



A National Standard-Bearer for Islamic Chaplaincy

MEC Annual Report 2025

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

All Praise and Gratitude are Due to Allah

The 2025 reporting period was significant for its continuing efforts, activities, and achievements for MEC and the chaplains we support.

OVERVIEW

In addition to our primary mission of evaluating and endorsing chaplains and ensuring that they maintain their Endorsement, we maintain recognition with various chaplaincy bodies and agencies. In our continued pursuit of becoming an approved endorser with the Department of War (DoW), we have submitted our first candidate, thereby completing our application.

Further, we continued to maintain “The MEC Scholar” at The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA). We are in the process of facilitating the development of an Islamic Higher Education Consortium (IHEC) with The Roundtable of Seminaries. We have maintained our engagement with the Association of Professional Chaplains Common Council and the Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies (AREB).

MEC-endorsed chaplains continue to strive in their respective areas of chaplaincy. All our healthcare chaplains have achieved board certification.

In April 2025, we welcomed Chaplain Nora Zaki Mantas to our board.

Our president was recognized by the Association of Muslim Chaplains (AMC). She continues her work as a team member with the Muslim Higher Education Accreditation Board (MHEAB).

MEC collaborated with the Executive Editor, Dr Zainab Alwani, in the compilation of the chaplaincy edition of *The Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice* Vol 6, which was published in December 2025.

MEC started a new initiative, Association of Islamic Endorsing Bodies (AIEB), being chaired by board member Chaplain Rafael Lantigua.

New partnership: MEC and Guidance College signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in October 2025.

CONTINUED WORK

Endorsement and Annual Reporting

MEC continued to endorse qualified chaplains. It also followed up on the annual reporting of our endorsed chaplains to ensure that they continued to meet the terms of their Endorsement and maintain their professional development. This included retrieving yearly background checks and requiring them to submit Annual Accountability for Ethical Conduct Statements in line with the standard held by the Association of Professional Chaplains.

Approved Endorser

MEC is currently an approved endorser for the College of Pastoral Supervision & Psychotherapy (CPSP), the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), the Association of Professional Chaplains/Board of Chaplaincy Certification (APC/BCC), and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

Department of War (DoW) Approved Endorser Status

We have submitted our first military candidate, thereby completing our application with the DoW to become an approved Military endorser. We are awaiting a decision.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Islamic Society of North America Chaplaincy Services Department (ICSD)

MEC continued its Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Islamic Society of North America Chaplaincy Services Department (ICSD) through 2025. However, as of January 2026, MEC has decided not to extend the MOA with ISNA ICSD.

MEC Scholar

“The MEC Scholar” is a TISA program that grants eligible chaplaincy students full-tuition scholarships. MEC entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA) on February 10, 2022. The organizations collaborate to identify outstanding candidates for TISA’s chaplaincy scholarship program by cross-promoting information regarding the scholarship with each other’s name, logo, information, services, and events on their digital advertising, website, social media, email marketing, mailings, offline promotions, events, affiliate marketing, and public relations platforms.

The Roundtable of Seminaries

MEC organized the first meeting of The Roundtable of Seminaries on September 3, 2022, in Chicago to share information on the criteria for religious endorsement. This is a group of leaders and faculty representing seminaries throughout the United States that educate Muslim chaplains. This group also gave feedback on the development of the MEC Competencies Rubric for their five core competencies. 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). This group is now developing the Islamic Higher Education Consortium (IHEC).

Common Council & Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies

MEC continued engagement with the Association of Professional Chaplains Common Council, a group of endorsers for all faiths striving to uphold the integrity of chaplaincy endorsement.

Board Certification

We continue to be impressed by our endorsees, who progress in their respective areas of chaplaincy. All MEC’s healthcare chaplains have received their board certification. Many MEC-endorsed chaplains go beyond their chaplaincy responsibilities by teaching, writing, and contributing to research.

