

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

- * Enforces extremist Wahhabi theological writ in America’s mosques
- * Established by U.S.-based members of the Muslim Brotherhood who also had a background as leaders of the Muslim Students Association
- * Largest Muslim organization in North America

Origins and Mission

The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) was [established](#) in July 1981 by U.S.-based members of the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) who also had a background as [leaders](#) of the [Muslim Students Association](#) (MSA). As author and terrorism expert Steven Emerson [puts it](#), ISNA “grew out of the Muslim Students Association, which ... was founded by Brotherhood members.” Indeed, Muslim Brothers would [dominate](#) ISNA’s leadership throughout its early years, when the Society was highly dependent upon [Saudi funding](#). ISNA’s founding [mission](#) was “to advance the cause of Islam and serve Muslims in North America so as to enable them to adopt Islam as a complete way of life.”

Today ISNA is the largest Muslim organization on the continent. Its annual conferences routinely [draw](#) 30,000 to 40,000 [attendees](#), and its website receives some 2.6 million hits per month. In an [effort](#) “to be an exemplary and unifying Islamic organization in North America,” ISNA professes a commitment to:

- “contributing to the betterment of the Muslim community and society at large”;
- promoting “freedom”;
- “eradicating prejudice”;
- “establishing an open, pluralistic platform for presenting Islam”;
- “supporting Muslim communities”;
- “developing educational, social and outreach programs”; and
- “fostering good relations with other religious communities, civic and service organizations, and all levels of government.”

ISNA’s Earliest Roots

When ISNA was [incorporated](#) on [July 14, 1981](#), its official location was listed as 6555 South County Road 750 East, in Plainfield, Indiana. At the time, that same address was also used by MSA. Eventually, the [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#) (HLF)—the U.S.-based financing wing of [Hamas](#)—would share the address as well. The [complex](#) that first housed ISNA’s operations—built by the [North American Islamic Trust](#) in the late 1970s and early 1980s—featured a \$3.5 million mosque, an 80,000 volume library, and a research center. Funding for these facilities included a combined \$21 million from the emir of Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood leaders [Yusef Qaradawi](#) and Youssef Nada.

ISNA’s three [incorporators](#) were listed as: (a) Mahmoud Rashdan, former secretary general of MSA; (b) Talat Sultan, who later served as president of the [Islamic Circle of North America](#); and (c) [Iqbal Unus](#), a former member of MSA’s General Secretariat who later [served](#) stints as [president](#) of the [Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers](#) (a subsidiary of ISNA), dean of students at the [Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences](#), headquarters director of the [International Institute of Islamic Thought](#), secretary general of ISNA, and [managing editor](#) of ISNA’s *Islamic Horizons* magazine.

ISNA’s Founders, Original Board Members, and Early Leaders

* One of ISNA’s key [founders](#) was one of [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](#)’s founding students, [Sami Al-Arian](#), who [was](#) directly [involved](#) with the Muslim Brotherhood in 1981, the year ISNA was established.

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- [John Brennan](#)
- [Muzammil Siddiqi](#)
- [Abdullah \(a.k.a. Abdallah\) Azzam](#)
- [Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin \(a.k.a. H. Rap Brown\)](#)

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- [Islamic Association for Palestine \(IAP\)](#)
- [Muslim Students Association of the U.S. and Canada \(MSA\)](#)
- [International Institute of Islamic Thought \(IIIT\)](#)

* A prominent founding member of ISNA was [Mahboob Khan](#), also an [early founder](#) of MSA.

* [Sayyid M. Syeed](#), who served as president of MSA from 1980-83, was an original founding [board member](#) of ISNA, [served](#) a stint as the group’s [secretary-general](#), and [headed](#) ISNA’s Center for Interfaith and Community Outreach in the District of Columbia.

* [Another](#) of ISNA’s original board members was Haroon Qazi, who later became a member of the [Islamic Medical Association of North America](#).

* For a list of all of ISNA’s original board members, see page 12 [here](#).

* An Egyptian named Ahmed Elkadi, who served as [president](#) of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood from 1984-94, joined ISNA’s executive council in 1984.

* In November 1987, the Islamic Society of North America [established](#) the [ISNA Political Awareness Committee](#) headed by [Abdurahman Alamoudi](#), an ISNA regional representative and Muslim Brotherhood operative who in 2004 would be convicted on terrorism-related charges.

Ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Extremism

Based on a mid-1980s investigation, the FBI concluded that the Muslim Brotherhood members who founded U.S.-based groups had risen to “leadership roles within NAIT [[North American Islamic Trust](#)] and its related organizations,” including ISNA, “which means they are in a position to direct the activities and support of Muslims in the U.S. for the Islamic Revolution.” Expanding on this, a late-’80s FBI memo [said](#):

“Within the organizational structure of NAIT, there have been numerous groups and individuals identified as being a part of a covert network of revolutionaries who have clearly indicated there (sic) support for the Islamic Revolution as advocated by the Ayatollah Khomeini and his government as well as other fanatical Islamic Shiite fundamentalist leaders in the Middle East. This faction of Muslims have declared war on the United States, Israel and any other country they deem as an enemy of Islam. The common bond between these various organizations is both religious and political with the underlying common goal being to further the holy war (Islamic Jihad).”

Declassified FBI [memos](#) indicate that ISNA was identified as a Muslim Brotherhood front as early as 1987. “The entire organization is structured, controlled and funded by followers and supporters of the Islamic Revolution as advocated by the founders” of the Brotherhood in Egypt, said one source. In August 1988, that same source furnished the FBI with a private ISNA [document](#) “clearly stat[ing] that ISNA has a political goal to exert influence on political decision making and legislation in North America that is contrary to their certification in their not-for-profit tax returns as filed both with the State of Indiana and with IRS.” And a 1988 U.S. Muslim Brotherhood [document](#) bluntly identified ISNA as part of the “apparatus of the Brotherhood.”

Two other U.S. Muslim Brotherhood documents (from 1991 and 1992), however, [indicated](#) that the Brotherhood’s influence over ISNA had declined somewhat in the late 1980s and early ’90s. Nonetheless, ISNA was explicitly named in a May 1991 [Muslim Brotherhood](#) document—titled “[An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America](#)”—as one of the Brotherhood’s 29 likeminded “organizations of our friends” that shared the common goal of destroying America and turning it into a Muslim nation. These “friends” were [identified](#) by the Brotherhood as groups that could help teach Muslims “that their work in America is a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and ‘sabotaging’ its miserable house by their hands ... so that ... God’s religion [Islam] is made victorious over all other religions.”

