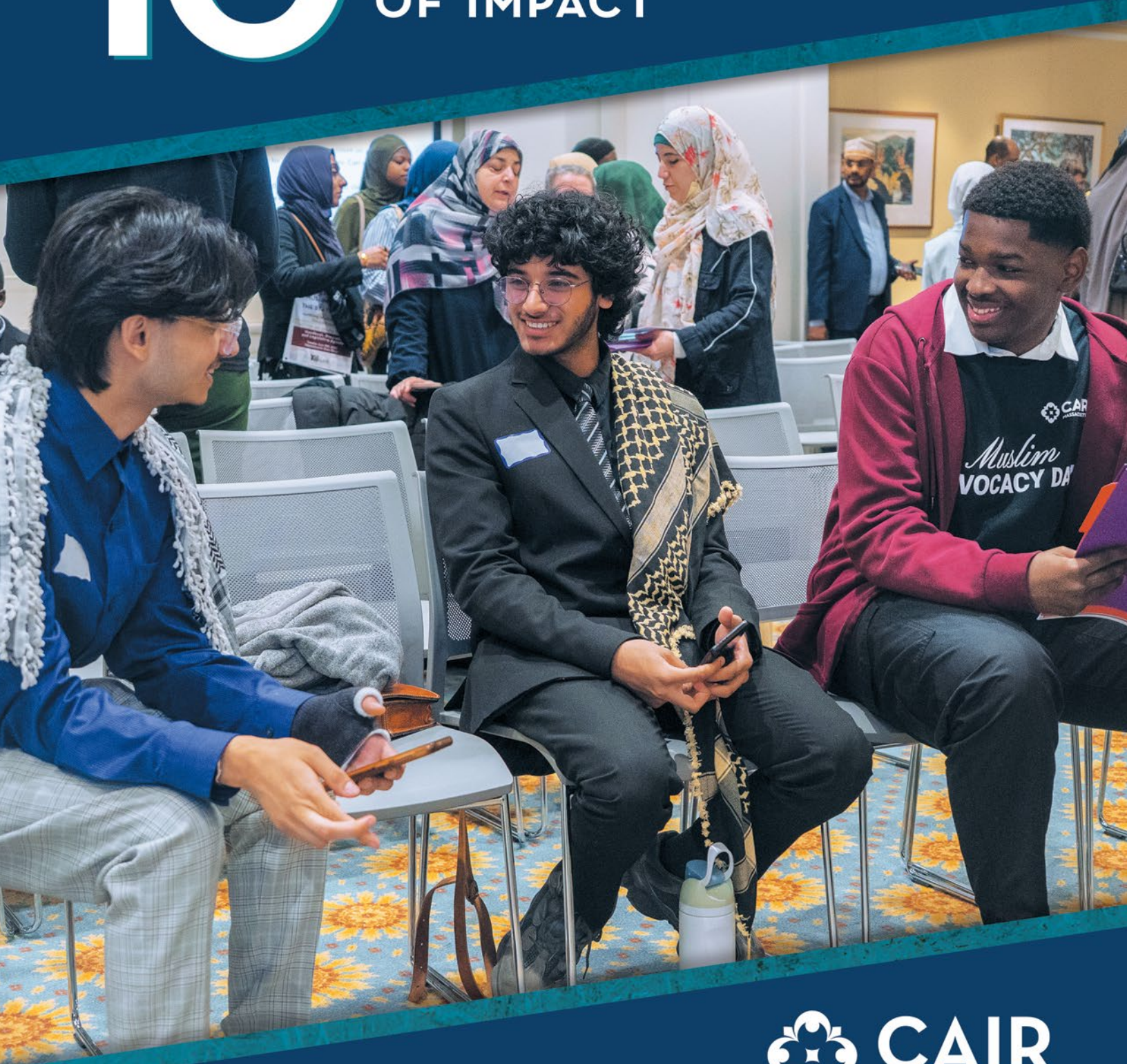


10 YEARS OF IMPACT



2025 Annual Report

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On the front cover (L-R): Tayyab Afzal, Ibrahim Afzal, & Dawud Bey sit in the State House after participating in our first Legislative Briefing.

Above: Asma Elkabti (President, MAS Boston) & Vincent Ware (Deputy Director, CAIR-MA) attend Muslim Advocacy Day. Learn more about the Legislative Briefing and Muslim Advocacy Day on page 6.

