

Fiysabiylillah

Compassionate Aid Organization



As we celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Canada, we will share with you the experiences of some of our volunteers to highlight the importance of giving back.

2017



Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization

This Organization was founded in 2001 in Whitby Ontario. It is a Canadian Registered Charity (#845026723RR0001) committed to enriching the lives of the less fortunate through sustainable projects and through the development of one's faith as the ultimate source of strength.



In the past, Fiysabiylillah raised money to purchase and distribute Ramadan/Eid Food Hampers, collected and redistributed gently used and new clothing and organized fundraisers to collect funds for International Projects. We continue to strive to combat poverty through Islamic charitable means in our local communities and abroad. Also, we do not charge a fee on any part of the donations made to our projects. 100% of all donations made goes directly towards the projects of a donor's choice!

To learn more about us, visit our website at: www.fiysabiylillah.org

Fiysabiylillah Executive Committee for 2017

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Treasurer - Nafeeza Nabibaksh
Secretary - Samiya Drabu
Board Member - Fatima Alala
Board Member - Farema Shaffee
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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2016-2017

War - this topic always makes headlines and I always ask the question, why do we need to bomb and kill

each other? As soon as one war is over, another one starts up. Will it ever end?

WAR - I have come to accept it as part of life.

I fret, get angry, blame others, try to find answers and I always give up and say it is by the will of

Almighty Allah. Allah Subhaan wa ta Ala is the only one who is in control of everything and He has the power to end it.

I always feel that the people who are safe and not engaged in war have responsibilities to the war victims, and that is one reason why I chose to volunteer with Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization. I have been involved with this organization from its inception and I am very happy to be involved in the various projects over the years.

- Presently the Syrian war is in its seventh year. In 2014 our organization started a Sponsorship program for Syrian widows and orphans who had to flee their homeland to seek asylum in Jordan in search of peace, safety and security. Our goal was to find 150 -200 Canadian sponsors who were willing to provide \$CDN30 per month in financial aid to Syrian widows with orphans under 12 years of age. In January, 2015, with the help of Sister Lamia, a Fiysabiylillah volunteer and the Hemma Volunteer Group located in Amman Jordan, we were able to identify 48 Widows and orphans . We now have 135 in all (38 widows and 97 orphans) and with your generous support will reach our goal very soon InshaAllah. Please visit our website to donate on line or you can mail us a cheque for \$360 to sponsor one widow or child. I met all 135 of these Widows and orphans on my last visit to Amman, Jordan in April 2016.

- In 2016 The Cdn Govt. opened its doors to the Syrian refugees and Alhamdulillah we were able to raise \$230,000 to sponsor eight families from our Syrian Widows and Orphans Project in Amman, Jordan. As of August 2016, five of those eight families arrived in Canada - two families settled in Oshawa, two families in Whitby and one family in Mississauga. Fiysabiylillah CAO is looking forward to welcoming the other three families in 2017. It has been a very trying time for both Fiysabiylillah CAO Support Group and the Refugee Families but with each passing month, our task is becoming easier as the families are coming to grips with their new surroundings and cooperating with us as we try to resettle them the best way we can.

- This Ramadhan we want to focus on providing Food Hampers to fasting widows and orphans who have fled Syria to Jordan and Turkey. Also we would like to provide Food hampers to poor fasting families in Kenya, Guyana, Tanzania, and India.



Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization is 100% volunteer - no one gets paid - everyone works for the pleasure of Allah. 100% of your donation goes to the project of your choice.

Donate now at www.fiysabiylillah.org

Please check our website for drop off locations in Whitby/ Oshawa, Scarborough, Markham and Mississauga as we are collecting eyeglasses, gently used footwear, gently used clothing, linens, school bags, medical equipment and winter clothing. All donations must be in very good condition. Give what you would like to receive to seek the Pleasure of Allah, the Almighty.



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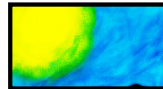


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ON THE COVER - Canada 150

2017 marks the 150th Anniversary of Canada. On July 1st, 1867, the colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick joined together to form the Federal Dominion of Canada. This process was also known as Confederation. Since then, Canada has expanded to include the 10 provinces and 3 territories we know today, with its many diverse cultures and people.

Fiysabiylillah is a good example of the rich tapestry of different cultures and people who live in Canada, who benefit from its social programs and who come together to help others in need. The dedicated volunteers of this organization come from various countries and the contributions and experiences that they bring not only make this organization better, but shows a resilience that makes Canada better. May Allah always keep us on the path that pleases Him and always allow us to come together to do good wherever we are.

VOLUNTEERED



By: Raaid Hooseinny

I have volunteered with Fiysabiyallah Compassionate Aid Organization since I was in my teens. In the beginning it was more a case of being “volun-told”, (def. Being told to volunteer even though you do not want to) than me actually volunteering. As a youth I often did not value the idea of giving back to the community. I always thought that I had better things to do with my time such as playing ball hockey with my friends, playing video games or even studying for school.