Also named in the Muslim Brotherhood document were:

- [Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers](#)
- [Association of Muslim Social Scientists](#) (of North America)
- [Audio-Visual Center](#)
- [Baitul Mal Inc.](#)
- [Foundation for International Development](#)
- [International Institute of Islamic Thought](#)

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- [Islamic Centers Division](#)
- [Islamic Circle of North America](#)
- [Islamic Education Department](#)
- [Islamic Housing Cooperative](#)
- [Islamic Information Center](#) (of America)
- [Islamic Medical Association](#) (of North America)
- [Islamic Teaching Center](#)
- [ISNA Fiqh Committee](#) (now known as the [Fiqh Council of North America](#))
- [ISNA Political Awareness Committee](#)
- [Malaysian Islamic Study Group](#)
- [Mercy International Association](#)
- [Muslim Arab Youth Association](#)
- [Muslim Businessmen Association](#)
- [Muslim Communities Association](#)
- [Muslim Students Association of the U.S. and Canada](#)
- [Muslim Youth of North America](#)
- [North American Islamic Trust](#)
- [Occupied Land Fund](#) (later known as the [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#))
- [United Association for Studies and Research](#)

Promoting Sharia Law & Islamic Supremacism

ISNA leaders view Islam as being [superior](#) to all other faiths and destined to replace them. Taha J. Alwani, a leading official of the [Fiqh Council of North America](#), which is run under ISNA, writes: “In considering the earth as an arena for Islam, Allah has promised its inheritance to His righteous people, and He has promised that Islam will prevail over other religions.”

In a similar spirit, ISNA [co-founder Muzammil Siddiqi](#) wrote in a 2004 *fatwa*: “The Qur’an makes us fully aware that there are a variety of religious communities, each happy with its own version of the truth. They all possess some truth which is a part of the true Islam in their midst, but regrettably none of them has preserved the message of Allah in its complete and authentic form. Allah sent Prophet Muhammad to guide humanity to the original and authentic faith and the message of Allah.”

According to ISNA leadership, Muslims are obliged to view political processes solely through the eyes of their faith. Alwani, for one, urges Muslims to [participate](#) in American politics “in order to protect our rights as American citizens”; to “facilitate our support of our fellow Muslims around the world”; to “help to spread Islam’s message”; to “convey the universality of Islam”; “to protect our human rights, guarantee the fulfillment of our needs, and work for the improvement of living conditions for Muslims and non-Muslims in America and abroad”; and “to promote good and to forbid and prevent evil for the welfare of our society.” Further, Alwani exhorts Muslims to nominate fellow Muslims for political office; to “suppor[t] (both politically and financially) those non-Muslim candidates whose beliefs and values are most compatible with ours as Muslims, and who most address and support our issues and causes”; and, above all else, to become American citizens and registered voters who can go to the polls on election day.

Muzammil Siddiqi likewise emphasizes the need for Muslims to be politically active: “In Islam there is no division between religion and politics ... We have to see everything from the Islamic point of view whether social, economical or political.” Siddiqi aims to promote, in an incremental manner, the [establishment](#) of universal Islamic rule and the creation of a worldwide Islamic state:

“[T]hings do not change overnight. Changes comes through patience, wisdom and hard work. I believe that as Muslims we should participate in the system to safeguard our interests and try to bring gradual change for the right cause, the cause of truth and justice. We must not forget that Allah’s rules have to be established in all lands, and all our efforts should lead to that direction.”

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disease,” “a sin,” and a “corruption” that merits the death penalty. Similarly, Taha Alwani has called homosexuality “an abomination,” “a crime,” and an “illness.” Regarding women’s issues, Alwani has [characterized](#) the [hijab](#) as “part of the protection of the family and family values.... We don’t like to see in society any woman to show herself in a way that attracts husbands of other wives.” ISNA leader and board member [Jamal Badawi](#) is also a strong [proponent](#) of the hijab for women.

The Radicalization of American Mosques

Described by Islam scholar Stephen Schwartz as “one of the chief conduits through which the radical Saudi form of Islam passes into the United States,” ISNA focuses heavily on providing Wahhabi theological indoctrination materials to a large percentage of the mosques in North America. Many of these mosques were built with Saudi money and are required, by their Saudi benefactors, to strictly follow the dictates of Wahhabist Imams—an [edict that affects](#) the tone and [content](#) of the sermons given in the mosques, the selection of books and periodicals that may be read in mosque libraries or sold in mosque bookshops, and the policies governing the exclusion or suppression of dissenters from the congregations.

Kaukab Siddique, a Lincoln University professor who has [called](#) for the destruction of Israel, [concurs](#) that “ISNA controls most mosques in America and thus also controls who will speak at every Friday prayer, and which literature will be distributed there.”

Through its affiliate, the [North American Islamic Trust](#) (NAIT)—a Saudi government-backed organization created to fund Islamist enterprises in North America—ISNA [reportedly](#) holds the mortgages on [50 to 80 percent](#) of all mosques in the U.S. and Canada. Thus the organization can freely exercise ultimate authority over these houses of worship and their teachings. Notably, the [boards](#) of NAIT and ISNA overlap considerably.

According to Sufi leader Sheikh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani’s January 7, 1999 [testimony](#) before a State Department Open Forum, Islamic extremists, at that time, had already gained control of “more than 80 percent of the mosques in the United States.” This, said Kabbani, “means that the ideology of extremism has been spread to 80 percent of the Muslim population, mostly the youth and the new generation.” In his personal investigation of 114 American mosques, Kabbani [found](#) that “ninety of them were mostly exposed ... to extreme or radical ideology, based on their speeches, books and board members.” This was largely due to the efforts of ISNA.

Similarly, a 2008 report by the International Assessment and Strategy Center indicated that ISNA was [supplying](#) educational and support services to about 1,100 of the approximately 1,500 mosques in North America.

According to [Dr. Mark Christian](#), a [former](#) Islamist who converted to Christianity, “ISNA mosques differ from other mosques in both leadership and organization.” He elaborates: “Most mosques in the U.S. are small independent affairs, more often than not without a full-time imam. They teach the same Quran and study the same Hadiths as the ISNA mosques, but they are largely autonomous, answering only to their own boards, or at times, small regional affiliations with other area mosques. They generally accept the rulings of the Fiqh Council, but unlike ISNA mosques, they are not punished for failing to do so. ISNA mosques are highly structured corporate operations with a high degree of similarity in organization and teaching regardless of geographic location. Think of the independent mosques as ‘Mom and Pop’ stores while ISNA mosques are more like franchises of a large national chain. Just as the shopping experience differs little from one Wal-Mart to the next, so it is with ISNA mosques nationwide.”

Supporting Extremism, Jihadism, and Anti-Semitism, 1995-2007

* When [Hamas](#) political leader [Mousa Abu Marzook](#) was [arrested](#) in 1995 by U.S. authorities pending an Israeli warrant, ISNA rushed to his [defense](#). The [November/December 1995](#) issue of the ISNA magazine *Islamic Horizons*, which went to press nearly a full year after Hamas had been officially designated by the U.S. government as a terrorist organization, featured an [article](#) lamenting that Marzook was being “held hostage in the U.S. at the whims of his Zionist accusers,” even as it acknowledged that Marzook was “[a] member of the political wing of Hamas.” In 1997 Marzook [thanked](#) ISNA for having “supported” and “consoled” him throughout his “ordeal.”