About CAIR-MA, Inc.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations—Massachusetts (CAIR-MA) is a chapter of America's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. CAIR-MA, Inc., was established in 2015 and serves the estimated 150,000 Muslims living in the Commonwealth. Our mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

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LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem.

Ten years ago, a small group of believers decided that Massachusetts Muslims deserved an organization that would stand with them – not just in theory, but in the courtroom, in the State House, and in the street. I am humbled and grateful to Allah (SWT) that I have borne witness to CAIR-



Enas Batarfi, Mariam Aydah,
Tahirah Amatul-Wadud, & Tareq Hamad (L-R).

Massachusetts's continued strength and presence in all of the ways our founders imagined.

This report documents what we accomplished in 2025, a year that tested this community in ways that were both familiar and those never seen before. Hate crimes, school bullying, employment discrimination, immigration crackdowns, and the silencing of political dissent did not slow us down. If anything, they reminded us why this work matters and who it is for. **This year we were stretched beyond capacity with need, so we stretched our budget** to have six full time staff members. This

is the first time our team has been this large. And we worked. Hard.

To our board, staff, interns, coalition partners past and present, and community: *jazakum Allahu khayran. Thank you.*

This report is dedicated to our founding Executive Director, Dr. John Robbins, who laid the framework for this chapter. That is why we named him one of our 2025 Stewards of Justice!

In gratitude,

Tahirah Amatul-Wadud, Esq.

Executive Director & Chief Legal Officer, CAIR-MA



Tahirah with Senator Jamie Eldridge.



Left: Professor Tracy Magdalene from WNEU School of Law hosts a mock law class. Right: Vincent Ware attends an interfaith event.



OUTREACH & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

In recognizing the ten-year milestone of CAIR-MA, **we intentionally expanded outreach and community engagement efforts** across the state. The goal was to strengthen relationships with Muslim communities, educational institutions, interfaith partners, and civic partners.

Our interfaith partnerships are one of the most meaningful relationships we have. We stand in solidarity with our neighbors and friends of faith, and with those who do not profess a faith but hold values aligned with ours.

By building a strong and visible presence, **we are fostering an informed and engaged Muslim community.**



CAIR-MA's annual Wayland Iftar.

