5 year-old children operates out of our Morton Grove campus on a part-time schedule, meeting Monday through Thursday from 10AM - 2PM.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Ayah of the Month

"Whoever fears Allah, He brings forth a way out for him. And provides him (with what he needs) from where he does not even imagine. And whoever places his trust in Allah, He is sufficient for him. Surely Allah is to accomplish His purpose. Allah has set a measure for every thing" [65:2-3]

### Hadith of the Month

Aisha reported, the Messenger of Allah (S) said, "No believer is pricked by a thorn or more, except that Allah will raise him one degree in status or He will erase a sin." [Muslim]

## US Elections November 8: Please Vote

(Continued from "President's Report")

different programs and ask the office.

MCC has hired a Youth and Senior Coordinator (Mohsin Ishaq) who will be talking to various committees, councils, schools and employees to develop additional successful programs for youth and seniors. Please extend full support to Mohsin so that he can develop some good programs for these two entities.

November 8, 2016 is the election-day for US president, senators, congressmen and many other local positions. As Muslims, it is our duty to full participate in these elections. I encourage you all to register and vote for deserving candidate.

Mohammad Sarwar Nasir  
President, MCC  
847-927-0919, Msnasir53@gmail.com

(Continued from "MCC: A Registering New Applicants")



The part-time program is unique from our full-time early childhood program in that it is a dual-language learning environment designed with extra emphasis

made on teaching early Arabic language skills. Teachers speak in both English and Arabic throughout the day so that the young children absorb both languages. Students also advance in reading and math skills and study Quran and Islamic Studies alongside Arabic. Our teachers employ a play-to-learn approach with many hands-on learning activities. Students also enjoy free play time in our school's gymnasium or outside on the field.

## Countering Today's Challenges

The MEC Women's Committee hosted a special program in English for sisters and mothers facing today's challenges in helping their children to deal with bullying, peer pressure, culture clashes, and islamophobia. Sister Hadia Zarzour - a Fulbright Scholar and a licensed counselor with a Masters in counseling psychology, conducted a discussion followed by a question answer session on the issues Muslim youth are facing today. Discussions such as these will be very helpful to our community as our children are constantly facing a fast-changing environment.

Zeiba Husain

## Civic Engagement: The National Election Day is November 8

In Illinois, eligible voters can vote early at their choice of numerous locations, morning through evening hours, weekends and by mail. Eligible voters can even register as late as election day.

While the Presidential election gets the most media coverage, the elections that determine who represents us at other levels of government often impact our day-to-day lives more. Additionally, the election of U.S. Senators and Representatives determine what kind of relationship Congress will have with the President. Voting for offices other than that of the President/Vice President is often called "voting down-ballot" because these offices are listed further down on the ballot - after the choices for President/Vice-President. Voting for these down-ballot officials can often be very confusing. It is not unusual to see names of people we have never seen or heard of before. Confronted with these choices in the booth we are not confident in casting a vote for many of these offices. It is best to research and think about the choices available to you before entering the booth. The following are tools to help you make an informed decision and fulfill your civic and Islamic duty.

The sites below will help you find out where to vote, your U.S. Congressional district, the candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, candidates for state and county offices, any referendums, and any other logistical information you need. If you live outside of Cook County, go to the site for Chicago residents and there will be a link towards the bottom for your Illinois County: City of Chicago Residents - [Chicagoelections.com](http://Chicagoelections.com); and Suburban Cook County Residents - [Cookcountyclerk.com/elections](http://Cookcountyclerk.com/elections). At both of these sites, you can click on the names of the candidates to be taken to a statement by the candidate.

An additional helpful site is [Ballotpedia.org](http://Ballotpedia.org). After getting your address this site will show you a sample ballot. You can click on the candidate's name to a hyperlink that takes you to a page to learn more about the candidate. [2016Election.Procon.org](http://2016Election.Procon.org) is a site that helps organize the positions taken by the Presidential candidates on many major issues.

After doing your research, don't forget to go out and vote!