NEW FOR 2025

New Board Member

We welcomed our newest Board Member, Chaplain Nora Zaki. Chaplain Nora Zaki received an MA in Religious and Islamic Studies from Chicago Theological Seminary (2024), a Master of Divinity (MDiv) from the University of Chicago (2017), and holds a BA from the University of Florida (2013) in Arabic, Religion, and Political Science.

Association of Muslim Chaplains (AMC) Members Conference 2025

MEC's president, Shazeeda Khan, was the 2025 recipient of the AMC Distinguished Service award in recognition of "The contributions to the development of the field of Islamic Chaplaincy" on February 15, 2025.

LGBTQ+ policy Extended

In July, MEC ratified an addendum to the LGBTQ+ policy, which was authored by MEC's Treasurer, Chaplain Rafael Lantigua. The addendum advises MEC-endorsed chaplains regarding participation in public events, memorials, or advocacy programs related to the LGBTQ+ community.

New Partnership

In October 2025, MEC and Guidance College signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the terms by which chaplaincy applicants, upon the advice of MEC, may enroll in selected courses at Guidance College. Such courses include Aqida, Fiqh of worship, Seerah, Counseling, Quran recitation, and memorization. The mission of Guidance College is to educate its student population in Islamic knowledge and to prepare graduates to think critically and ethically so that their contributions to society are maximized. <https://guidancecollege.org/>

Training Workshop

On April 27, 2025, MEC conducted its *Virtual interactive In-Service Training Program for Chaplains*. The theme was *Upholding Ihsan & Adl in Chaplaincy*. The keynote address was given by Dr. Mariam Sheibani. Dr. Kamal Abu-Shamsieh conducted two sessions: *The Islamic Ethics of Care* and *Examining Various Chaplaincy Settings: Practical Strategies for Chaplain-Client Relationships*. Dr. Ingrid Mattson addressed *Navigating Compassion with Ethics and Boundaries Towards Healing*. Chaplain Azleena Azhar presented on *Trauma-informed Pastoral Care*. Professor James Jones of The Islamic Seminary of America (TISA) facilitated the role-play breakout session. The training was capped at 30 chaplains. The participants overwhelmingly evaluated the training as effective and relevant.

Islamic accrediting organization

MEC's president was invited by Dr. Nancy Khalil, Assistant Professor, Arab & Muslim American Studies Program, Department of American Culture at Michigan University, to join the Muslim Higher Education Accreditation Board (MHEAB) working team. A second convening of the MHEAB occurred in August 2025 at Michigan University. The MHEAB team, along with several Islamic education institutions, continues to explore the feasibility of developing an Islamic accrediting organization. Khan presented on *Implications Between Requirements to Train for Chaplaincy & To Train for Muslim Institutional Leadership*.

Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice

MEC collaborated with TISA to publish *The Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, 6th Edition, which was published in December 2025, link: [Vol. 6 No. 1 \(2025\) | Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice](#). The theme of the 6th Edition is Advancing Islamic Chaplaincy in North America. This publication aims to bring together diverse perspectives and innovative research in Islamic Chaplaincy. MEC contributed to the publication by sharing the organization's work in hopes that it will serve as a support and resource for seminaries, chaplains, and endorsement bodies.

Association of Islamic Endorsing Bodies (AIEB)

MEC's latest initiative is the formation of the AIEB. This association will be chaired by MEC's board member, Chaplain Rafael Lantigua. The AIEB convening goals with our fellow Islamic endorsing bodies are to address the following:

- Share information
- Learn from each other
- Open a broader discussion on how to serve our chaplains and how to improve and elevate Islamic chaplaincy endorsement

Revised MOU with AMC

The president of AMC, Dr. Joshua Salaam, and MEC's president, Khan, signed a renegotiated MOU that will facilitate more effective communication and collaboration between the two organizations; the executive director of AMC, Zakia Haque, and Khan will meet monthly to effectuate this.

Respectfully submitted by the MEC Board
February 16, 2026