By the Numbers: Our Impact in 2025

116

**Outreach
Events**

40

**Mosque
Visits**

10

**Educational
Workshops**

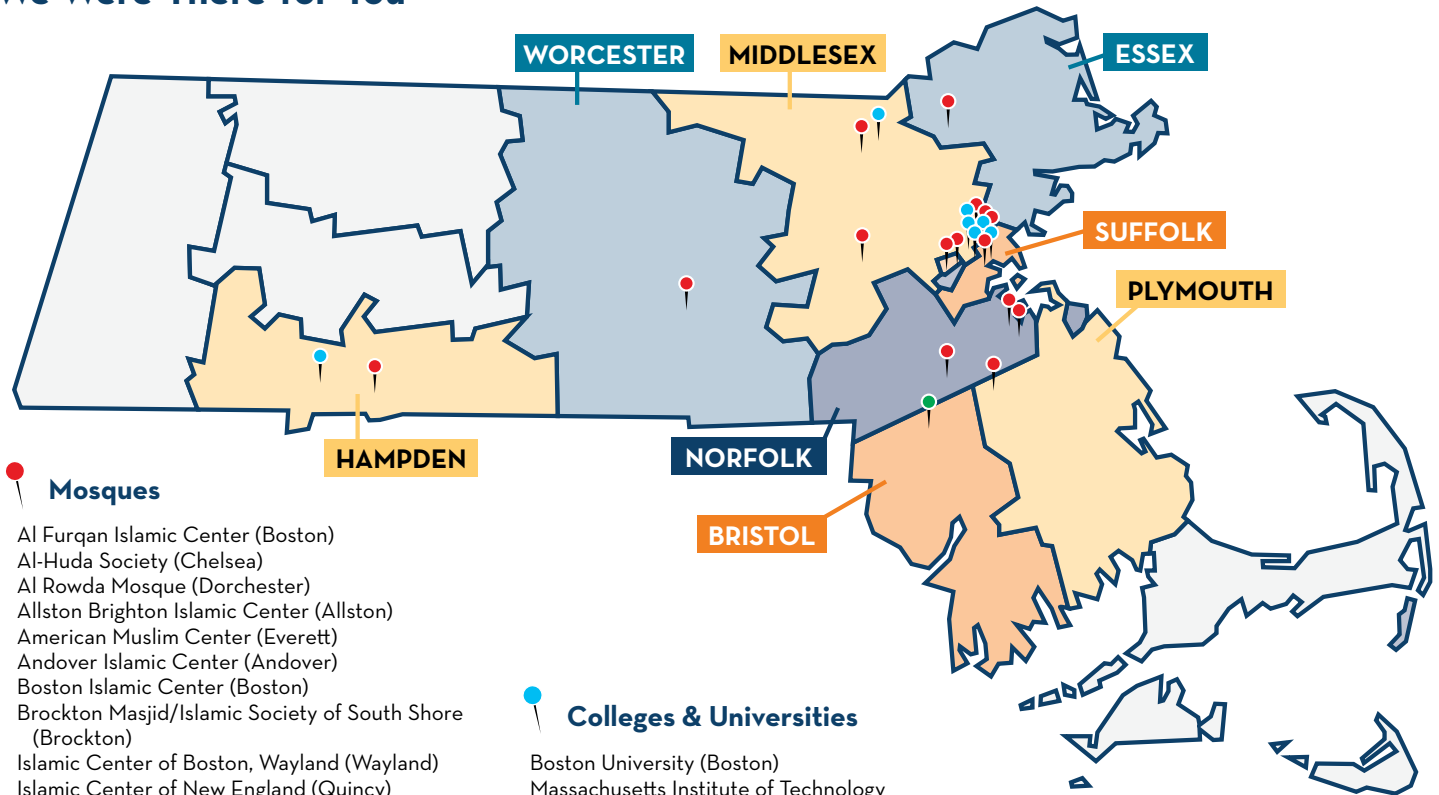
12

**School & University
Engagements**

54

**Community
Engagements**

We Were There for You



In 2025, we visited eight out of the fourteen counties in the Commonwealth.



MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

In its tenth year, CAIR-MA's work made news across all media: **print, digital, and broadcast**, running in **local and independent outlets, as well as in national ones**.

Among the outlets that covered our work: CNN, Newsweek, the Boston Globe, WBUR, Campus Safety Magazine, Sampan, and The Shoestring. Each story reflected something our community was living through in real time, from the bullying of Muslim students in Massachusetts schools, to immigration fear gripping families at Logan Airport, to the fight for academic freedom at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's graduation ceremony.



Participants of our first Legislative Briefing.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY: BUILDING MUSLIM POLITICAL POWER

STATE

As CAIR-MA marked its tenth year, we conducted our **first-ever Legislative Briefing alongside the annual Muslim Advocacy Day**. This was a historic milestone in a decade of advocacy at the Massachusetts State House and reflected the urgency of the issues facing Muslim communities across the Commonwealth.

The Legislative Briefing **drew dozens of elected officials and staff** who listened to testimony on the alarming rise in violent hate crimes against Muslims, the silencing of political dissent amid the war in Gaza, and the sustained employment discrimination experienced by Muslim workers across sectors. Attorney Barbara J. Dougan, Fatuma Muhammad of the Youth Department, and other community members testified on a range of issues affecting Muslim communities. The hearing room was standing room only, as Muslims and interfaith partners filled the room before moving directly into meetings with lawmakers and staff, to share their lived experiences and **advocate for policies that advance civil rights, religious freedom, and support for the Muslim Commission Bill**.



Top left: Attendees of our Legislative Briefing.

Top right: Representative Vanna Howard & Senator Jamie Eldridge spoke during our Briefing.

Bottom: Safiyah M. Bey, CAIR-MA Youth Advisory Committee alum, emceeds the Legislative Briefing & Advocacy Day.

Advancing the Muslim Commission Bill

A major focus of CAIR-MA's legislative work this year was the Massachusetts Muslim Commission Bill (S.2134/H.Bill 3351). **The proposed commission would create a formal mechanism** for studying issues affecting Muslim communities and advising state government on policies impacting Muslims across the Commonwealth. CAIR-MA thanks **Senator Jamie Eldridge**, who secured the State House facilities for the Legislative Briefing, and **Representative Vanna Howard**, for their leadership in introducing this legislation bicamerally. To date, 18 lawmakers have co-sponsored the bill, reflecting growing support across both chambers.