* On May 24 1998, ISNA was one of 11 organizations that [sponsored](#) an all-day Brooklyn College program where [Wagdy Ghoniem](#), an Egyptian Islamic cleric, [spoke](#) in Arabic about the “infidelity,” “stealth” and “deceit” of the Jews, and led attendees in a song whose refrain was: “No to the Jews, Descendants of the Apes, We Vow to Return

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* ISNA's 35th Annual Convention, which was held in St. Louis in September 1998, featured [speeches](#) by CAIR founding member [Nihad Awad](#), U.S. Congressman David Bonior, and ISNA secretary general [Sayyid Syeed](#).

* On May 29, 1999, ISNA, CAIR, and [American Muslims for Jerusalem](#) were among the 26 organizational [co-sponsors](#) of a Santa Clara, California conference/fundraiser where UC Berkeley lecturer [Hatem Bazian](#) announced: “[I]n the Hadith, the Day of Judgment will never happen until you fight the Jews. They are on the West side of the river, which is the Jordan River, and you’re on the East side ... until the trees and the stones will say, oh Muslim, there is a Jew hiding behind me. Come and kill him! And that’s in the Hadith about this, this is a future battle before the Day of Judgment.”

* In a January 2000 press release, ISNA [declared](#) that it was setting aside a special day “to honor the Shaheeds [martyrs] and the Mujahideen [jihadists] of Chechnia.”

* The September 2000 ISNA Convention (in Chicago) [featured](#) a speech by Oussama Ahmad of the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#), a Hamas front group.

* When the U.S. government designated the Holy Land Foundation (HLF) as a terrorist organization in December 2001, ISNA, which had raised money for HLF and had allowed the Foundation to set up booths at ISNA conventions, [complained](#) that HLF was being unfairly “targeted” by “pro-Israel organizations and individuals.” In an effort to have the “terrorist” designation removed, ISNA asked President Bush to “[reconsider](#) what we believe is an unjust and counterproductive move that can only damage America's credibility with Muslims in this country and around the world and could create the impression that there has been a shift from a war on terrorism to an attack on Islam.” By ISNA's [reckoning](#), governmental and law-enforcement efforts to stop terror financing by U.S.-based Islamic charities (like the now-defunct HLF) creates “a [chilling effect](#)” on the type of charitable giving which the Islamic faith demands.

* During the same general time period, ISNA also [developed](#) a working relationship with [KindHearts](#), another (now-defunct) Hamas-affiliated entity described by a Treasury Department investigation as “the progeny of Holy Land Foundation and [Global Relief Foundation](#).”

* A noteworthy [speaker](#) at ISNA's 2001 national convention was [Sami Al-Arian](#), a University of South Florida computer-science professor who eventually would be found guilty of conspiring to fund the terrorist organization Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Al-Arian [spoke](#) frequently at ISNA events, and ISNA board members attended conferences that Al-Arian organized for his [Islamic Committee for Palestine](#).

* Vehemently [opposed](#) to the post-9/11 U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, ISNA was a signatory to a February 20, 2002 [document](#) condemning military tribunals and the detention of immigrants apprehended in connection with terrorism investigations. In ISNA's [estimation](#), the Patriot Act constituted an assault on the civil liberties of Muslim Americans.

* At a 2002 ISNA conference in Berkeley, California, guest speaker [Hamza Yusuf stated](#), “[W]e shouldn't be ashamed of anything we say. There is nothing Prophet Muhammad ever said that we should be ashamed of ... The only America that I am proud of is the America of dissent.” Also at this conference:

- Another noteworthy [guest](#) was William Baker, the [former](#) Populist Party chairman who authored a conspiratorial anti-Semitic book titled *Theft of a Nation*.
- During a [session](#) exploring how Muslims could fight back against “attacks on Islam,” a questioner complained that Muslim leadership in the U.S. had “asked [Muslims] to accept the blame for 9/11.” Three prominent members of the panel all rushed to assure the questioner that, in fact, they were not certain that [al Qaeda](#)—or *any* Muslim, for that matter—was responsible for 9/11. Moderator [Jamal Barzinji](#), who at the time was director of the [International Institute of Islamic Thought](#), [said](#): “It is not only that we don't have any proof, but the FBI doesn't have any proof. They are still looking.” Former ISNA president Muzammil Siddiqi, who was still on ISNA's board, [added](#): “We cannot say in surety whoever did it or not.” And [Souheil Channouchi](#), then-president of [Muslim American Society](#), agreed: “Probably we'll never know who actually did it, or who, what, or what groups.”

* Also in 2002, WTHR, an Indianapolis television station located close to ISNA's Plainfield, Indiana headquarters, [said](#) it had [identified](#) “about a dozen charities, organizations and individuals under federal scrutiny for possible ties to terrorism that are in some way linked to ISNA.”

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* In the fall of 2003, ISNA endorsed the [Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride Coalition](#), which sought to secure amnesty and civil liberties protections for illegal aliens.

* In December 2003, U.S. Senators Charles Grassley and Max Baucus of the Senate Committee on Finance [listed ISNA](#) as one of 25 American Muslim organizations that “[finance](#) terrorism and perpetuate violence.”

* Among those invited to speak in December 2003 at a [Universal Heritage Foundation](#)-sponsored [conference](#) entitled “Islam for Humanity” were ISNA leaders [Abdullah Idris Ali](#), Muzzamil Siddiqi, and Sayyid Syeed. Additional invited speakers included Sheikh [Abdur-Rahman Al-Sudais](#), and [Wagedy Ghoneim](#). The former was a Saudi cleric who, according to various news reports, had recently prayed for the Jews to be “terminated,” calling them “the scum of humanity, the rats of the world, the killers of prophets, and the grandsons of monkeys and pigs.”

* At a 2004 forum at Georgetown University titled “War and Violence: Islam’s Perspective,” ISNA vice president [Mohamed Magid](#) claimed that news reports about the [Darfur genocide](#) (in Sudan, where Arab Muslims were killing black Christians) were vastly [overblown](#): “[T]hings escalated and people called it genocide. There is a fight, people have been displaced, people lost their homes and they need help but at the same time I want to say there is some kind of exaggeration of the some of the problems.”

* ISNA chose not to endorse or participate in the May 14, 2005 “[Free Muslims March Against Terror](#),” an event whose [purpose](#) was to “send a message to the terrorists and extremists that their days are numbered ... [and to send] a message to the people of the Middle East, the Muslim world and all people who seek freedom, democracy and peaceful coexistence that we support them.”

