

# THE STAR NEWS

AL IHSAN SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

## *Muslim Day At the Capitol*

By Yasmine Dardari and Danah Harmouche

Columbus, OH- On October 31st Al Ihsan students joined CAIR for Muslim Day at the Capitol to learn the importance of political involvement.



The Al Ihsan students had many amazing opportunities by meeting and learning from civic servants. They listened to very inspirational speeches from speakers Jaiza Page, Kelly Capatosto, Amelia Sykes, and Charleta Tavares who spoke about the importance of being involved in your community and about political diversity. The students learned the paramountcy of them getting involved and exercising their freedoms, so that was the next thing they did. Students learned how to lobby senators, but before they could put their acquired knowledge into action, they had to answer the call to prayer. Students could hear the Adhan echoing throughout the Senate halls.

The students lobbied senators for two very important bills: Senate Bill 172 and House Bill 360. S.B. 172 fought for the rights of students who cannot afford lunches by prohibiting schools from publicly shaming students who cannot pay for their meal and depriving them of a nourishing meal. "As Muslims we are supposed to stand up for justice and be the voice for the voiceless," says Faten Odeh, the teacher chaperone.

The second bill students lobbied for was House Bill 360, which puts a stricter punishment on kids that bully other kids.

According to statistics reported by ABC News, "Nearly 30 percent of students are either bullies or victims of bullying, and 160,000 kids stay home from school every day because of fear of bullying." The effects of bullying on students is heartbreaking and it can even lead to the victim committing suicide. Through this bill, bullies would serve 10-180 days of suspension depending on the number of offenses. Counseling would be provided to both the victim and the bully to prevent further bullying.

"They were a part of the real political process. They spoke truth to power and stood up for the oppressed. I am so proud of them, mashallah. I hope to take more students to more events like this, insha Allah," says Mrs. Faten. They reflected on their day during the car ride home, and were very happy to have done good for their community. "I really enjoyed this trip because it taught me how I could get involved and make the world a better place inshallah," says Ayah Jadallah, an Al Ihsan student who attended this trip.

## *Islamic Corner*

By: Rawand Abu-Jumah & Ayah Jadallah

"Whoever imitates a people is one of them."

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, al-Libaas, 3512.)

*It is the month our beloved Prophet SAW was born, however, we do not designate one day of celebration yet, we celebrate by practicing the Prophet's sunnah each and every day.*

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*'Tis the Season*

By: Bayan Abed

Thanksgiving has passed and Christmas will be soon celebrated by people around the world...including Muslims. These are not holidays that we as Muslims should be celebrating.

"It is sad to see our own Muslim brothers and sisters posing near their Christmas trees and posting these photos on social media," said Mrs. Faten

We need to always follow the sunnah and teachings of the Prophet (PBUH). Muslims are forbidden to imitate the Kuffar by having parties on such occasions, exchanging gifts, giving out sweets or food, or taking time off work, etc. because Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

*"Whoever imitates a people is one of them." (Narrated by Abu Dawood).*

The only holidays we should enjoy and celebrate are Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. These holidays are extremely special to Muslims because they represent a very important part of our history. It is important to stay true to Islam and close to the right path.

Some mainstream holidays we should not celebrate are Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thanksgiving started as a tradition celebrated by pilgrims in 1621. It was a feast that lasted three days, and brought together the Native-Americans and Pilgrims. Thanksgiving began as a day for showing thanks for the blessing of the harvest and the coming of the new year. However, the holiday wasn't all smiles and good times because of what it caused. Native Americans were kicked out of their homes and left to survive on their own. After being

*Star Rants*

By: Rawand A. &amp; Ayah J.

"Uuuuuuhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh"  
 "It's gonna be soooo liit"  
 "Angle-Side-Side"  
 "Dollarrrr"  
 "Cool beans"  
 "HHHOT POCKETTS"  
 "Keep your nose on your face"  
 "Toe Disease"

abandoned by whom they once trusted, many of them died from the winter that was to come. This led to a great depopulation of the Native American community.

Although millions of people celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25th, most scholars agree that he wasn't born on that day. "Our Ummah today needs to improve and be cautious about what they are passing down to their children such as traditions and holidays that they celebrate", said Rawand Abu Jumah, a student at Al Ihsan. Allah revealed in Surah Maryam:

*"And shake the trunk of date-palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you."*

In this verse, Allah was commanding Mary (R) through an angel to go to a palm tree and shake the trunk and dates will fall. Now if you meet any horticulturist he will tell you that the dates always fall in mid-summers, thus, alluding to the point that Jesus was not born in December.

"Christmas is a Christian holiday. I don't understand why Muslims are celebrating it" says Yasmine Dardari, a student at Al Ihsan school. All in all, as human being we can tend to forget our history and go with the flow of society. However as Muslims, it is our duty to remind each other to stay on the straight path.

*Star Students*

By: Selma Abazid

Maria Mousa (1<sup>st</sup> Grade): "She is a pleasure to have in class and is eager to always help!"

-Nadia Aziz

Ayah Samad (5<sup>th</sup> Grade): "Ayah is a nice and friendly person who always shows great respect."