CAIR-MA **organized and participated in a hearing on the bill** in the fall of 2025, with testimony from organizational leaders, including Board President Rev. Corey Sanderson. In December, the legislative committee reviewing the bill voted to report it favorably, advancing it to the next stage of the process. The bill is currently before the House Ways and Means Committee. CAIR-MA continues to meet with legislators and coalition partners to build support for its passage.



Muslim Youth Leadership Program participants visited the State House three times during 2025.

Protecting Civil Rights & Religious Freedom

CAIR-MA remained actively engaged in legislative and policy discussions concerning civil rights, religious freedom, and equal treatment under the law.

As a member of the **Together for an Inclusive Massachusetts** coalition, we advocated for approaches to combating antisemitism that protect all communities while preserving free speech and the right to engage in legitimate policy debate. CAIR-MA urged policymakers to pursue solutions grounded in solidarity and mutual respect rather than measures that divide religious communities.

CAIR-MA staff and volunteers also testified before the Legislature's Judiciary Committee regarding proposed changes to Massachusetts anti-discrimination law, and continued advocating for policies that uphold constitutional rights and protect vulnerable communities.

We supported legislation addressing immigrant justice, educational equity, privacy rights, and criminal justice reform – including expanding legal representation for low-income immigrants, limiting the use of facial recognition technology for mass surveillance, preventing suspensions for dress code violations, and advancing dignity and fairness within the criminal legal system.

FEDERAL

In April, Deputy Director Vincent Ware, MYLP and YAC alumnus Aly Tahoun, and others from the Massachusetts contingent joined Muslim delegates from across the nation in Washington, D.C. for the U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO)'s **Muslim Advocacy Day**.

Participants met with their members of Congress to advance three core priorities:

- **Protecting Free Speech and Nonprofit Advocacy Rights** in the face of growing legislative threats and McCarthy-era investigations targeting Muslim, Arab, Palestinian, allied Jewish, and other community organizations;
- **Opposing Discriminatory Travel Bans** by supporting the NO BAN Act and by rejecting the reimplementing of extreme visa restrictions on Muslim-majority countries; and
- **Calling for U.S. Action to End Genocide and Human Rights Abuses** in Gaza, Sudan, China (Xinjiang), Burma (Myanmar), and India, where Muslim communities face ongoing violence and oppression.



CAIR-MA & others from the Massachusetts contingent attended the USCMO's Muslim Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C.



YOUTH ADVOCACY IMPACT

Muslim Youth Leadership Program

In August 2025, CAIR-Massachusetts hosted its 8th Annual Muslim Youth Leadership Program (MYLP), bringing together 22 high school student leaders from across the Commonwealth. This **intensive four-day retreat in Boston empowered young Muslims in organizing and change-making** through media literacy training, civic education, and strategic advocacy frameworks. Throughout the four days, participants also bonded with one another and built meaningful connections through the program. These bonds are crucial to their development, allowing them to better understand their peers and gain new perspectives on topics, ideas, and approaches to the work being done in their communities.

MYLP participants took part in 13 workshops, engaged with local leaders, authors and experts, took field trips, and worshipped together. The experiences covered a **wide range of topics**, including:

- Towards Sacred Activism
- Prophetic Leadership
- Crucial Conversations
- Building Together: Coalition Skills Lab
- Jumma in the Community

The workshop "Towards Sacred Activism" taught how Muslims can **engage in advocacy and social justice as part of maintaining their core Islamic values and ethics**. In advocacy work and in standing for justice, the line between principles and practice can sometimes become blurred. There are guidelines, and students learn boundaries and opportunities guided by Islamic principles. This workshop helped participants understand the connection between worship and activism.

During MYLP 2025, site reviewers from the **Cummings Foundation** visited the program and were so moved by what they witnessed that they **nominated CAIR-MA for additional funding consideration.**

We are grateful to the incredible guest speakers and workshop facilitators who shared their knowledge and experiences at MYLP 2025. Thanks to the partnership of the **Islamic Council of New England**, we were able to provide scholarships to students who otherwise may not have been able to attend.

Youth Advisory Committee

CAIR-MA also continued its Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), which **empowers youth to serve as voices for their communities and to help drive meaningful change.** This committee consists of youth ages 16–21 who are interested in developing leadership and networking skills, receiving mentorship, and working on community initiatives. The program engages young leaders who are passionate about social justice, civil rights, community organizing, and advocacy within the Muslim community. Our 2025 cohort consisted of six motivated youth, each working on their personal and professional development as advocates in their communities.