* ISNA’s 2005 national conference included a [session](#) entitled “The Muslim Political Outreach Agenda,” where [Muslim Public Affairs Council](#) (MPAC) founder [Salam al-Marayati](#) denounced not only law-enforcement investigations that involved Muslim informants, but also the Muslims who served as those informants:

“Counter-terrorism and counter-violence should be defined by us. We should define how an effective counter-terrorism policy should be pursued in this country. So, number one, we reject any effort, notion, suggestion that Muslims should start spying on one another ... Law enforcement is going to come to your mosque; it already has as far as I can tell. Everywhere I go either somebody tells me that officials have met with them publicly or they tell me that they know who those folks are that are representing law enforcement.”

* A 2006 [poll](#) of ISNA members found that by nearly a 3-to-1 margin, they believed that the U.S. government had advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks but allowed them to happen anyway. A majority of respondents did not believe that Muslims were responsible for either the 9/11 attacks or the July 7, 2005 terrorist bombings in London.

* In July 2006, ISNA secretary general [Sayyid M. Syeed](#) joined [National Council of Churches](#) general secretary [Robert Edgar](#) and [Sojourners](#) leader [Jim Wallis](#) in [opposing](#) any U.S. military action against Iran’s nuclear weapons program—instead advocating “direct negotiations” with Tehran.

* During ISNA’s [2006 convention](#), guest speaker Kamran Memon, an attorney with the group Muslims for a Safe America, [tried](#) to rationalize al Qaeda’s terrorist activities as a response to provocative American policies overseas:

“Some Muslims in the Muslim world decided that they were just not going to take it anymore. They were angry at our ongoing support from their enemies, so they began to attack American targets to pressure our government to change its foreign policy. They attacked American targets in 1992 in Somalia; in 1993 in New York; in 1995 and 1996 in Saudi Arabia; 1998 in Tanzania and Kenya; and 2000 in Yemen. But the U.S. government did not change its foreign policy, so those Muslims who decided that they weren’t going to take it anymore attacked America on September 11.... They are also angry at us because they look at us, the elder generations, and they see us sitting on our hands not doing anything serious to alleviate the suffering of Muslims in the Muslim world. And when they get that angry, then they do things, like if you believe that Muslims did it, they do things like the London bombings in July 2005; because they see no other way to change American foreign policy other than violence.”

At that same conference, MPAC executive director Salam al-Marayati [complained](#) that Middle Eastern affairs were “not centered around al Qaeda as much as ... around whatever the powers that be in the Middle East, with the power obviously centered

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* At its 2007 [convention](#) in Illinois, ISNA honored the National Council of Churches' (NCC) associate general secretary for interfaith relations, Shanta Premawardhana, with its Interfaith Unity Award. In his acceptance speech, Premawardhana [lauded](#) ISNA for “doing the will of God”; condemned “far-right-wing” Christians who were critical of political Islam; denounced the Bush administration for its presumed intent to attack Iran’s nuclear weapons program; stated that Iran was “eager” to engage the United States in diplomatic dialogue; defended Iran’s Islamist theocratic dictatorship, to which he had been a personal envoy; assured his listeners that the Iranian mullahs accepted Islam’s supposed prohibition against nuclear weapons; lamented that “all our religious traditions,” and not Islam uniquely, “have legitimized imperialism”; chastised “those who promote fear-mongering ideologies that strengthen divisions in human relationships”; and asserted that the “only viable option in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a political one, and not a military one.”

When introducing Premawardhana, ISNA president [Ingrid Mattson](#) spoke of NCC’s “[commitment](#) to stand in partnership and solidarity with the Muslim community through some of the most difficult times of discrimination and prejudice they’ve faced, particularly since 9/11,” according to an NCC news release.

At the same 2007 ISNA convention, Parvez Ahmed of the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#) (CAIR) [defended](#) the activities and agendas of [Hamas](#) and [Hezbollah](#):

“Hamas and Hizballah are both on the U.S. State Department’s list of foreign terrorist organizations. But Hamas and Hizballah are also part of their democratic governments. They’re elected representatives of their own people. So this presents a problem. ... And when you look at historical precedent, there is historical precedence in trying to make that distinction [among terrorist groups]. And historical precedence is in Ireland, where Irish Republican Army and Sein Finn, they were, one part was terrorist; the other part was political. And ultimately, the solution to the problem in Ireland did not come until Britain negotiated with the Irish Republican Army. And that is a lesson that is often lost over here, not to mention that resistance to [Israeli] occupation is a legitimate right. It is, you can say it’s a God-given right.”

* In May 2007, ISNA-Canada [held](#) a convention titled “Shaping a Canadian Muslim Identity.” The event [featured](#) a speech by [Tariq Ramadan](#) and was [sponsored](#) by Human Concern International, a “charity” that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service has repeatedly [identified](#) as a front for al Qaeda.

* In 2007, ISNA helped operate the [Muslim Youth of North America’s National Youth Training Program](#), a summer camp that was held at [Camp-Y Noah](#) of the YMCA of Akron (Ohio). The event featured appearances by a number of Islamic [extremists](#), including [Abdullah Idris Ali](#), [Jamal Badawi](#), Altaf Husain (former president of the [Muslim Students Association](#)), Sherman Jackson (who says that “the aggressive jihad of the premodern world will find both practical justification and religious sanction,” and asserts that Islamic Law should be permitted to “influence the legal order in America”), [Mohamed Magid](#), and [Siraj Wahhaj](#).

* At ISNA’s 2008 convention, a guest speaker lauded the “[amazing work](#)” that Hamas was doing to promote education and health care in the West Bank.

ISNA and the Holy Land Foundation Trial

In the summer of 2007, the [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#) (HLF), which was based within ISNA’s [headquarters](#) in Plainfield, Indiana, was tried on charges that it had engaged in fundraising on behalf of Hamas. During the court proceedings, the U.S. government released a list of approximately 300 of HLF’s “[unindicted co-conspirators](#)” and “joint venturers.” Among them were groups such as ISNA, the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#), [Hamas](#), the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#), the [Muslim Arab Youth Association](#), the [North American Islamic Trust](#), and the [United Association for Studies and Research](#). The list also included many individuals affiliated with the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) and/or Hamas. Among these were [Omar Ahmad](#), [Abdurahman Alamoudi](#), [Yousef al-Qaradawi](#), [Abdallah Azzam](#), [Jamal Badawi](#), [Mohammad Jaghli](#), [Mousa Abu Marzook](#), [Abdel Aziz Rantisi](#), and [Ahmed Yassin](#).

Key [evidence](#) implicating ISNA included the following:

- During a secret 1993 conference in Philadelphia, the Palestine Committee (PC)—an organizational structure that [operated](#) in the U.S. to support the Muslim Brotherhood

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Documents and wiretapped conversations showed that ISNA had helped support Hamas with checks deposited into the ISNA/NAIT account for the HLF, made payable to “the Palestinian Mujahadeen,” the original name for the Hamas military wing. The funds were then [transferred](#) to the Holy Land Foundation.