-Manar Hammoudeh

Jennay Attallah (8<sup>th</sup> Grade): "She took my advice with a smile."

-Faten Odeh



### *Teacher Feature*

By: Rawand Abu-Jumah and Ayah Jadallah



Middle School Boys Room- Araceli Harris recently became the K-12 Program Director/Head of Middle School at Al Ihsan because of her hard work and dedication to reform the program.

It all started when her Aunt Wendy, who sadly passed from cancer, asked her to consider becoming a teacher. When she was growing up, Mrs. Harris would always volunteer to help her aunt, a teacher, with lesson plans and activities to do during class. Her enthusiasm prompted her to get into teaching.

In pursuit of her aunt's request she then went on to attend Cleveland State University. She soon got her bachelors in early child education and continued on to get her masters in K-12. She first heard about Al Ihsan in an ad looking for a kindergarten teacher. The reason I became a teacher at Al Ihsan is because I liked how dedicated everyone was about their religion and that they put it before everything." She likes that Islam is similar to her religion and she is very comfortable teaching in this environment.

From elementary, to administration, to middle school, Mrs. Harris has showed her hard work was recognized.

"One of the hardest things about teaching a multi-grade classroom is having to keep everything in order and organized," Mrs. Harris says. It's hard to teach three different grade levels at the same time, but she puts her best foot forward to help our school improve.

### *Riddle (answer p. 4)*

- A woman is sitting in her hotel room when there is a
- knock at the door. She opens the door to find a
- stranger. The man said, "Oh I'm sorry, I thought this
- was my room." He then went down the hallway and
- took the elevator. The woman went back into her
- room and phoned security. Why?

### *Dear Abby,*

I am being bullied what do I do?

-Anonymous

Assalamu alaykum,

If you are being bullied talk to someone who will listen, someone you can trust like maybe a teacher or parent. Even if that doesn't help right away, you'll feel better later on. Knowing that you shared your situation it will make you feel less lonely.

Sincerely,  
Hawa Abdul Salaam

### *Raising Money for the People of Burma*

By: Jenin Mahmoud

During the month of November, 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> girls at Al Ihsan School held a series of events to raise money for our brothers and sisters in Burma.

The fundraisers that were held were two bake sales, a gyro sale, and a dress down week. "All students were being selfless, and not raising money for personal gain, but rather to help those who are less fortunate," said Mrs.Emily, a teacher at Al Ihsan. The amount of money that was raised \$2,226.

The reason for these fundraisers was to help Muslims in Burma who are currently in desperate need of help. The United Nations estimates that more than 168,000 people have been displaced since the conflict erupted in 2012. According to the World Food Program, more than 162,000 people face food insecurity and another 78,000 people are in need of immediate food assistance. The motivation for these fundraisers came from a documentary called The Hidden Genocide, by Al-Jazeera that was shown to the middle school girls. The money raised went towards relief efforts in Burma through the organization Salaam Cleveland at the fundraiser that was held on 12/10/17 at La Villa. "In the past few months we have tempted to knock on the doorstep of every church, mosque, and synagogue to be able to form an alliance for the people of Rohingya, we are moved by the images we have seen," said Arshan Khalid, a member of Salaam Cleveland.



## Past & Present

By: Hawa Abdul Salaam & Jennay Attallah

Detroit, Michigan - Al Ihsan middle and high school students visited the Michigan Science Center on Nov. 3rd to explore the 1001 Inventions Exhibit and learn about the Muslims during the Golden Ages.

When was the last time you used a camera to capture a memorable moment? Did you use a phone camera or a digital camera? Well, you have the Muslims to thank for that. There are many things from the past that Muslims have contributed. These things include the camera obscura, leading to the digital camera, and the Elephant Clock, leading to the modern clock.

A thousand years ago, during his house arrest, Ibn Al Haytham discovered a light from outside projecting from a tiny hole and realized the more focused the light, the sharper the image. The image projected by the light was traced to produce a picture therefore creating the camera obscura we use to make the modern camera.

There are many inventions that Muslims have brought to our world, that affect us today. "We were so happy to show the students the 1001 Inventions Exhibit because they need to be inspired and understand that many of the great discoveries in the world have been done by Muslims just like them. They were able to reach amazing heights because they put Islam into action." Mrs. Faten Odeh head of the Star News stated.

Many Muslims have showed us that we can succeed in life and strive to be the best. "It was interesting to see all of the Muslim inventions and to be inspired," said Jenin Mahmoud. While the students are making their inventions, they should remember that Muslims did many things that affect us today, and that they can impact the world in the present and future.



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## Save the Date

### December:

15<sup>th</sup>: Invention Fair  
22-31<sup>st</sup>: Winter Break

### January:

2<sup>nd</sup>: Back to school!  
3<sup>rd</sup>: Second Quarter ends  
15<sup>th</sup>: MLK Day (no school)

### February:

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>: Quarter Progress Report  
19<sup>th</sup>: Staff Professional Day (no school)  
26-28: Reading Week

Answer: You don't knock on the door of your own room.