What Our MYLP Alumni Say *Their words speak for themselves.*

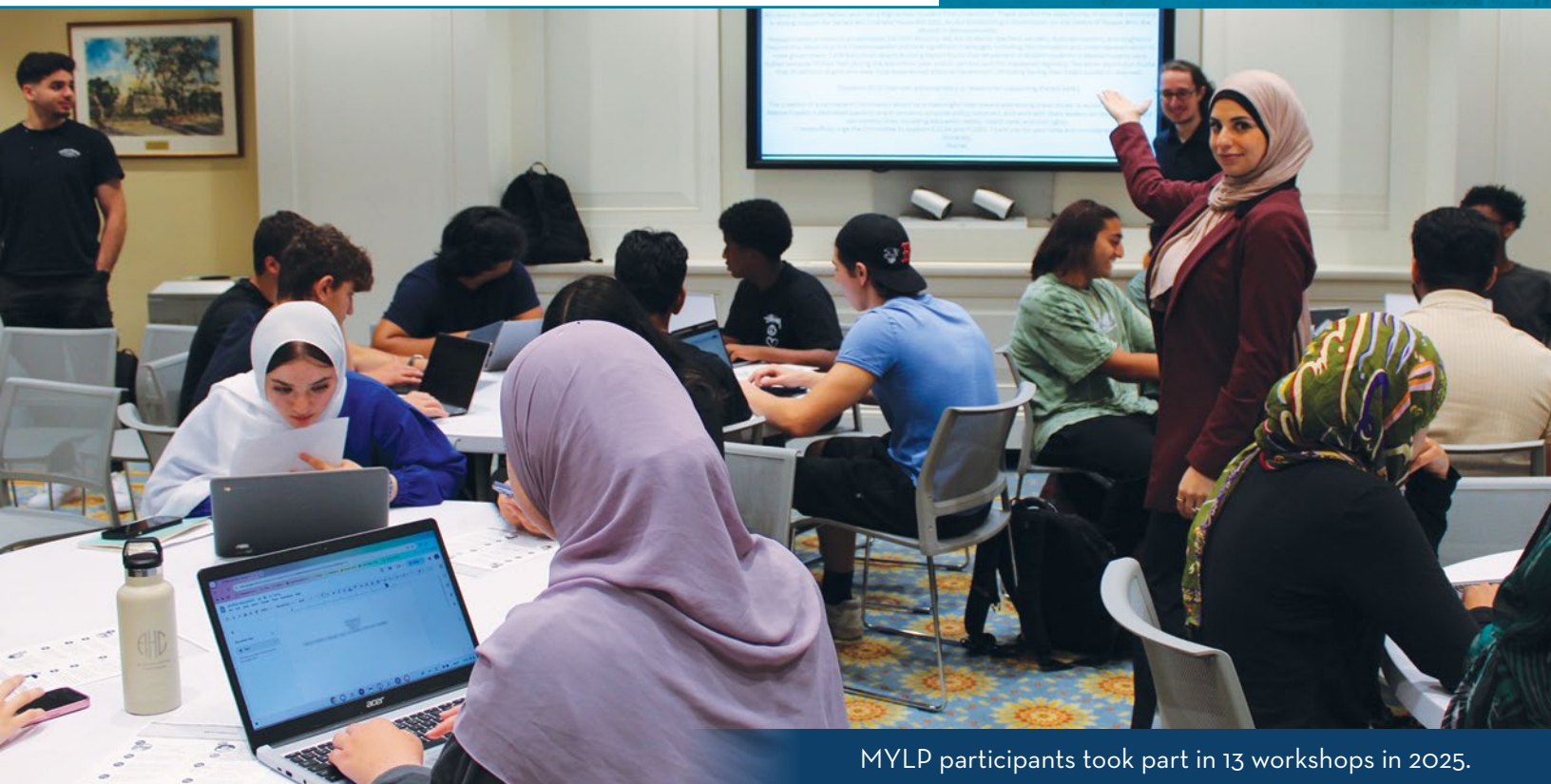
“It was a great experience. **I learned a lot and formed deep connections** with the mentors and other students.”

“**MYLP did not just meet my expectations, it exceeded them.**

I learned so much while also experiencing new aspects of my leadership abilities that I did not know I had.”

“**My favorite part of MYLP was meeting new people** from different backgrounds and cultures.”

To learn more about MYLP, visit cairma.org/MYLP



MYLP participants took part in 13 workshops in 2025.