- In 2004, ISNA secretary-general Sayyid Syeed [acknowledged](#) having donated money to the HLF, calling it “innocent support for what the organization believed was a good cause.”
- [According](#) to the Investigative Project on Terrorism: “Exhibits entered into evidence ... the HLF trial include an [expense voucher](#) from the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT) an [ISNA subsidiary](#), made out for \$10,000 in the name of [Musa Abu Marzook](#), as well as a [check](#) drawn on a NAIT account in the same amount made out to Marzook. Another [check for \\$10,000](#) on the same account was made out to [Marzook’s wife, Nadia Elashi](#). [Another check for \\$30,000](#) was made out to the Islamic University of Gaza (and has Shukri Abu Baker/OLF written on the memo line), a school long known to be [controlled by HAMAS](#), and which counted such notables as former HAMAS leader [Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantissi](#) and current HAMAS leader [Dr. Mahmoud Al-Zahar](#) as professors, and the recently deposed HAMAS Prime Minister [Ismail Haniyeh](#) is a [former dean of the University](#).”

In response to the government’s charges, ISNA in the fall of 2007 issued a [statement](#) asserting that it “never was, and is not now, affiliated with or influenced by any international organizations including the Muslim Brotherhood.”

In a June 2008 brief filed on their behalf by the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), ISNA and its related financial arm, the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), [petitioned](#) U.S. District Judge Jorge A. Solis to order that their names be removed from the list of co-conspirators in the HLF trial. The [prosecutors](#), in turn, [cited](#) nearly two dozen exhibits establishing “both ISNA’s and NAIT’s intimate relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestine Committee, and the defendants in this case.”

In July 2008, ISNA’s lawyers [conceded](#) that their organization, through its affiliate NAIT, had [given](#) financial support to Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzook. Their defense was that documentary evidence of those ties dated back to the late 1980s and early 1990s, before the U.S. government had officially designated Hamas as a terrorist organization.

On [July 1, 2009](#), Judge Solis [upheld](#) ISNA’s designation as an unindicted co-conspirator, [ruling](#) that the government had “[produced](#) ample evidence” linking the group to Hamas and thereby justifying the designation.

2007 to the Present

* In recent years, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has conducted [outreach work](#) with ISNA. In September 2007, for instance, DOJ used American taxpayer dollars to co-sponsor ISNA’s national convention.

* Qazi Hussein Ahmad, an avid [supporter](#) of the late [Ayatollah Khomeini](#), was originally scheduled to be a [featured speaker](#) at ISNA’s [annual Canadian conference](#) in May 2008. The leader of the al Qaeda-affiliated Pakistani group [Jamaat-e-Islami](#) (JEI), Ahmad had been [banned](#) from more than [25 countries](#) across Europe and the Middle East because of JEI’s activities; he had publicly [defended Osama bin Laden](#); he had [acknowledged](#) meeting with bin Laden on a number of occasions; and he had [claimed](#) that no definitive proof existed of bin Laden’s involvement in the 9/11 attacks. A few days before the ISNA conference, Ahmad was in Tehran as the [keynote speaker](#) at a three-day “Muslim Unity Conference” sponsored by the Iranian government. There, according to a [press release](#) issued by JEI, he hailed Iran’s “spirit to fight to the death” against the U.S. and exhorted Muslims worldwide to do the same. The ISNA-Canada conference was run [jointly](#) with the Muslim Students Association and Muslim Youth of North America, and was endorsed by the Canadian Council on American-Islamic Relations, the [Islamic Circle of North America](#), and the Muslim Association of Canada.

* At ISNA’s [2008 convention](#) in Columbus, Ohio, a number of speakers rationalized Hamas terrorism and engaged in historical revisionism:

- UC Berkeley [history professor Hatem Bazian](#), a former [fundraiser](#) for the Hamas front group [Kindhearts](#), falsely [claimed](#) that violent Palestinian opposition to Israel had started after the 1967 war (in fact, it began in 1948). Said Bazian: “The violence is not a genetic motivation or genetically defined in the Palestinians. The Palestinians don’t wake up in the morning and think yeah, I’m inclined towards violence. The Palestinians, when they woke up, they see that their land has been taken from underneath them, that they have to go through five or six checkpoints before they get to school, that they are no longer able to use the hospital, that they are seeing a new settlement being built every other

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... Palestinian Journal Dujain [censor](#) Dujain's false history. "Palestinians are sick and tired of dialogue. I mean they've been listening to dialogue for six decades. It is great to have people from different places and come and interfere and put themselves between the occupier and the victim, and Palestinians listening to promises, and they see their future disappear right in front of their eyes."

- Rick Hannis, a member of the [Christian Peacemaker Teams](#), [said](#): "Now, most people know about the militant part of Hamas. They don't know about the education or healthcare issued in the West Bank part. It really does amazing work."

Also at the 2008 ISNA conference, [hundreds](#) of vendors sold items bearing slogans in support of [Barack Obama](#)'s presidential candidacy—in violation of laws forbidding nonprofit groups from openly endorsing any particular political candidate. By contrast, there was no material supporting Republican John McCain. According to the [American Thinker](#), there were also "several booths with anti-American slogans on shirts, along with pro-Hamas, pro-Palestinian, and anti-Israel garments"; a plethora of "DVDs, books, manuals, and pamphlets calling America a terrorist organization and for the destruction of our country and Israel"; an abundance of "material calling for killing innocent men, women, and children in America" who did not embrace Sharia Law; and material advocating polygamy, encouraging child marriages, and promoting the views of the Muslim Brotherhood.

None of the aforementioned items were sold without ISNA's knowledge. Indeed, ISNA's [vendor contract](#) explicitly stated:

"Products or services sold or displayed/demonstrated in actual, kind or in printed or audio-visual matter must meet Islamic standards that ISNA wishes to observe. The determination of Islamic standards shall be in the sole and absolute discretion of ISNA, and ISNA shall have the authority to require the removal of any and all goods, displays, or other materials not meeting this standard.... Any literature (fundraising or otherwise) ... must be pre-approved in writing by ISNA, in ISNA's sole and absolute discretion."

* In July 2008, the Investigative Project on Terrorism [reported](#) that the Library page on ISNA's website contained genocidal language against Jews:

"Book 41, Number 6985: Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say: Muslim, or the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him; but the tree Gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews."

Soon thereafter, that [page](#) was scrubbed from ISNA's website, though it remained available on the [web archive](#).

* In January 2009, ISNA president [Ingrid Mattson](#) was invited to [speak](#) at the [National Prayer Service](#) for the inauguration of the newly elected U.S. President, Barack Obama.

* In June 2009, Barack Obama's senior advisor for public engagement and international affairs, [Valerie Jarrett](#), became the [first](#) White House official to address an ISNA gathering. In her remarks, Jarrett invited ISNA president Ingrid Mattson to join the White House Council on Women and Girls, a council headed by Jarrett herself.

