

Muslims Travel to Dearborn, Michigan for 2006 MAS-ICNA Convention

Congressman- Elect-Keith Ellison Visits Convention and Offers Words of Inspiration

WASHINGTON, DC - Dec. 27, 2006 (MASNET) Overflow crowds extending outside of the main hall was the attendance norm for the main sessions of the 2006 Annual Muslim American Society (MAS)-Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) convention. Muslims from across the U.S. and Canada traveled to Dearborn, MI to attend the convention.

This year's theme was: Muslim Americans for Revival and Reform.

The convention included a stellar list of scholars and speakers (Click here), with lectures and workshops covering a wide spectrum of issues, including spiritual development, fiqh, family life, civic engagement, and issues related to global politics and the international Muslim community.

Main sessions on such issues as developing Muslim leadership and human rights issues in the Muslim world drew capacity crowds. During the convention, MAS also offered intensive courses in the subjects of public speaking, media, and Islamic sciences. The intensive courses were offered to increase the skills of the many attendees and to support their work when returning to their local mosques and communities.

Participants were also reminded of the MAS conference slogan that "when the conference ends, the work begins."

The numerous programs for youth attendees were also very well attended. "I think the reason you didn't see youth hanging around in the halls but rather, attending the sessions, is a direct result of having the MAS-Youth Department directly involved in the planning and coordination of the conference" stated Mahdi Bray, Executive Director of the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation, who was also a presenter for the youth sessions.

The MAS outreach department, under the direction of Iyad Hindi of Raleigh North Carolina, used this year's convention to highlight their new MAS Service Corps, which will perform social service activities, volunteer community services, and relief and emergency disaster responses within the U.S.

The latest project of this service corps is a Udhiya (Meat for the Needy) program designed to distribute meat to the hungry and needy in America.

Also available at the conference were opportunities for personal spiritual enhancement, with activities such as Qiam-ul-Lail, Duaa-ul-Wit, and Qur'anic recitation. Additionally, attendees were treated to wholesome entertainment and daily opportunities to shop at the onsite bazaar.

The conference ended with a visit to the concluding session by America's first elected Muslim Congressman, Keith Ellison. The capacity crowd gave Mr. Ellison a standing ovation as he encouraged the crowd to be positive and proactive in the face of tremendous challenges. He emphasized that part of the faith of a Muslim is the ability to face hardships for a righteous cause with dignity. Further, he pointed out that our struggle to overcome bigotry and promote religious tolerance and basic civil and human rights ultimately benefits everyone in America.

The Congressman- elect also indicated that despite some minor controversies, he still plans to take his private oath of office on the Holy Qur'an.

The convention concluded with an address by the respective presidents of MAS and ICNA, Dr. Esam Omeish and Dr. Khurshid Khan, followed by a night of fantastic Muslim family entertainment.

<http://www.maskansascity.org/MAS-ICNA-Conv06-online/speakers.html>

Confirmed Speakers Dr. Rageb El-Sirgani, Dr. Esam Omeish, Dr. Imad Damaj, Dr. Suhail Gannoushi, Imam Mahdi Bray, Dr. Tarek Ramadan, Dr. Khurshid Khan, Sheikh Bin Bayah (Video Conferencing), Br. Jameel Johnson, Br. Mohamad El-Sheikh, Dr. Hamid Gazali, Br. Mohamad Abbasi, Br. Mazen Mukhtar, Dr. Hazem Said, Sr. Muslema Purmul, Br. Muhamad Aftab Diwan, Sr. Shahina Siddiqi, Br. Hasan El-Alami, Br. Hossam Al-Jabri, Dr. Magd Al-Maz, Br. Murad Ameirah, Imam Mohammad Al-Qatanani, Imam Zubair Buchicki, Dr. Ragheb El-Sirgani, Imam Ahmad El-Khalidy, Br. Raed Tayeh, Sheikh Abdelgawad Kounsouah, Dr. Hisham Abdallah, Imam Taha hassani, Imam Mohamad El Hanouti,

Dr. Hatem Baizan, Dr. Usama El-Gamal, Br. Ibrahim El-Rimi, Dr. Muqtader Khan, Br. Marawan Marouf, Sr. Nada Meqdadi, Dr. Mamdouh Ruzaika, Sr. Mariam Sobh, Br. Abdallah Abdallah, Br. Mukhit Hussain.