Over the years and as I matured, I got employed, I married and I had kids. I had become busier than I had ever been in my teens yet I found myself wanting to give back to the communities I lived in, whether it was in the GTA or, where I now live, in Ottawa. Only Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) knows whether or not this desire was a result of my time volunteering with Fiysabiyallah. What I do know, is that the experiences I had with Fiysabiyallah proved to me that you do not need a huge organization or a lot of money to make a lasting impact in the lives of others. Fiysabiyallah has shown me over the years that if one makes an effort to do good in this world for the pleasure of Allah SWT then He will open a way for you to accomplish your goals. This is one of the most profound lessons I have taken away from my time volunteering with Fiysabiyallah, because I am always shocked at the number of people who have wonderful ideas and dreams for their communities yet they do nothing about it. Don't get me wrong, there are always reasons; they are too busy with work or kids or friends, they do not know where to start, or they do not know if they are allowed to do what they want to do. After working with Fiysabiyallah I have realized that these are not really reasons. They are excuses. They are excuses that Shaitan whispers to us to slow our first step, to hold us back from gaining the pleasure of Allah SWT. My knowledge of Fiysabiyallah since its inception and the experience I gained there, have given me, by the grace of Allah SWT, the strength to overcome Shaitan's whispers and to work at being a benefit to the communities I live in.

In conclusion, to everyone out there who has an idea, small or big, simple or complex, that can help even just one person, or animal or plant, please do not let your idea stay only as an idea. Fiysabiyallah started off as an idea. Then it helped a handful of people one cold Ramadhan night, in one apartment building in one small Canadian town. Now, by the grace of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), Fiysabiyallah has helped hundreds if not thousands of people worldwide. Let Fiysabiyallah be an example to all who wish to help. The easy part is the idea. The rewarding part is taking the first step.



A GIFT WRAPPED BANANA BOX

By: Fozia Hooseinny



Fiyasbiyillah Compassionate Aid Organization began its operations by distributing 10 Ramadhan/ Eid Hampers to newcomers who had just arrived in Canada from war torn Afghanistan and single Moms who were finding it difficult to make ends meet. These families were identified through Sisters at the local masjids in Ajax, Oshawa and Whitby. The Ramadhan/Eid food hampers were distributed to these families to ensure that these fasting families had something extra for their Eid celebrations. The gift of a food hamper helped the Moms to have some extra cash to buy something nice for their children. Some families were even able to send a few dollars to their relatives back home who were even worse off. Alhamdulillah, here in Canada there is a very good welfare system where those who have jobs, whether it be a factory worker, a doctor, a lawyer or an accountant contribute a part of their earnings in the form of taxes to fund this Government program. The government help that is available to the residents of Canada ensures that most of the needs of the jobless and disabled are met and there is no need to resort to thievery, which is prevalent in societies that lack this type of organized help.

By the year 2015, Fiyasbiyillah CAO was distributing over 300 Food Hampers in the GTA, Durham and Kawartha Lakes Regions. By this time, most of the Masjids were also preparing Food Hampers and distributing to those in their jamaats. Many families were also receiving Food Hampers from our organization as well as their local Masjids. Our organization's board members decided that Fiyasbiyillah Compassionate Aid Organization should help the Needy in other countries seeing that the Masjids were now offering this help to their jamaats. In 2016 Fiyasbiyillah Compassionate Aid Organization did not distribute local hampers but distributed food hampers to needy fasting families in Guyana, Syria, Turkey(Syrian refugees), Tanzania, Kashmir(India), Jordan (Syrian refugees) and Tamil Nadu (India). These food hampers were prepared by members who were visiting their homeland or their trusted contacts there.

I was very surprised during the last week of Ramadhan when a Sister approached me and gave me \$100 for a food hamper, exactly like the ones that we distributed in previous years. I told the Sister who is a member of the organization if she could wrap the banana box in gift wrap paper and purchase all the items and deliver it



to the family. The Sister was very hesitant and she said that she wanted me to personally deliver this hamper as a gift from Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization. She is Arab like the family in need and she did not want to hurt anyone's feelings, so she wanted me to deliver the Eid Gift Hamper to the family. I was not too happy to be asked this favour as I was very busy with my Quranic reading and extra salaah as well as preparing for Eid celebration. This request was always pushed aside as I continued my daily activities, then a few days before Eid, the Sister called again and asked if I was able to prepare the Hamper. I asked for the family's name and phone number and the Sister said that she doesn't know but she can direct me to the family's home. I decided that I had to address this matter, so I then gift wrapped a banana box and went to the supermarket and purchased one each of all the items that we would usually put in the Ramadhan/Eid Gift Hamper. Of course it cost much more than if we purchased 300 each of every item. Anyway, I eventually packed the hamper, then I had to ask my son to accompany me to deliver the Hamper as it was too heavy for me to carry.