* In early July 2009 the [speakers](#) at ISNA's national convention, which was replete with speeches denouncing U.S. foreign policies and law-enforcement practices, [included](#) such notables as former Kindhearts official [Zulfiqar Ali Shah](#), [CAIR](#) executive director [Nihad Awad](#), [Muslim America Society](#) (MAS) freedom director [Mahdi Bray](#), CAIR spokesman [Ibrahim Hooper](#), [Islamic Relief](#) staffer Naeem Muhammad, former MAS president Esam Omeish, Imam [Warith Deen Umar](#), and Islamic cleric [Siraj Wahhaj](#). Umar delivered a particularly acerbic [presentation](#), charging that Jews "have control of the world"; depicting the Holocaust as punishment of Jews for being "serially disobedient to Allah"; and implying that that Hurricane Katrina was a form of divine punishment for America's immoral tolerance for homosexuality. Moreover, Umar's books were available for purchase at the convention.

* In July 2010, ISNA gave its [Interfaith Unity Award](#) to the Northern Illinois Conference of United Methodism, which had recently voted to divest from companies doing business with Israel, including Caterpillar and General Electric. "At the national level, the Islamic Society of North America has found a close ally in The United Methodist Church," [said](#) ISNA, "both working together in campaigning for social justice, peace and equity."

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[Siraj Wahhaj](#).

* On October 19, 2011, ISNA was one of 57 organizations to co-sign a [letter](#) that Farhana Khera, executive director of an Islamic organization called Muslim Advocates, wrote to [Barack Obama](#)’s then-Deputy National Security Advisor for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (and later CIA director), [John Brennan](#). The letter [demanded](#) that Obama officials “purge all federal government training materials of biased materials”—i.e., materials that ISNA and its fellow signatories claimed were biased against Islam—and “implement a mandatory re-training program for FBI agents, U.S. Army officers, and all federal, state and local law enforcement who have been subjected to biased training.” Joining ISNA as signatories were such groups as the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#), the [Islamic Circle of North America](#), [Islamic Relief](#) USA, the [Muslim American Society](#), and the [Muslim Public Affairs Council](#).

The Obama administration quickly complied with the letter’s demands. That very same day, Dwight C. Holton, former U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon, [emphasized](#) that training materials for the FBI would be purged of everything that Islamic supremacists deemed offensive:

“I want to be perfectly clear about this: training materials that portray Islam as a religion of violence or with a tendency towards violence are wrong, they are offensive, and they are contrary to everything that this president, this attorney general and Department of Justice stands for. They will not be tolerated.”

* For a number of years, ISNA has been involved in [developing](#) “cultural sensitivity training” for law-enforcement officials and organizations across the United States.

* In 2012, ISNA president Mohamed Magid and its community outreach director, Mohamed Elsanousi, [traveled](#) to Mauritania for a [conference](#) about the “challenges faced by religious minorities in Muslim-majority communities.” The event was hosted by the vice chair of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, whose [president](#) is Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader [Yousef al-Qaradawi](#). Also present was the Obama administration’s envoy to the [Organization of Islamic Cooperation](#) (formerly known as the Organization of the Islamic Conference), [Rashad Hussain](#).

* On [January 15, 2013](#) at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Washington, DC, ISNA’s “[Shoulder to Shoulder](#)” interfaith campaign sponsored an [event](#) denouncing what it termed the “Islamophobia Network.” One of the speakers was ISNA president Mohamed Magid. Sponsors of the event included the Jewish Community Relations Council, Rabbis for Human Rights-North America, and [Sojourners](#). Particular attention was [focused](#) on a [Center for American Progress](#) report titled “[Fear Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network](#),” which dismisses concern about the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood as anti-Muslim propaganda.

* On May 15, 2013, ISNA president Mohamed Magid and the the leader of the Islamic Circle of North America both [attended](#) a speech by Turkey’s Islamist Prime Minister Erdogan, who spoke in support of a [\\$100 million mega-mosque project](#) which his government was funding in Maryland. Three days later, Mohamed Elsanousi, ISNA’s community outreach director, [met](#) with Erdogan in San Francisco and briefed him on ISNA’s activism—most notably the success of its [Shoulder-to-Shoulder campaign](#) and its political alliances with “[interfaith partners](#)” such as American Baptist Church USA, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Hartford Seminary, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the [National Council of Churches](#), Presbyterian Church USA, Union for Reform Judaism, United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Terrorists With Ties to ISNA

In July 2015, Dr. Mark Christian [wrote](#) that since September 11, 2001, at least 251 Muslims had attempted some form of violent jihad in the United States. “Of these,” Christian added, “109 were interdicted by U.S. counterterrorism personnel. Another 121 American Muslims were involved in attempting to join, otherwise materially support or finance known terror groups. The remaining 21 succeeded in shedding innocent American blood in the name of Islam.... Of the 21 violent attacks on domestic American targets perpetrated by domestic Muslim jihadists (defined as American citizen, naturalized or on long-term visa) at least 12 of those attackers (arguably as many as 17) regularly attended or were significantly linked to Islamic Society mosques.”

Among the noteworthy Islamic [terrorists](#) who had regularly attended ISNA mosques, wrote Dr. Christian, were the following:

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- U.S. Army psychiatrist [Nathan Redden](#), who in November 2009 went on a shooting rampage inside the Army post at Fort Hood, Texas — killing 13 people and wounding at least 31 others;
- Tamerlan Anzorovich Tsarnaev and his brother Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who planted bombs at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, killing 3 people and injuring as many as 264 others;
 - Abdurahman Alamoudi, ISNA's founder and first president, who in 2004 was [sentenced](#) to 23 years in prison for terrorism-related activities;
 - Aafia Siddiqui, an MIT scientist-turned-al-Qaeda agent, who in 2010 was [sentenced](#) to 85 years in prison for his role in plotting a chemical attack in New York;
 - Tarek Mehanna, who in 2012 was [sentenced](#) to 17 years in prison for conspiring to use automatic weapons to commit mass murder in a Massachusetts mall;
 - [Yusuf al-Qaradawi](#), an ISNA mosque trustee and an Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood leader who has issued numerous fatwas supporting Islamic extremism and denouncing Israel and the U.S.;
 - [Jamal Badawi](#), a former ISNA trustee who in 2007 was named as an unindicted co-conspirator in a plan to funnel millions of dollars to Palestinian suicide bombers.

Other Notable Speakers

Other notables who have [spoken](#) at ISNA conferences over the years include Qazi Hussain Ahmad (leader of Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan), Rachid Ghannouchi (Tunisian Islamist); Murad Hoffman (German Islamist connected to the Muslim Brotherhood); and Sheikh Mahfoud Nahna (Algerian Islamist).

