



2023

MEC ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

for

Imams, Chaplains,
and Lay Leaders

Building Core Competencies



March 4th
8 AM to 6:30 PM

Union Theological Seminary
James Memorial Chapel
90 Claremont Ave, NY 10027

www.muslimendorsementcouncil.org

MEC FIVE CORE COMPETENCIES

I. Qur'anic Literacy

Candidates must demonstrate a working knowledge of the Qur'an. Demonstration of said competency may include but is not limited to:

- A. Reading the Qur'an in Arabic with Tajweed
- B. Qur'an Memorization
- C. Familiarity with scholarly interpretations of Qur'an
- D. Ability to apply the Qur'an to everyday situations in the US and in the context of chaplaincy engagement

II. Prophetic Theory and Praxis

Candidates must demonstrate familiarity with the entire biography of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), and the applicability of his life example. Demonstration of said competency may include but is not limited to:

- A. Ability to recall and discuss major events in the life of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)
- B. Basic knowledge of hadith and their impact on the Muslim practice of Islam
- C. Ability to apply the Prophetic example to current everyday situations in the United States
- D. Sound knowledge of the basic Fiqh of Islamic worship including the five pillars of Islamic practice i.e. Shahadah, Salat, Sawm, Zakat, Hajj

III. Cross Cultural Capability

Candidates must demonstrate the necessary interpersonal skills for working effectively with Muslims and people of other faiths from various cultural backgrounds, as well as with both males and females.

Demonstration of said competency may include but is not limited to:

- A. Basic working knowledge of the major cultural groups that the chaplain is likely to encounter in his or her chosen field of chaplaincy
- B. Effective conflict resolution skills
- C. Self-awareness and insight when it comes to dealing with one's own biases

IV. Facilitation Skills

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the consistent ability to counsel and "connect" with people in a sensitive, open, and respectful way. Demonstration of said competency may include but is not limited to:

- A. Providing effective support that contributes to the well-being of persons who request their help
- B. Providing support to and/or referrals for persons experiencing loss and grief
- C. Developing, coordinating and facilitating public worship/spiritual practices as appropriate

V. Professional Theory and Practice

Candidates should be able to promote and integrate chaplaincy as a professional discipline into the life of the institution where they function. Demonstration of said competency may include but is not limited to:

- A. Establishing and maintaining professional and interdisciplinary relationships inside and outside of institutions in which they function
- B. Articulating an understanding of institutional culture and systems, especially when it comes to ethical decision-making
- C. Demonstrating an ability to effectively document interactions within the institutions where they work



A National Standard-Bearer for Islamic Chaplaincy

MEC Leadership Conference

March 4th, 2023 | Sha'ban 1444

Building Core Competencies – A Training for Imams, Chaplains, & Lay Leaders

Program

8:00AM - 8:30AM	Check-In/Registration/Breakfast	
8:30AM - 9:30AM	Opening Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Opening Dua'- Qur'an Recitation (Surah Luqman: ayah 12-18)- Welcome & Conference Goals- Welcome from UTS- Islamic Chaplaincy as a Religious Profession- Pastoral Counseling Role as an Imam- Greetings from President- HIU	Dr Bashir Ansari Ch Mustafa Boz Br Aqil Hashim Ch Patty Anton Imam Mohamed Sackor Dr Joel Lohr
9:30AM - 11:30AM	Qur'anic Literacy & Prophetic Theory and Praxis <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Qur'anic Literacy & Prophetic Theory and Praxis- Workshop 1 Facilitator	Prof Zainab Alwani Ch Mustafa Boz
11:30AM -11:45AM	From Our Sponsors <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bayan Islamic Graduate School- The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA)- United Muslim Relief (UMR)	
11:45AM - 1:45PM	Lunch/Networking/Salah	Dhuhr 1:00PM
1:45PM - 3:45PM	Cultural Competencies & Facilitation Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cultural Competencies- Facilitation Skills- Workshop 2 Facilitator	Prof Roula Allouch/Prof James Jones Prof James Jones/Prof Bonita McGee Ch Omer Bajwa
3:45PM - 5:20PM	Professional Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ch John Hallock- Federal Bureau of Prisons- Ch Dale Marlowe- Department of Defense- Ch AlHassan Kamagtey- Healthcare chaplaincy- Ch Patty Anton- College chaplaincy- Workshop 3 Facilitator	Prof Roula Allouch
5:25PM - 6:30PM	Closing Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Recognitions- Keynote Address: Prof Ingrid Mattson- The Importance of Setting Religious and Professional Standards- Acknowledgements- Closing Dua'	Br Aqil Hashim Ch Omer Bajwa

A special thanks to Union Theological Seminary for hosting us!