We arrived at the home but we were not sure whether the family was living on the main floor or the basement. I knocked on the door to the main floor and said that I was looking for a Muslim family. A boy of about seven years old answered the door and he assured me that the family in the basement was not Muslim and that his family was Muslim. I asked to speak to his mother and he said that she was in the washroom. I told him that I had an Eid Gift Food Hamper for them and if I can bring it from the car. He consulted with his mother and she said yes, so I asked my son to bring the hamper to the door and the boy was very happy about the items in the box. He saw a package looking like coffee beans and he wanted to wrap that as an Eid gift for his Dad as he said that his Dad loved Arab coffee. I told him that we have whole chickens also and he said no, then I said that they were halal and he quickly stretched his hand to accept the halal meat package that came with the food hamper. I was moved by his understanding that as much as they needed the meat, he would only accept it if it was halal. After this encounter, I really feel that Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization should continue the Local Ramadhan/ Eid Hampers Project. Only families whom have been identified by members and volunteers as "in need" would qualify to receive a Ramadhan/Eid Hamper. As we move forward, it is my hope that Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization will continue to serve the needy locally by continuing the Ramadhan/Eid Hamper program. I do encourage residents of the various communities to help us to identify the needy in their communities and to support this program with their generous donations InshaAllah.

Teaching Islam Through Drama

By: Sister Asia Maktabi



Every year I am filled with wonderful new ideas for a new play. My goal as always is to focus on our children and building a strong next generation by teaching them about this beautiful way of life, Islam. This is sometimes difficult when we live in a time of great technology where people, especially young people, are often engaged in isolated, solitary activities and do not take the time to interact with learned people or attend a lecture so that they may better themselves in knowledge.

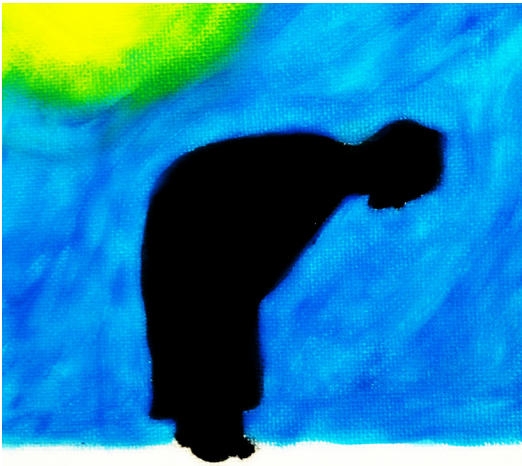
I have found that the art of acting is an amazing way to bring religion to our children in a way that is entertaining and which holds their interest. I want to encourage in them a love of knowledge and a greediness to learn and soak up religious information. In every show I am looking to pour as much as I can from this wide spring of knowledge. Within ourselves there seems to be a sickness as well, wherein we are content with what we know and care nothing about reading Islamic literature and expanding the way we practice our religion. We are oppressing ourselves when we refuse to make any change for the betterment of our lives. We need to wake up and make a sincere effort to learn and to ask in our du'as, "Oh Allah, increase us in knowledge." My hope is that our dramatic presentations will allow you to gain Islamic knowledge and provide you with an opportunity to entertain and teach your children about this wonderful Deen.



To date we have performed three plays and while we have made some mistakes along the way, we also have had many successes to be pleased about, Alhamdulillah. Our most recent play was entitled The Change. It presented several short stories from the Qur'an touching on different topics such as family relationships, the importance of charity, and non-believers receiving guidance and wholeheartedly accepting the message of God. My hope is that we will be able to bring a new play to the public in 2017, Insha Allah.

As always I have the deepest admiration and appreciation for the volunteers who devote a considerable amount of their spare time to rehearsals and script meetings in order to bring these dramatic productions to life. My thanks to you all and may Allah bless each and every one of you. We are always looking for new volunteers and this is a wonderful opportunity to help others to bring meaningful change to their lives, Insha Allah.





Khushoo' in Prayer

The basic meaning of khushoo' is the softness of the heart, its being gentle, still, submissive, broken and yearning.

Allah, the Most Great, says, "It is the believers who are successful: those who are humble in their prayer..." (The Holy Quran, 23:1-2)

The Prophet, on whom be peace, said, "Of a surety, there is a morsel of flesh in the body, if it is sound, the whole body will be sound, but if it is corrupt, the whole body will be corrupt. It is the heart."

When the heart is humble, so too is the hearing, seeing, head and face. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) would say while bowing in ruku', "My hearing, sight, bones and marrow are humbled to You."

The source of khushoo' is gnosis of Allah's greatness, magnificence and perfection. **E.g.** Some hearts are humbled through their perceiving the magnificence of Allah, His greatness and His grandeur.

From: **The Humility in Prayer**
By: *Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali*

Concentration

By: *Rafia Hooseinny*

"Allahu Akbar" the leader says.
I raise my arms and begin to pray.
The words flow easily from my lips.
Since a child, I learned all of this.

My homework,
That song,
Those shoes,
My chores.
My mind grows heavy
With thoughts of this world.

I try to focus as the leader says,
"Allahu akbar!"
The second rakat begins.

The words still flow,
I'm practised and clear,
But my mind still scrambles
For remembrance most sincere.

"Oh Allah!" I think as the third rakat begins,
"This is for You for giving me everything.
From the food I eat to the water I drink.
For these legs I walk with and these eyes I see with.