ISNA's Denials of Extremism

On its website, ISNA [states](#) that it “is not now nor has it ever been subject to the control of any other domestic or international organizations including the Muslim Brotherhood”; [professes](#) to “rejec[t] all acts of terrorism, including those perpetrated by Hamas, Hizbullah and any other group that claims Islam as their inspiration”; and encourages “a just and fair settlement of disputes between Israel, the Palestinians and their neighbors through diplomacy and other peaceful means.” But as the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT) [points out](#):

“ISNA rather slyly only generally ‘rejects’ the violent acts: its officials refuse to condemn both groups, will not label either as terrorist organizations, but instead refer to HAMAS [favorably](#) as the ‘democratically-elected Palestinian government.’ ISNA studiously ignores the [HAMAS Charter](#), a virulently anti-Semitic tract which states that, ‘Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it’ and the fact that violent jihad is a core principal of HAMAS and Hezbollah.... ISNA’s support of HAMAS is not merely financial, but the group was also a vocal supporter of HAMAS leader Mousa Abu Marzook, using the pages of its magazine, *Islamic Horizons*, to both whitewash HAMAS’ bloody history and engage in thinly veiled anti-Semitism.”

In short, ISNA's denials regarding its own extremism ring hollow. As terrorism expert Steven Emerson puts it, ISNA:

- “is a radical group hiding under a false veneer of moderation”;
- “[convenes annual conferences](#) where Islamist militants have been given a platform to incite violence and promote hatred”;
- has held fundraisers for terrorists such as [Hamas](#) leader [Mousa Abu Marzook](#); and
- has condemned the U.S. government’s post-9/11 seizure of Hamas’s and [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](#)’s financial assets.

“I think ISNA has been an umbrella,” [says Emerson](#), “[and] also a promoter of groups that have been involved in terrorism. I am not going to accuse the ISNA of being directly involved in terrorism. I will say ISNA has sponsored extremists, racists, people who call for *Jihad* against the United States.”

Along the same lines, the International Assessment and Strategy Center arrives at this [conclusion](#):

“From Al-Arian, to KindHearts, to terrorism itself, ISNA has publicly distanced itself from extremists only when there was no other choice. As one of the largest Muslim American organizations in the United States, its failure to strongly oppose terrorism is inexcusable, but not particularly surprising when one considers the organization in greater depth. ISNA’s history and past and present

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have been most clearly linked with extremist views. Ultimately, the weight of evidence pointing toward ISNA's extremist nature is too great to be explained away by coincidence, circumstance, or ignorance. It must be held accountable for its harmful influence, and certainly does not merit its status as a ‘moderate’ partner of the State Department on the increasingly crucial area of relations with the Muslim community.”

President Obama Praises ISNA

In September 2013, President Barack Obama [praised](#) ISNA for having long “upheld the proud legacy of American Muslims’ contributions to our national fabric,” and for its commitment to “the vision that this country has always championed: that everyone deserves a chance to make their mark on our American story, no matter who you are, where you come from, or how you pray.” Moreover, Obama said that:

- he was “especially grateful for the work ISNA has done to advance interfaith understanding and cooperation”;
- his administration was “proud to be [ISNA’s] partner in our shared efforts to promote economic opportunity, accessible health care, and affordable education in Muslim communities throughout our country”; and
- he was thankful for ISNA’s “tireless advocacy and ... commitment to an America that realizes the full potential of all its people.”

ISNA Canada Affiliate Loses Its Charitable Status

On September 20, 2013, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) — which is that country’s equivalent of the Internal Revenue Service — [announced](#) that it had revoked the charitable status of the ISNA Development Foundation (IDF), which [operates](#) out of ISNA Canada’s headquarters in Mississauga. The revocation came after a CRA audit of the IDF’s books (covering the period of January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2009) had produced evidence linking the IDF to Pakistani terrorist groups.

Specifically, the CRA’s 71-page “letter of revocation,” complete with flow charts, detailed funding transactions between the IDF and the Kashmiri Canadian Council/Kashmiri Relief Fund of Canada (KCC/KRFC), a group which the CRA categorized as a non-qualified donee under Canada’s Income Tax Act. The KCC/KRFC, in turn, [sent](#) the money that it received from IDF to the Pakistan-based Relief ISNA Development for Kashmiri Muslims (ROKM), the charitable arm of the [Jamaat-e-Islami](#) — a political group that contests the legitimacy of the Indian government’s control over the state of Kashmir, to the point of advocating secession. ROKM’s armed wing, the Hizbul Mujahideen, is [considered](#) a terrorist organization by both the Council of the European Union and the Government of India. In total, the IDF disbursed more than \$280,000 to ROKM, either directly or via KCC/KRFC.

ISNA’s Current Issue Priorities

ISNA’s work today focuses on the following major priorities:

* [Religious Freedom](#): Speaking out “on behalf of the rights of Americans of all faiths and no faith,” ISNA describes itself as “a major advocate of international religious freedom, including efforts to advance citizenship and the rights of minorities in Muslim-majority countries.”

* [Global Poverty](#): Asserting that “humanitarian and poverty-focused international assistance is a critical obligation for America,” ISNA “encourages our government to increase funding in this area.” While America contributes “only 0.28 percent of our GDP ... to international aid,” says ISNA, “millions of lives are being threatened and ended by poverty, hunger, infant mortality and preventable diseases.”

* [Domestic Poverty and Economic Justice](#): ISNA is an active member of “Fighting Poverty with Faith” and the “Faithful Budget Campaign,” nationwide interfaith movements “to end domestic poverty and restore economic justice to our nation.” Through these coalitions, ISNA “advocates for clear, immediate policy solutions to address the root causes of poverty.” The Society is also active in calling for federal policies that “create jobs and strengthen our economy for those who are at greatest risk of impoverishment and hardship.”

* [Health Care](#): ISNA states that “ensuring access to health care for all” is “one of the many ways” in which it “works to protect dignity and equal rights for all people.”

* [Torture and Indefinite Detention](#): ISNA is a founding member of the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture](#), whose initiatives aim to “ensure that U.S.-

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torture against religiously, ethnically and other targeted groups.”

* [Gun Violence](#): A member of Faith United to Prevent Gun Violence as well as the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, ISNA “supports and reaffirms the constitutional right of all citizens to bear arms, and calls for sensible federal policies to ensure that guns stay out of the hands of those who pose a risk to society.”

* [Rights of People with Disabilities](#): ISNA is a steering committee member of the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition, which urges the federal government to “enable and expand opportunities for people with disabilities for independence and community living, employment, education, and access to health care.”

* [Middle East Peace](#): ISNA leadership has been a formative part of the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East since 2003. This Initiative seeks to build “support for strong U.S. leadership for a two-state solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict that brings security and recognition to Israel and establishes a viable and independent state for the Palestinians—two states living side by side in peace and security—with peace agreements between Israel and all its Arab neighbors.”

