

FAITH OVER FEAR
Empowering Faith Leaders to Combat Islamophobia
January 28 - 30th, 2018
Muslim Association of Puget Sound
17550 NE 67th Ct, Redmond, WA 98052

TRAINING OVERVIEW

Sunday, January 28

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Opening Reception, Introduction & Community Building

Monday, January 29

Breakfast: *On your own*
9:00 AM Islamophobia 101
10:15 AM *Break*
10:30 AM Introduction to Islam
11:45 AM *Break*
12:00 Noon *Working Lunch - Becoming an Effective Ally*
1:15 PM Locating our Fears and Responding to Them
2:45 PM *Break*
3:00 PM Media and Public Messaging: How do we talk about this?
4:30 PM *Break*
4:45 PM Addressing Difficult Questions, Myths & Tropes
6:15 PM *Dinner and Entertainment*

We encourage you to review the highlights and helpful information from today's training, and practice your responses to the common questions, myths, and tropes about Islam and Muslims.

Tuesday, January 30

Breakfast: *On your own*
9:00 AM Learning Groups: Practicing our Responses
10:15 AM *Break*
10:30 AM Who Are American Muslims?
11:30 AM Learning Groups: Practicing our Responses
12:30 PM *Working Lunch - Strategies for Engagement and Change*
1:15 PM Interfaith Closing Prayer and Pledge Signing
2:00 PM In-Depth Media & Public Messaging Training
6:00 PM *Conference Ends (dinner on your own)*

AGENDA & SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Sunday, January 28th

7:00 - 9:00pm - Opening Reception & Pledge Launch

Please join us for a casual welcoming reception to meet, greet, and network with local, regional, and national faith leaders, organizers, elected officials and special guests as we prepare for our training. Light refreshments will be provided.

Monday, January 29th

9:00 - 10:15am - **Islamophobia 101**

Lead Facilitators:

Kristin Sekerci, The Bridge Initiative
Alejandro Beutel, Southern Poverty Law Center
Madihha Ahussain, Muslim Advocates

Description:

The session will cover a brief history of Islamophobia in Western culture and the current narratives that support it. The facilitators will share information about the Islamophobia Industry, what it is, how it works, and who funds it. We will together explore how faith leaders can purposefully or unintentionally affirm Islamophobia, and we will uplift the vital and necessary role faith leaders can play to dismantle it.

10:30 - 11:45am - **Introduction to Islam**

Lead Facilitator:

Aneelah Afzali, Muslim Association of Puget Sound - American Muslim Empowerment Network (MAPS-AMEN)

Description:

This session will include a brief overview of Islamic beliefs and practices, and address some specific topics, including comparisons with other Abrahamic faith traditions, human rights (including women's rights) within Islam, and a proper understanding of concepts like sharia and more. Faith leaders will be encouraged to ask their questions and get the information they seek to gain a better understanding of the religious roots, teachings, understandings and interpretations of Islam.

12:00 - 1:00pm - **Working Lunch - Becoming an Effective Ally**

Lead Facilitators:

Conference Organizers

Description:

What does it mean to be an effective "ally" on this issue? How do we honor our differences while being in solidarity with one another? We'll begin with an introduction with personal reflections from the conference organizers, then move into guided table conversations, and end with a debrief with the larger group.

1:15 - 2:45pm - **Locating Our Fears and Responding to Them**

Lead Facilitators:

Rachel Brown, Project OverZero
Alexei Laushkin, Kingdom Mission Society

Description:

Informed by extensive research and practice, the facilitators will lead us in a theoretical and practical conversation on what fear “does” to us and how we can better understand, analyze, relate, and respond to fear within ourselves and in others. How can we engage with those captivated by fear? How do we understand violence committed in the name of religion and how can we respond to questions and fears about them? What is the difference between a fear and a threat? The conversation will be crafted intentionally so that faith leaders can utilize these tools and better address these issues in their own contexts and communities.

3:00 - 4:30pm - Messaging & Media: How to Talk About This

Lead Facilitators:

Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons, ReThink Media

Firdaus Arastu, ReThink Media

Arsalan Bukhari & Sarah Stuteville, Council on American-Islamic Relations

Description:

What messages are most effective at countering the rise in anti-Muslim bigotry? How do we talk about Islamophobia in the media in the most strategic possible way, backed by research? ReThink Media and Anzalone Liszt Grove Research conducted an in-depth round of message testing, and based on the research, ReThink has developed a messaging guide and set of best practices. This session will include the top messages that work best with the majority of audiences, a look at those that do not work, and how faith leaders can integrate these findings into your work.

4:45 - 6:00pm - Addressing Difficult Questions, Myths, & Tropes

Lead Facilitators:

Cassandra Lawrence

Catherine Orsborn

A moderated panel with all presenters and short videos

Description:

This interactive session will be a space for common tropes, myths, facts, and figures about Islam and Muslims to be unpacked and explored. We hope this session, along with all sessions, will give faith leaders the tools and talking points they need to bring back to their communities, and the ability to respond to common misconceptions in an informed and effective, research-based method to positively change hearts and minds and unite us as Americans.

6:15 - 8:00pm - Dinner

Tuesday, January 30th

9:00 - 10:15am - Learning Groups: Practicing Our Responses

10:30 - 11:30pm - Who Are American Muslims?

Lead Facilitator:

Meira Neggaz, Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU)

Description:

Who are American Muslims? What does this community look like, what have been their experiences in recent years, what are their attitudes and practices? This session will help you bust myths, combat fear with facts and and replace anecdotes with evidence. Drawing from ISPU's original research, Meira will provide a snapshot of a community that is so often talked about and less often talked to. From religiosity to politics, demographics to discrimination and more, this session will help you understand the American Muslim community in all its diversity, providing a foundation upon which to build relationships and educate others.

11:30 - 12:30pm - **Learning Groups: Practicing Our Responses**

12:00 - 1:15pm - **Working Lunch** - Strategies for Engagement and Change

Lead Facilitators:

Training Organizers

Description:

What are best practices and challenges to building interfaith relationships and organizing networks and partnerships? What are some strategies and tactics for engagement and change? *What is the impact of federal, state, and local laws and policies regarding Muslims? How does it impact greater American society and faith communities of all traditions? What are the current laws and policies to look out for?*

1:15 - 1:45pm - **Interfaith Closing Prayer & Pledge Signing**

Description:

As the training comes to an end, the work, guided and sustained by faith, continues on. We will close in prayer led by interfaith leaders and sign a pledge to commit to choose Faith over fear.

2:00 - 6:00pm - **In-Depth Media and Public Messaging Training**

Description:

How can use the news and social media arenas to effectively counter anti-Muslim bigotry? This session will include an overview on the tenets of values-based communication and best practices to engage in social media conversations and news interviews.

Lead Facilitators:

Firdaus Arastu, ReThink Media
Hannah Sullivan, The Bridge Initiative
Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons, ReThink Media
Arsalan Bukhari & Sarah Stuteville, Council on American-Islamic Relations

6:00pm - Conference Ends (dinner on own)