You alone deserve my worship.
No one else can ever compare!
Nothing else deserves my attention
As I stand up here and pray."

"Asalamu alaikum wa rahmatullah," the leader says.
"Asalamu alaikum wa rahmatullah," the prayer ends.
The world I worried about did not go anywhere,
Praise be to Allah for giving me another day.

SUGUTA VILLAGE



By: Hawa Sardar



Suguta village is in the Kongwa district in the Dodoma Region of Tanzania. The majority of people in the village are Muslim. There is a small mosque and a brother named Omar Kihange is the imam as well as the madrasa teacher.

My name is Hawa Sardar from Oshawa, Ontario, Canada representing the Fiyasabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization as the co-ordinator for African countries. I speak many local languages. On my journey to Dodoma, (Dodoma is the capital city of Tanzania), I came across a family knocking at my first class compartment for help. It was a dark night, an odd hour (12:30 am) and this family was crying for help. I heard the noises; the yelling and hysterical crying! I could not resist. The next thing I knew I was peeping through my window only to see the horror of my life: a pregnant woman soaked in a pool of blood needing to be rushed to the hospital as she had slipped and fallen due to the heavy load of water she had been carrying. She had slipped on a rock, hit her head and fallen into a deep ditch. I realized it wasn't just curiosity which had led me to open my window; I wanted to help this family. I climbed through the window to help the woman. We managed to get her to hospital, but there was no doctor on duty! I finally managed to

track down the doctor in a nearby restaurant and the woman finally received the medical attention she needed. This incident seemed to be something sent from God and I immediately felt the need to help provide safe, accessible drinking water to these people.

I had decided to visit Suguta village and it was amazing to me to witness the many women and teenage girls who were victims of such accidents almost every day. Life for them is very difficult; women and their children walking two hours to fetch a pail of water on their heads and at the same time carrying



small children on their backs. The water they carry is not even safe to drink. The water colour is orange because cows, pigs and dogs urinate and defecate in the same water. The same water the people not only have to drink but also the same water they as Muslims are forced to use to perform their wudhu! Alhamdulillah, with the help of donations quickly raised back in Canada we were able to build a well in this village and help these people have access to one of the basic necessities of life. This story has a happy ending, but there are many more untold stories where people struggle everyday and continue to live life without clean, accessible water.

People in poor nations are thirsty and starving to death! All while we are enjoying our delicious meals with friends and family. There are various governmental aid-projects and privately run charities which are responsible for delivering donations from the relatively wealthy nations to the nations in need. I believe it is a morally right thing to help people in need, but not all of us would make donations of our time. Why not? Are we really that busy or are we just too consumed in our own lives to want to spend the time caring about someone else's? I believe you all need to visit these places to see how people, especially the women and children suffer. Maybe after witnessing firsthand what we only hear about in the news, we would feel more compelled to roll up our sleeves and dig into the actual work of helping people who are living in extreme poverty and who exist everyday without something as basic as clean drinking water.

May Allah (swt) help us to help others and may He make us among those who are grateful. Ameen.

BUILDING A NEW LIFE



Narrated by: Souzan Saffaf

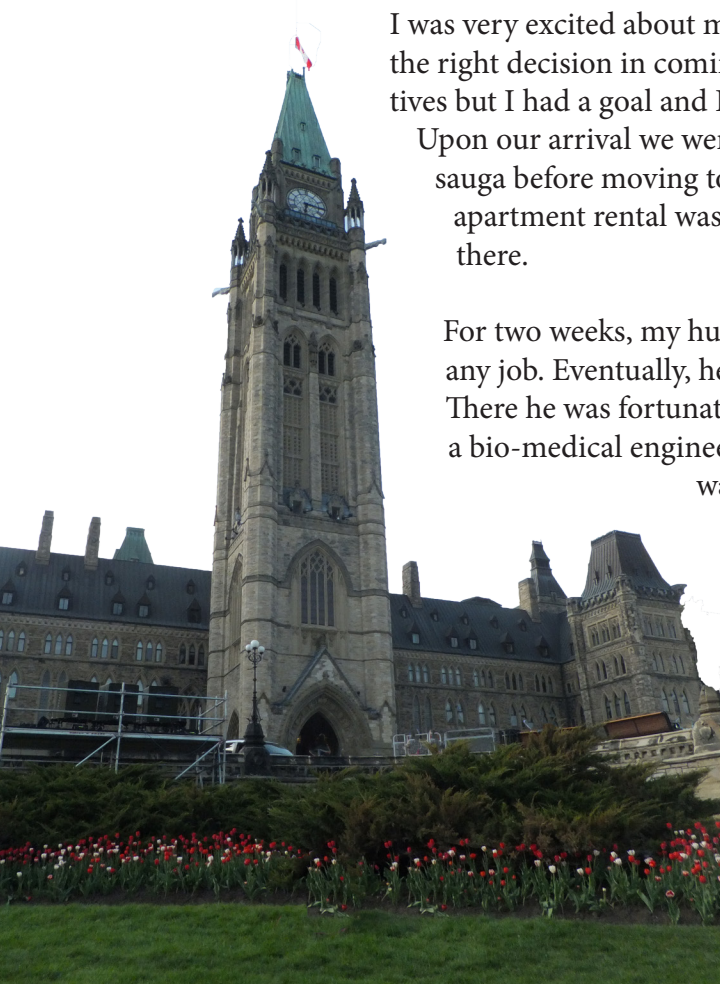
I am a Syrian national married to a Palestinian born in Syria. My husband's father migrated from Palestine and since his roots are not Syrian, neither he nor his descendants can ever become Syrian citizens. From the time my husband graduated as a bio-medical engineer, he began his quest to find a home where he could be recognized as a citizen of that country and enjoy rights like all other citizens. He was constantly searching for employment opportunities in the bio-medical field on the internet and he frequented the American and Canadian embassies in search of job opportunities. His search led him to seek migration to Canada and this process included many steps and took four long years to complete.