Naushina Rahman

## MCC Elections 2016

This year, the MCC election will take place on Sunday, December 11th and will be for 5 new Board members, and a designated position for one youth and one female board member (total 7 new Board members). Elections will take place from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM at both the Elston and Morton Grove buildings. InshaAllah, we are also hoping to schedule a candidate-forum on Sunday, December 4, 2016 at the Morton Grove building (last year the forum was held at the Elston facility).

The Request for Absentee Ballot forms should be available at the Elston and Morton Grove Masjid offices. The last day to submit requests for Absentee Ballots will be Sunday, November 13, by 2:00 PM. You may also contact Samina Hussain at [mccelectioncommittee@gmail.com](mailto:mccelectioncommittee@gmail.com) or at (847) 663-9134 if you have any questions regarding the elections or would like the Request for Absentee Ballot Form.

Finally, we will need volunteers, especially for Election Day. Such tasks include helping verify membership and distribute ballots, help voters with any questions they may have, providing refreshments for voters and volunteers, counting ballots, etc.

Samina Hussain, Chairperson, Election Committee

## New MCC Youth and Senior Coordinator Hired

MCC has hired Mohsin Ishaq as a Youth and Senior Coordinator (YSC). Mohsin will utilize his expertise in developing additional programs for our youth and seniors. As an initial step, he will be contacting various MCC committees and councils to review the existing programs and would need our full support in this regard.

## Vote Early Phone Bank

On Tuesday, October 25th from 5-8pm many gathered in the MEC social hall to partake in a phone bank. The phone bank was an initiative to get south Asian citizens in the Chicagoland area to get out and vote. Throughout the multiple question survey, the interviewer asked if the citizens were going to vote and, if so, if they would like to early vote. The purpose of this phone bank was to have people vote to insure that the South Asian communities' voice is heard. There is such a convenience in voting early. One MEC volunteer said "I like coming to this phone bank because I like to experience civic engagement in action and just be able to teach people the convenience about early voting."

Sawleh Waraich

## MCC Elections 2015

### Candidates' Nomination In Progress

Following the deadline of Sunday, November 6th, for submitting Nominations by Petition, MCC's Nominations Committee is scheduled to post the final list of nominees by November 13, 2016, inshaAllah! Names of these nominees will be placed on the ballot for the elections scheduled for December 11, 2016. A voting member may vote in person on December 11th at our MCC Elston Avenue location or at MEC Morton Grove location.

### Voting by Absentee Ballot

Votes may also be cast by an Absentee Ballot. An Absentee Ballot may be obtained by downloading from the MCC website or can be picked up from the MCC office. Request can also be made via e-mail; and should include all information required in the form including member's mailing address for verification. The deadline to submit requests for absentee ballots is by 2:00 PM on Sunday, November 13, 2016.

### Candidate Forum- December 4, 2016

InshaAllah, the MCC election Committee will schedule a candidate-forum on Sunday, December 4, 2016 at the Morton Grove building (last year the forum was held at the Elston facility). The nominees will present themes for their candidacy and will be an open Q/A session afterwards.

## MEC Open Mosque Day

MEC was bustling with volunteering activities on October 16th Sunday afternoon. It was the 2nd annual Open Mosque Day, when along with several other Chicagoland mosques, MEC welcomed local community for an informative, educational, and fun afternoon. It is an annual event organized by the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago. The purpose of this event was to provide our guests an opportunity to get acquainted with fellow Muslim neighbors, tour the mosque, ask questions and get first-hand information about Islamic faith. Around 40 non-Muslims visited with curiosity and questions, many of them had never been to any mosques before. Guests got a chance to meet the Imam, explore different cultures through Islamic artifacts, get Hanna and their name in calligraphy - all while enjoying cookies from girls scout group and Mediterranean snacks. The day ended with lovely thank you notes from visitors like "Thank you for this wonderful welcome. Your outreach programs are impressive", "Thank you for sharing your special place with us" and many more. Thanks to all the volunteers, especially the youth, and to Br. Syed Ullah for his photography.