Muslim Endorsement Council, Inc. (MEC) Report

On November 10, 2019, MECC unanimously approved the resolution to become a national endorsing body. This change **reflected the desire of MEC to affect Islamic chaplaincy endorsement on a national level**. This change also included changing our name to the Muslim Endorsement Council (MEC), Inc.

MEC continues to expand the number of endorsees. MEC endorsees must submit annual reports to ensure that they were meeting the terms of their endorsement and continuing with their professional development.

By the close of 2020, MEC submitted an application with the DOD for official recognition as an endorser of military chaplains. **MEC received endorser recognition from the College of Pastoral Supervision & Psychotherapy, Inc (CPSP), the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), and the Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc (BCCi). MEC has long been recognized by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) as an official endorser.**

MEC established a Consultative Committee (CC). Members of the CC are nominated and voted upon by the MEC Board of Directors. Their role is to **provide advice and information on theological, academic, and legal matters to the board related to Aqidah and Islamic Jurisprudence**. The committee members are **Imam Zaid Shakir, Dr. Tamara Gray, Dr. Feryal Salem, and Imam Dawud Walid**. The CC has no other duties, voting privileges, nor obligations to MEC or its board of directors.

MEC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements with The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA) and the Imam Mahdi Association of Marjaeya, Inc. (IMAM). TISA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization whose mission is to cultivate generations of world class doers and thinkers who lead from an Islamic paradigm while engaging contemporary challenges and opportunities. **TISA also adopted MEC's Five Core Competencies of endorsement as a basis for their chaplaincy pedagogy**. The two organizations are actively collaborating to identify chaplaincy candidates for the TISA-MEC scholarship program. IMAM is a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization that serves as the liaison office of the Supreme Religious Authority, Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Sistani, in North America. IMAM is devoted to building a strong Shia community in North America by serving as the central point of contact between the religious authority and centers, organizations, and faithful believers.

MEC also **established partnerships with the Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies (AREB) where MEC President Ch Shazeeda Khan is currently serving as treasurer**. Other partnerships include Chaplaincy Innovation Lab (CIL), Peaceful Families Project (PFP), Malik Human Services Initiative, Inc (MHSI), Measured Tones Institute of Quran (MTIQ), and Muslim Alliance of North America (MANA).

MEC embraced the Amman Message <https://ammanmessage.com/the-three-points-of-the-amman-message-v-1/> during 2021 as their foundational criteria for defining the Muslim Ummah (nation).

MEC organized and moderated three community support webinars during the 2021 reporting period. All the webinars were free and featured prominent Islamic Scholars and Behavioral Health Professionals. The webinars were as followed: ***Self-Care in Stressful Times – from an Islamic Perspective*** on January 9, 2021; ***Managing Stress & Anxiety – Using Islamic Principles & Practices*** on March 20, 2021; and ***Healing from Collective Trauma – Using Islamic Principles & Practices*** on August 28, 2021. The Islamic Scholars and Behavioral Health Professionals featured in the abovementioned webinars were as follows: ***Ch Sondos Kholaki, Ch Omer Bajwa, Aqil Hashim, LCSW, Mubarakah Ibrahim, Nutrition & Fitness Expert, Imam Zaid Shakir, and Imam Salahuddin Muhammad on January 9, 2021; Maliha Malik, LMFT, Dr. Asif Rashid, MD, Imam Mohamed Hag Magid, and Imam Omer Bajwa on March 20, 2021; & Umm Juwayriyah, M.Ed, Author, Salma Abugideiri, LPC, Imam Suhaib Webb, and Aqil Hashim, LCSW on August 28, 2021.***

In 2022, MEC President Ch Shazeeda Khan and MEC Advisor Ch AbdulMalik Negedu published an article in Muslim Matters entitled, “**Muslim Chaplains in an Evolving Profession.**”

Two MEC board members were invited and attended the Hurma Conference in Chicago. They provided a presentation on the mission, vision, and history of MEC which was warmly received and met with pledges of support.