Two years after submitting his application, I got married to my husband in 2001 and he then had to pay a fee for me to be added onto his application that was being processed. Alhamdulillah, a year later our first child was born and he had to pay another fee to get her added to his application as well. One requirement in the application process was that the applicant must possess a Canadian bank account with a certain amount of money. This was accomplished by all his relatives pooling their funds together with the promise that when he reached Canada, the funds would then be used to sponsor someone else. Finally in 2002, the application process was completed and in May 2002, we left Syria to build a new and better life in Canada.

I was very excited about my trip and as I sat in the airplane. I wondered if we had made the right decision in coming to Canada. I felt very sad at leaving my country and my relatives but I had a goal and I was determined to overcome all obstacles in reaching my goal. Upon our arrival we were greeted by a friend and stayed three days with him in Mississauga before moving to London, Ontario to stay with my husband's uncle. In London, apartment rental was cheaper than the big cities, so we decided to start our new life there.

For two weeks, my husband went job hunting from one business to another just to find any job. Eventually, he met someone who told him to check the Employment Agency. There he was fortunate to find a factory job as a packer on the night shift. So from a bio-medical engineer in Syria, he was now a factory worker in Canada. But this was a starting point and did not deter him from his goal of being a bio-medical engineer in Canada. He was happy for the factory job as he was able to leave his uncle's home and rent his own apartment for him and his family. Although, we had no furniture, we were thankful to Allah for his Mercy and Blessings. At the apartment, in my new environment, I was lonely but not sad. I cried because of my loneliness and I was scared of being left alone at nights. During the day my husband did not want me to go out alone as he thought it was not safe. I had no cellphone or Google translator.

For two weeks I watched from my balcony as people used





The Trailer

the bus to travel, interacted with each other and generally went about their business. One day I gained the strength to venture out and I decided to take my three year old daughter on a bus ride. I did not know to speak the English language but I wrote down the bus number and route, boarded the bus and did not come off until it came back to my apartment building. I was very happy that I had ventured out as it gave me confidence to use the bus again. I then took my daughter to the park and there I met lots of seniors who were kind to me and my daughter and I even met an Arab lady who reminded me of my Mom. She became my first friend in this new land. We became very close as she was my main support and with her help my husband was able to find a full-time day job in another factory.

With this new opportunity, he was able to explore the possibility of upgrading his education. He had a good friend at the factory who helped him to attend ESL school by always making sure that he had the afternoon shift from 2-11pm. After achieving Grade 12 English, my husband was able to upgrade his degree at Fanshawe College and during that time I delivered our second child. After six months at college, my husband was now equipped to find a job in the bio-medical field

and began looking for job opportunities in this field. Alhamdulillah, after a few months he was able to find a six month contract job in Oshawa, Ontario. As it was only a contract job, I remained in London with our two children as we did not want to move since the job was not permanent, I was very comfortable in my new environment and my English was still non-existent.

Alhamdulillah, after the six month contract, my husband was offered a permanent job, so we decided to move to another apartment in Oshawa. After one year, we were able to purchase a small car and pay down for a small house. My husband continued his academic studies and after two years completed his Masters Degree in bio-medical engineering. We were always grateful for the Blessings Allah had bestowed upon us. In our move to Canada, we never forgot our salaah and I never gave up my Islamic dress code. I wore my hijab wherever I went and was never ashamed of my religion. As soon as my kids were of age to attend madrasa, I took them to the Masjid and enrolled them in the daily evening classes where they continued to learn about their religion. We came to Canada for a better life but not to forget or change our religion.

After my two children started attending school, I now had some time to educate myself in the English language and enrolled for ESL classes. My child once said that he would exchange me for a Mom who could speak good English and I said to him that I would trade him for a child who spoke good Arabic. Alhamdulillah, this type of conversation inspired me and gave me the strength and courage to seek knowledge. I was able to pass my written and road driving test in 2006. I am still upgrading my English and am currently enrolled at Durham College where I am studying Grade 12 English. My goal is to complete a degree at UOIT. I will work hard and with Allah's help, I will succeed, InshaAllah.