* [Nuclear Weapons Danger](#): In 2005, ISNA and the Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy developed the Muslim-Christian Initiative on the Nuclear Weapons Danger, to draw attention to the fact that “chemical, biological and particularly nuclear weapons do not discriminate between combatants and non-combatants and inevitably destroy innocent human life, even as they destroy other forms of life such as animals and vegetation, cause irrevocable damage to the environment for many generations to come, and cause human suffering and disease.”

Additional Programs and Services

* ISNA has a [Youth Programming and Services Department](#) which, in conjunction with [Muslim Youth of North America](#) (MYNA), offers parenting workshops designed to help mothers and fathers relate more effectively with their adolescent children. This Department also holds teachers' workshops aimed at “improving communications between school staff and students.” Moreover, ISNA is closely [affiliated](#) with MYNA camps and programs which are run by young people (ages 12-18) under the guidance of adults with experience in youth work.

* ISNA's [Chaplaincy Leadership Department](#) is dedicated to “setting standards for imams and chaplains, and organizing training programs for them meet these standards”; “granting certification and providing endorsement to Muslim chaplains”; “conducting conferences, seminars, workshops, continuing education and other programs for the purpose of developing a new caliber of imams and community leaders”; and “preparing and publishing guides, manuals, handbooks, and other material for training [imams and chaplains].” ISNA enjoys the [privilege](#) of being one of two Islamic organizations (along with the [Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences](#)) that endorse Muslims for employment as chaplains in the armed services.

* ISNA's [Office for Interfaith and Community Alliances](#) (IOICA), located in Washington, DC, engages with other “mainstream religious organizations” in “joint initiatives” designed to “break down barriers of misunderstanding, form genuine partnerships of faith and ethics, and establish a platform to advocate for social justice issues for the common good.” Among ISNA's more than three-dozen [Interfaith Partners](#) are [Faith in Public Life](#), the [National Council of Churches](#), the [National Peace Foundation](#), the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture](#), [NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby](#), the [New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good](#), the [Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding](#), and [Sojourners](#).

* ISNA issues a semi-monthly magazine titled *Islamic Horizons*, which is [read](#) by some 250,000 people. According to terrorism expert Steven Emerson, this publication “[often champions militant Islamist doctrine](#).” Similarly, journalist [Joe Kaufman](#) writes that *Islamic Horizons* “is filled with features and advertisements linked to radical Islamic thought and activity.” For example, in 1996 the magazine [stated](#):

“It is ... pertinent that Muslims enlighten their children about the valor of their co-religionists who are sacrificing their lives to establish the way of Allah. Muslim children need to know and honor not only those martyrs who are laying down their lives in Algeria, Bosnia, Chechenya, Kashmir, Palestine and Mindanao, but also those who are sacrificing their livelihoods to establish the rule of Allah in lands that are now held hostage to the whims of despots.”

Much more recently, the January/February 2013 [issue](#) of *Islamic Horizons* featured:

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a story promoting [Shaykh Awamleh](#), a Brooklyn-based imam with a host of ties to Islamic terrorism;

- a full-page advertisement urging readers to donate \$10 for “Palestine emergency aid” through a charity called Islamic Relief (which had previously been identified by Israel as a Hamas front group, and by the U.S. Treasury Department as a “possible source of funds for al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations”);
- a full-page ad urging readers to “sponsor a child” through Helping Hand USA, a charitable function of the [Islamic Circle of North America](#) (both groups were donors and partners of the Hamas-supporting al-Khidmat Foundation, a Pakistani charity);
- a full-page ad featuring the International Institute of Islamic Thought, which has ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, supports Islamic jihad, and has numerous documented links to terrorism; and
- a positive portrayal of the Michigan-based group Mercy-USA for Aid and Development, whose board members have included a number of individuals with terrorist ties.

* ISNA and its sister organization, the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), [together](#) run the [Islamic Book Service](#) (IBS) for the United States and Canada.

At one time, ISNA sold books via its own online bookstore. One of those books was Illinois Congressman Paul Findley’s *Silent No More: Confronting America’s False Image of Islam* (2001), which [described](#) Osama bin Laden as “one of the pre-eminent heroes of Afghans, occupying a role similar to the Marquis de Lafayette, a Frenchman who fought at the side of the Colonials during America’s Revolutionary War.” Also [available](#) at ISNA’s online bookstore was *More in Common Than You Think*, by William Baker, the former Populist Party chairman who authored a conspiratorial anti-Semitic book titled *Theft of a Nation*.

Saudi Funding

In 1996, a national media [report](#) indicated that the Saudi royal family had cut its funding for ISNA when the latter chose not to take a position on the Gulf War in 1990. Another news report [indicates](#) that in 1994, ISNA accepted at least \$500,000 in donations from Saudi Arabia.

In the wake of a 2004 Senate investigation into possible links between Islamic charities and terrorism, ISNA secretary-general Sayyid M. Syeed made several statements [denying](#) that his organization received funds from Saudi Arabia:

- In January 2004, he told the *New York Times* that “his group once accepted money from Muslims overseas but had not for the last two or three years,” and that “the only overseas Muslims who sent money to the Islamic Society were people who supported the moderate vision that he said his group represented.”
- In a March 2004 interview, he claimed that ISNA received no funding from the “Saudi government or Saudi citizens with close ties to the royal family.”
- In May 2004, he told a Florida newspaper that Saudi financial backing for ISNA had ceased “more than 10 years ago.”

In November 2005, however, Canadian media [reported](#) that in 2002, Saudi King Fahd had given millions of dollars to the Islamic Centre in Toronto, which houses ISNA’s Canadian operations, and that in 2005 the Saudi Islamic Development Bank had announced a \$275,000 grant it was giving to ISNA’s high school and a related scholarship program. The Islamic Development Bank website confirmed both awards.

ISNA Leadership

ISNA’s current president, Mohamed Magid, is also the [executive director](#) of the [All Dulles Area Muslim Society](#) and once served as an adviser to the Sterling Charitable Gift Fund. Both of those organizations were raided by federal authorities in 2002 as part of “Operation Green Quest,” an investigation into terrorism financing by large elements of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood. In October 2004, Magid blasted the investigations into the Brotherhood network, [accusing](#) elements of the American government of being “intent on dismantling Muslim organizations and bringing them down.”

In addition to Magid, ISNA’s 19-member [board of directors](#) also includes, among others, [Ihsan Bagby](#) and [Muzammil Siddiqi](#). A prominent member of the [executive council](#) is [Ingrid Mattson](#), ISNA’s former president.

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Muzammil Siddiqi

>

Abdullah (a.k.a. Abdallah) Azzam

>

Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin (a.k.a. H. Rap Brown)

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Committee), and [Louay Safi](#) (former ISNA executive director who supported Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader Sami Al-Arian).

Additional Information

For additional information on ISNA, [click here](#).

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