In Chicago, September 3, 2022, **MEC convened the first meeting of The Islamic Seminary Roundtable.** This is a group of leaders representing seminaries throughout the United States whose purpose is to set national standards for the competency of Muslim chaplains. The group is represented by The American Islamic College (AIC), Bayan Islamic Graduate School, Boston Islamic Seminary (BIS), Hartford International University (HIU), and The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA).

MEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ch Shazeeda Khan <i>President</i>	Ch (Dr.) Salahuddin Muhammad <i>Vice President</i>	Br. Aqil Hashim, LCSW <i>Secretary</i>	Imam Kashif Abdul Karim <i>Treasurer</i>	Ch Patty Anton <i>Member</i>
--------------------------------------	---	---	---	---------------------------------

MEC ADVISORY BOARD

Prof James Jones, D.Min.	Ch Matinah Yahya, M.Ed.	Dr Irfan Galaria, MD, MBA	Ch AbdulMalik Negedu
--------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------

Biographies

Prof Roula Allouch

Prof Roula Allouch is an attorney with experience in employment law, civil rights, insurance defense and general civil litigation. She is the former Chair of the National Board of Directors of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Kentucky in 2003 and her juris doctor from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 2006. She is licensed to practice in state and federal courts in Kentucky and Ohio. Prof Allouch is an advisor to the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession and serves on the Board of Directors of the Association's Rule of Law Initiative. Prof Allouch was named a Rising Star by Cincinnati YWCA in 2015 and was featured in Cincinnati Magazine's "The Future of Cincinnati: Ones to Watch" 2015 issue. Prof Allouch is visiting faculty at TISA teaching "Islam in America", "Public Speaking" and "Navigating Muslim American Cultures and Identities."

Prof Zainab Alwani

Prof Zainab Alwani is the Founding Director of the Islamic Studies program at Howard University School of Divinity (HUSD), where she is also an Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and the chair of the Religious Studies Master of Arts program. She is an Islamic scholar, researcher and community activist. Prof Alwani is also the first female jurist to serve on the board of the Fiqh Council of North America and currently serves as the Council's Vice-Chair.

Prof Alwani received her PhD in Islamic Sciences (Usul Al-Fiqh) and Islamic Jurisprudence from the International Islamic University in Malaysia. Her PhD dissertation examined *Maqāṣid/objectives of al Sahriah* in the area of family, the book "*The Family and Maqasid Al Shariah: Marriage and Divorce in American Muslim Family.*"

Ch Patricia (Patty) Anton

Ch Patricia Anton (Chaplain Patty) serves as Chaplain and Director for Muslim Life at the University of Pennsylvania. She is also a chaplain at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and founder of Alanur, a non-profit she established to offer faith-based training and services to the community. She has come into chaplaincy with a background of working with Muslim, interfaith, academic and peace-building institutions. She received her BA in International Relations from the Ohio State University, MA in Islamic Studies from the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, was granted a Graduate Fellowship in Non-Profit Management and Governance from Indiana University, had additional graduate studies at George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Hartford Seminary's Islamic Chaplaincy program and is a certified mediator.

Ch Omer Bajwa

Ch Omer Bajwa serves as Director of Muslim Life in the Chaplain's Office at Yale and has been engaged in religious service, inter-religious engagement and educational outreach since 2000. He earned his Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy from Hartford Seminary, has an MA in Near Eastern Studies and an MS in Communication from Cornell University, and a BA from Binghamton University. Ch Bajwa has also studied several classical Islamic sciences with traditional scholars from Pakistan, Turkey and the United States. He is a co-editor of the new book, "Mantle of Mercy: Islamic Chaplaincy in North America" by Templeton Press.

Ch Mustafa Boz

Ch Mustafa Boz has been serving in a Federal Prison as a Muslim Chaplain since 2012. Previously, he served five years as a Muslim Chaplain in the Connecticut Department of Corrections. He is a graduate of Hartford Seminary's Islamic Chaplaincy Program and holds endorsement from the Muslim Endorsement Council. He is a graduate of the Turkish Imam Hatip system, holds a BA in Islamic Studies from Ankara Divinity School and had nearly completed a MA in Tafsir before immigrating to the U.S. He has previously served as Vice President of Corrections Chaplains with the Association of Muslim Chaplains and currently lives with his wife and two young children in Southeast Michigan.