While attending ESL classes, I met Fatima. She was from Syria and we became good friends. I thank Allah for her as she is now my closest friend. Fatima once asked me to help out at a Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization event and as I was very happy to do



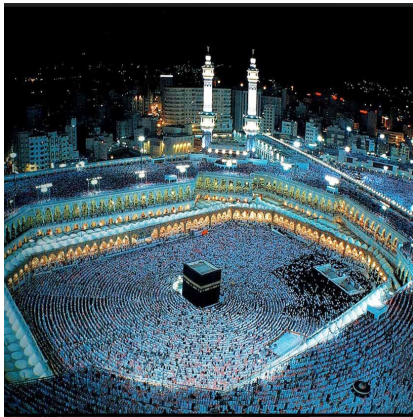
Sister Fatima (center) at Children's Eid Party

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Hajj... A Journey Of Mind, Body and Soul

By: Askar Yasmeen Siddiqui

I'd like to acknowledge the greatest blessing of Allah (SWT), who chose me from amongst more than 6 billion Muslims in the world to invite me to His blessed house, the Kaba, to perform Hajj. Hajj is indeed a reminder of another journey every one of us is travelling - a journey to the hereafter; to paradise or to hell. If hajj is done properly with due thought and attention to all the requirements, so that your Hajj bears resemblance to the journeys of Prophet Abraham and Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon them both), when you return home from hajj your life should reflect good changes because Allah SWT has forgiven all of your sins and it is as though you are as innocent and pure as a newborn baby. According to a Hadith of Prophet Mohammed PBUH "The person who came on pilgrimage to the house of Allah, then neither committed an indecent act, nor indulged in any disobedience of Allah, he will return home as pure (of sins) as he was on the day his mother bore him" (Bukhari, Muslim).



First of all I was overwhelmed by the number of people (more than 3 million) from all over the world, wearing the same white Ihram, doing the same rituals, at the same time and at the same place. I could not help but be overwhelmed. The crowd makes you feel so humble that you realize you are not even a spec in the universe. When you see people so old and so weak you appreciate your health and well-being. Some people cannot even walk properly because their ankles and feet are so swollen that they cannot completely insert their feet into their footwear. You see people on wheelchairs pushed by others. You hear the silent hums of tens of thousands of people crying and pledging to Allah while performing Tawaf. You feel humbled for being an honoured guest of Allah SWT, The Most High.

This was indeed a lesson in humility.

It was a lesson for me to practise patience and tolerance. I remember my Imam, Abdool Hamid, said in our Hajj seminar, "Hajj is not about how much ebada you do for yourself, how many Umra's you do or how many Tawaf's you do, but it is to be considerate of others to do their Ibada." In Minah every minute I spent I had the potential to mold myself for better or for worst. When my fellow Haji's had multiple complaints - "oh it stinks", "oh it is the same food again", "the line-up for the buffet is too long" and "the tent is too crowded" - I was thankful to Allah to have an air-conditioned tent, a comfortable folding bed and sofa, brand new beddings, fresh fruits and cold drinks, tea and coffee, freshly cooked meals, deserts and much more at my disposal. I was thinking of people on the street who had no shade and some who were living under a sheet stretched across a few poles. Some people were on top of a mountain under the scorching heat of the sun. Some people had no food. The little kids were rummaging through pieces of garbage to get something to eat. I could not utter any comments to their complaints other than thank Allah for every morsel of food.

I hope this article opens the eyes of people going for Hajj to realize that it is a journey of the mind, body and soul and not a holiday trip. I request future Hajjis to channel their negative experiences into something positive to strengthen their faith and Imaan. Oh Allah I want to fear you and keep you in my mind every second of my life. Oh Allah, help me to make a sincere effort to correct my faults and shortcomings. Oh Allah, make me spend the rest of my life in your submission, surrendering to you, obeying your commands and staying away from your prohibitions. Finally, Oh Allah, grant me Jannah with your mercy.

Fiysabiylillah C.A.O. USA

A Year In Reflection



By: Nafeeza Hooseinny-Nabibaksh,
Director-Fiysabiylillah CAO USA



As Muslim American's face challenges of patriotism and Islamic identity amidst new leadership in this country, it forces many of us to become what we should have always been – Ambassadors of this beautiful religion through every facet of our lives. How we behave in our daily life, our dealings with others, our actions when tested; these are the things that must define us as better people, these are the things that defined our Prophets as true leaders. Living our life true to the exemplary teachings of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) will always persevere over ignorance and fear.



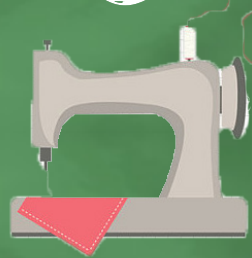
Alhamdulillah, Fiysabiylillah CAO USA continues to move slowly forward. In Ramadhan 2016 we collected over \$1,200.00 from the Islamic Centre of South Lake County to fund International Food hampers in countries such as Jordan, Tanzania and Pakistan. In addition, we partnered with a group in Tanzania, organized by Hawa Sardar (Fiysabiylillah CAO's coordinator for African countries), where we sacrificed several cows during Eid-ul-Adha and had the meat distributed to the poor in the rural villages of Suguta, Kidete, Mafisa, Kilwa-masoko and Kisiwani. Alhamdulillah, it was reported that they were very appreciative for the meat provided. May Allah(SWT) accept all our sacrifices.