Anisa Laliwala

## Urgency of Knowing Your Muslim and Catholic Neighbors

St. Isaac Jogues Parish in Niles graciously hosted on Tuesday, October 18, 2016, an important event involving participation from Muslims and Catholics of the neighborhood. Nearly 100 participants attended. They discussed commonalities between the Catholics and Muslims; and explored how these commonalities can benefit mutual understanding and closeness. It was also suggested to encourage others to engage in such important discussions.

## Women's Lounge at MCC Completed

Alhumdulillah the Women's Lounge at MCC (Elston) has been completely overhauled and renovated earlier this month. It is now a beautiful private space for our female community members. Designer and decorator Naaz Ayoob worked hard to brighten the space to make it inviting. Some of the updates include relaxing couches, reading space, safe play area for children, and tables and chairs to provide homework space for young adults. The walls are beautifully decorated in Islamic art and the lounge is private area for women to connect with each other. Please give a round of applause to Sr. Khadija and Sr. Naaz for their hard work, as well as to Sr. Ayesha for pushing the idea!

## Educators Meeting at MEC on October 17

MEC hosted a team of Indonesian educators for discussion on educational themes and methodology used at the MCC School system. Also discussed was the scope of the Muslim Community Center's programs and how the Center works with other religious institutions, schools, and governmental agencies to create a robust civil society. The MCC President Br. Sarwar Nasir welcomed the guests and invited MCCA Principal, Br. Habib Quadri for a formal presentation. There was also a Q/A session afterwards in the areas of curriculum, procedures, and logistics. The guests were served with dinner and a tour of the MEC afterwards.

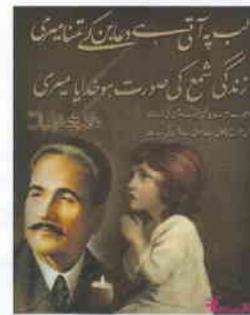


## Forthcoming Interfaith Thanksgiving Services

Several members from the MCC and MEC communities will be taking part in the forthcoming neighborhood thanksgiving services. MCC Imam Mufti Nazim Mangera will recite an Ayah about giving thanks and say Adhaan in the services at Trinity United Methodist Church in Wilmette on Tuesday, November 15, 2016. Students from the MCCA are expected to present a choir there.

Br. Anas Ghandi from the MCC Board is scheduled to say Adhaan in the Winnetka Interfaith Council Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 22, 2016.

## Allama Iqbal Anniversary



Allama Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal's 139th birth anniversary is to be observed on November 9, 2016. Allama Iqbal was a philosopher, poet, and politician; he was born in Sialkot, Pakistan. He is

considered one of the most important figures in Urdu literature, with literary work in both the Urdu and Persian. He is admired as a prominent classical poet by Pakistani, Indian, Iranian, and other international scholars. Though Iqbal is best known as an eminent poet, he is also a highly acclaimed "Muslim philosophical thinker of modern times". His first poetry book, *Asrar-e-Khudi* (Secrets of the Self) appeared in the Persian language in 1915; other books in Persian include *Rumuz-i-Bekbudi* (Hints of Selflessness), *Payam-i-Mashriq* (The Message of the East) and *Zabur-i-Ajam* (Persian Psalms), *Javed Nama* (Book of Javed), and the *Pas Cheh Bayed Kard Aay Aquam-e-Sharq* (What are we to do, O Nations of the East?). His Urdu books are *Bang-e-Dara* (The Call of the Marching Bell), *Bal-e-Jibril* (Wings of Gabriel), *Armughan-e-Hijaz* (The Gift of Hijaz), and *Zarb-e-Kaleem* (The Strike of Moses).

### MCC Publications Committee

Chairperson	Layout Editor
Asea Qidwai	Najah Bhatti
Co-Chair	Editorial Advisor
Shabnam Mahmood	Javed Bhatti

*The Message* is a monthly publication of the Muslim Community Center that provides a forum for members to engage with the administration, organization, and activities of MCC/MEC and with each other. Submit your questions and comments MCCpublication@gmail.com. The opinions expressed in *The Message* do not necessarily represent those of MCC. The editors reserve the right to edit all material.