Ch John Hallock

Ch John Hallock is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. Ch Hallock was ordained a priest in the Anglican Communion. He is a 21-year employee of the Federal Bureau of Prisons starting as a Correctional Officer and working through the ranks to Volunteer Coordinator, Supervisory Chaplain and his current role as Chaplaincy Services Coordinator. He has worked all security levels in the BOP to include medical and female units. In addition to his service with the BOP, he is an ACS Coast Guard Chaplain serving Sector Ohio Valley in Kentucky.

Br Aqil Hashim

Br Aqil Hashim received a Master's Degree in Social Work from the School of Social Work at the University of Connecticut (UConn) and is currently a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) working at Hall of Whiting Forensic Hospital (WFH) in Middletown, CT. He graduated from Bryant University in 1984, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. He serves as Secretary of the Muslim Endorsement Council, Inc (MEC) and President of the Connecticut School of Survival (CSS), a martial arts organization located in New Haven, CT.

Prof James Jones

Prof James Jones is Executive Vice President and Professor of Comparative Religion and Culture of The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA). He is a former Professor Emeritus of World Religions and former Chair of both the Dept of World Religions and the African Studies Program at Manhattanville College. Prof Jones's research focuses on the socio-cultural impact of prejudice and the intersectionality between sexism, racism and Islam. He has a DMin from Hartford International University for Religion and Peace and a MA in Religion from Yale Divinity School. He is President of the Malik Human Services Institute, a pre marriage advisor and volunteer prison Chaplain for more than three decades.

Ch AlHassan Kamagtey

Ch AlHassan Kamagtey was born in Accra, Ghana. He had his elementary and higher education in both Islamic and Secular education in Ghana. He holds MPhil in Religious Studies (Qur'anic science and exegesis) from Al Mustafa International University. He also completed a second-year chaplaincy residency program with 8 units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Westchester Medical Center, Westchester County, New York. In the year 2020, Ch Kamagtey has been endorsed by the Muslim Endorsement Council (MEC). He is currently a Staff Chaplain/Imam at Westchester Medical Center.

Ch, Lt. Col. Dale Marlowe

Chaplain, (Lt. Col.) Dale Marlowe is the Executive Director for the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. In this capacity, he is responsible for representing and supporting the Board to the Secretary of Defense and to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on religious, ethical, and moral matters for the Military Services. Additionally, he coordinates recommendations and responses on policy matters concerning the protection of the free exercise of religion; the procurement, professional standards, and requirements of military chaplains; credentialing of organizations seeking to provide chaplains for the Military Services; and the promotion of dialog with civilian organizations regarding religious issues.

Prof Ingrid Mattson

Prof Ingrid Mattson earned a PhD in Near Eastern Language and Civilizations in 1999 at the University of Chicago. From 1998 to 2012, she was the Professor of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut where she developed and directed the first accredited graduate program for Muslim chaplains in North America and served as Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. Since 2012 she has held the London and Windsor Community Chair in Islamic Studies at Huron University College at Western University in London, Canada.

Her writings, both academic and public, focus primarily on Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic theological ethics and interfaith relations. She authored, *The Story of the Qur'an*. Prof Mattson is currently involved in the *Hurma Project*.

Prof Bonita McGee

Prof Bonita McGee is a consultant, trainer, facilitator, and instructor with over 20 years of building community capacity and supporting organizational outcomes and over 20 years of experience in domestic violence and sexual assault awareness advocacy. For 13 years, she worked in public health policy and community capacity building to develop and implement policies, systems, and environmental changes in cancer and chronic disease. Prof McGee works with educational institutions, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. She provides strategic planning facilitation, program development, training, and technical assistance in dialogue facilitation, domestic violence awareness, and leadership. She has a MA in Islamic Studies from the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences. She also has a BA in Business Administration from Ohio State. Prof McGee is one of the founding members of the Islamic Seminary Foundation (ISF).

Imam Mohamed Sackor

Imam Mohamed Sackor is currently serving as the Imam and Resident Scholar in Omaha at the Islamic Center of Omaha. He graduated in 2006 with a BA in Shariah from the Islamic University of Medina. Since returning to the US, he has served several Muslim communities. He received several master's degrees namely: MA in Liberal Arts from Creighton University, MS in Global Security, and MA in Islamic Economics and Finance. He is currently working on his Ed.D in Leadership and Education. He recently received a scholarship to the TISA chaplaincy program as a MEC Scholar.

Our Sponsors



Hartford International University for Religion and Peace



**Divinity School
Chaplaincy Office**