2017 brings with it personal changes for myself as I move from the Orlando area to South Florida. Having made connections with masjids and volunteers over the past three years I will have to start over once again in a new community. Building relationships with Islamic organizations, volunteers, and developing a donor base from scratch takes time and connections. However, with Allah's (SWT) help we will continue to move forward, opening new doors, embracing new challenges and working hard to meet our goals.



It is with these minor obstacles we face that I reflect, appreciate, and find inspiration from the women in our organization who have to juggle the demands and pressures of family, work, and social obligations. It is with patience that we understand when a volunteer falls off the radar due to family obligations or demands placed upon her beyond her control. It is why I have come to appreciate the simplicity, maybe even the chaotic nature of this organization. While we all juggle our lives, Fiysabiylillah continues to represent what women can achieve while maintaining a sense of moderation and balance within their own lives. We may not change the world, but we change ourselves, and in doing so, Insha Allah we change each other.

Learning Centre



LEARN TO SEW

Over the March Break, I participated in a Fiysabilillah sewing class. We learned the basics of sewing and how to work a sewing machine. We also participated in a project to sew reusable pads for women in third world countries.

This program was beneficial because it provides girls with the chance to learn basic sewing skills. Also, it is a good opportunity to help others, because in third world countries, women don't have the convenience of disposable pads. Reusable pads provide them with an alternative way of keeping clean, and instead of being thrown away, they can be used again and again, so they are economically feasible for less fortunate people.



I enjoyed this program because I learned to sew. This is a valuable skill for women to have, so it is important to learn. Also, I met other Muslim girls who were very friendly.

In conclusion, this program was a very rewarding way for me to spend my March Break. I learned a valuable life skill, met lots of friendly people, and was given the opportunity to help less fortunate women in the world. I am very grateful for having this opportunity to help others and learn something that will benefit me at the same time.

- Hasna Khan



Since its inception in early 2001, Fiysabiyillah Compassionate Aid Organization has been conducting a madrasah on the ground floor of Building 100 of the White Oaks apartment buildings in Whitby. It all started when Sister Fozia began assisting new immigrant families who lived in the White Oaks complexes. She found that no matter what the reason for their immigration, every family that she encountered experienced a serious cultural shock when they first arrived. The reality is that many immigrants who come from Islamic countries usually have a very difficult time developing a strong balance between Islamic life and their new life in the West.

For many, Islamic education in their native country is naturally embedded in their cultural way of life and in their educational systems. In Canada, if you want to be Muslim, you have to choose to be Muslim, implementing a way of life that goes against mainstream Canadian culture. In many ways, it's that great opportunity to choose that makes us stronger as Muslims and helps to strengthen our awareness of our faith even more. Nevertheless, as much as it can be a blessing, it is initially a difficult struggle for many new immigrants in their early stages of integration as they find it very difficult to live in a country where Islam is not all around them. The biggest difficulty comes in the form of providing Islamic education for their children, a concept that is completely foreign to many newcomers. That's where FCAO steps in, to provide adequate Islamic education to the immigrant families in the White Oaks complexes. Since 2001, the classes have run every year with old students moving away and new students moving in.

Through God's great blessing, I have had the wonderful opportunity to teach at the White Oaks Madrasah and have been doing so for almost 3 years. It is extremely important to me to inspire each child to develop an Islamic life that is pleasing to Allah. It is critical in our day and age to bring religious clarity to the lives of our youth, in order to counter balance the messages that are propagated at school which go against God's true message. Being a graduate of the Canadian educational system, I understand the struggles and the misconceptions which can be formed from the messages provided by children's educational systems, media, society and Canadian culture. It is incredibly important that our youth are educated in the teachings of Islam in order to truly understand what is right and wrong and to be able to make educated decisions in choosing the path that will lead them to Jannah (Heaven).

Every Friday, Sister Fatima holds a Qur'anic class for recitation and memorization from 5-7pm and I run a class every Sunday from 11am to 1:30pm, focussing on the beautiful, powerful teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the incredible life of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him). With Allah's great blessing we hope that we can make an impact on the lives of each of our students to make them great Canadians, educated and knowledgeable Muslims, and ultimately the finest of humanity.

- Rawdeyah Hooseinny

Gratitude



Narrated By: Sister Nooria

During the Afghanistan War of 1992, I was living in Kabul where rockets were falling all around us. At this time the Taliban were in control in Afghanistan, there was no peace and we lived in daily fear. I was expecting my second child and during the day we lived in the upper floors of our home and during the night we had to seek shelter in the basement. If a light was seen in your home, a rocket would be shot at it. We all lived in hope that the nightmare would end and we could return to a normal life.

The night, I was in labour, there was no one to help with the delivery and my brother-in-law disguised himself and went door to door to find someone who could help. He eventually found someone who demanded twice the amount as it was a night delivery. As rockets fell on our house my baby was born and Alhamdulillah, both my baby and I were in good health. A month after the birth, the situation became worse and with the help of my older sister who arranged a car, my family and I fled with 25 other relatives from Kabul to Islamabad. In all there were about 30 persons in the car and the journey was very difficult and unsafe as we had to avoid the police checkpoints to avoid the hefty bribes that had to be paid at each checkpoint. After a gruelling journey of eight hours we arrived safely at my father's house in Islamabad. My Dad had moved to Islamabad before the war and was renting a house in the city. So we lived with him and about 50 other relatives from 1992-1995 with the hope of being sponsored by my brother who lived in Canada. After 3 years of waiting in these cramped conditions with my husband not working and depending on handouts from my Dad and brother, our application was finally processed and approved and we arrived in Canada in the middle of January 1995.



We were very happy to be in a safe place where we could start a new life. My brother kept us with him for two years where we were given one bedroom and were thankful for everything even if I had to sleep on the floor and my children out in the hallway. After one week in Canada, I began working during the night at my brother's convenience store while my husband did odd jobs until he found a full time job. At the end of each week, I received \$20 to buy milk for my children and \$400 to pay off my brother's debt. After 2 years, we received Ontario Housing and were able to move to our own 2 bedroom apartment. Things were getting better and we were working hard at rebuilding our lives. I stopped working at my brother's convenience store and started delivering flyers as I was now pregnant with my

third child and needed to be home with my other children as my husband worked during the day. We met a very nice Muslim family who lived in our apartment building and as we had no car, they offered to take our children to the madrasa with their children. We cannot forget the kindness of Brother Ayub and Sister Salam and they became our very close friends and remained so even after they moved and bought their own home.

Our children did not get a chance to do anything exciting during the long summer months as we had no car and I was scared to send them alone anywhere. My husband worked seven days a week and had no time to



take the children anywhere as we were off Government help and trying to stand on our own feet. My daughter was born in October 1998 and my husband was able to purchase a very old car but we were very happy with it even if it could not drive on the highway. I also began attending ESL classes whenever I could as I wanted to improve my English.

In 2000, I entered the work force as all my children were now at school and in 2006 after working 12 hour shifts, with the help of Almighty Allah we were able to purchase a small home. Life in Canada was getting better and better as we were always thanking Allah for His Mercies and Blessings and working very hard to succeed.

In 2015, I was able to leave the workforce and focus on taking care of my family and giving back to the community. I knew a Sister at Masjid-e-Ayesha was involved with an organization that helped the needy in the community locally and abroad. I had always wanted to help people, especially since I know how helpless one can feel when there is no one to turn to.

I, along with my daughter, have been volunteering for the past three year with Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization at their fundraising activities, Eid ul Adha Children's celebrations, Used Clothing Trailer and most recently at the Summer Day Camp. This year I was offered the Chef position at the Day Camp and it was very fulfilling and enjoyable. I was very touched by the fact that eighty percent of those who attended the Summer Day Camp were children of single Moms, do not have cars and could not afford to send them to an Islamic Day Camp. I remembered how my children had always complained of being bored and having nothing to do and nowhere fun to go. I also remembered the days that I used to sit and cry because I could not take them anywhere as their Dad was always working.

I hope to always be a part of Fiysabiylillah's Summer Day Camp as it makes me feel good about giving back to the community and is an activity that I find very enjoyable and rewarding. The children have a wonderful time as they partake in all the activities in a wholesome Islamic environment. My only regret is that Fiysabiylillah Summer Day Camp was not available for my children when they were so bored at home on those long summer days many years ago.



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some fiysabiylillah (In the way of Allah) work. I remembered attending one of Fiysabiylillah's Eid al Adha Children's celebration with my two children. We were happy to attend such an event and had lots of fun as there was nothing else like this in the Durham Region. Since that time I always look forward to taking my children and volunteering at this event even when it is as far away as Mississauga. Fiysabiylillah CAO organizes this event in different areas of the Greater Toronto Area so that newcomers and single moms can bring their children to celebrate Eid. As my children got older, I was able to volunteer more of my time at Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization. For the past three years I have been heading the team at the Used Clothing Trailer and each year we are able to help more and more people locally and abroad. I am now a member of Fiysabiylillah CAO and was given the opportunity to serve as a Board Member. Now my daughter, Judy is volunteering with this organization. Last March break she elected to attend sewing classes to learn to sew and at the same time to sew reusable sanitary pads for women in third world countries. I want my children to volunteer in this organization to gain the pleasure of Allah and reap the rewards in the Hereafter and not for any worldly gains. I told my daughter that her volunteering with Fiysabiylillah CAO would not count as her volunteer hours for High School and she is very happy to work solely for the Pleasure of Allah. I do hope that others will be inspired to volunteer to such a worthy cause.

BREAKING THE CYCLE *By: Rafia Hooseinny*