Profiles of Recent MYLP & YAC Alumni

At CAIR-MA, **nurturing and empowering youth is a priority**. Ensuring young people have the mentorship and resources they need to become immediate advocates for their communities is essential. As we continue to engage youth, our focus is on pouring into them the confidence and support they need to advocate in their local communities, across the Commonwealth, and beyond.

Tayyab Afzal (2024 MYLP Alum & Youth Advocate), a Methuen high schooler, rebuilt his school's dormant Muslim Student Association from the ground up as a freshman. He serves on the Safe and Supportive Schools Commission and the State Student Advisory Council. Following his MYLP participation, his leadership opportunities soared when he delivered standout testimony at both a Legislative Briefing and a separate fall hearing on the Commission on the Status of Muslims, demanding lawmakers "prove ... that change is real" against a backdrop of dismal bullying data for Muslim students. *Right: Tayyab testified at a joint committee hearing in support of a Commission on the Status of Muslims.*



Dawud Bey (2024 MYLP & YAC Alum) is a frequent youth volunteer with CAIR-MA. A product of the very programs he now helps sustain, Dawud took his advocacy to Beacon Hill during CAIR-MA's historic Legislative Briefing and Advocacy Day, where he sat down with his own state senator, Senator Adam Gomez, to speak directly about the needs of the Muslim community. Dawud represents exactly what CAIR-MA's youth programs are designed to produce: young people who are ready to lead. *Left: Dawud with Sen. Adam Gomez during CAIR-MA's Legislative Briefing and Advocacy Day.*

Ayaat Khwaja (2024 MYLP & YAC Alum) has taken her advocacy all the way to Capitol Hill. She participated in USCMO's advocacy and lobbying efforts and is now serving as an intern at the State House, continuing to deepen her engagement in civic and advocacy work. Ayaat represents the kind of young Muslim leader CAIR-MA's programs are designed to produce: one who moves from the classroom to the corridors of power. *Right: Ayaat (center) with U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern on Capitol Hill during USCMO's Muslim Lobby Day.*



Ammar Sheikh's (2025 MYLP & YAC Alum) advocacy is as much about showing up as it is about speaking out. He has engaged in high-level civic spaces, including meeting with U.S. Representative Ayanna Pressley, and has stood in public solidarity with the Somali community – demonstrating that Muslim advocacy means showing up. Ammar embodies the coalitional spirit at the heart of CAIR-MA's mission. *Left: Ammar stands in solidarity with the Somali community at a community vigil.*



EVENTS

10th Anniversary Banquet

CAIR-MA's Annual Banquet, held at the University of Massachusetts Boston, brought together community members and supporters for an evening of reflection and celebration. This year's program featured remarks from **keynote speaker Chris Smalls** (*top row, second from left*), the labor organizer and activist whose work building the Amazon Labor Union stands as one of the most remarkable grassroots victories of our time. His willingness to put himself on the line did not stop there; Smalls was among those who joined the Gaza aid flotilla, placing his body between humanitarian cargo and a blockade while the world was watching. His presence in that room meant something to everyone in it. He reminded us that the struggle for dignity and justice takes many forms and that coalition is how we win.

It was a pleasure to recognize the recipients of our 2025 **Muslim Youth Leadership Award**:



Maimuna Diallo is an MYLP alum and Muslim Advocacy Day participant who brought awareness of Palestine and Islam into her high school community with courage and conviction, embodying the values of faith, leadership, and justice at the heart of this award.



Hunan Mian is founder and president of Reuniting Hearts of Muslims, a nonprofit uniting Muslim youth across New England through faith, sports, and service. A Sankofa Scholar Award recipient at Westfield State University, Mian has built bridges of fellowship and spiritual growth across the region.



During our banquet, we were also honored to recognize the recipients of our 2025 **Steward of Justice Award** (pictured above):

Boston Workers Circle

For more than a century, Boston Workers Circle Center for Jewish Culture and Social Justice has fought for the marginalized. Over the past two years, that commitment has grown into a cherished partnership with CAIR-MA at iftars, Passover seders, and the State House. *Laura Derman & Ava Cheloff (pictured), plus a table of BWC members, attended to receive the award.*

Attorney Mahsa Khanbabai

When masked ICE agents seized Tufts University student Rümeysa Öztürk off the streets of Somerville, immigration attorney Mahsa Khanbabai, using skilled and relentless advocacy, fought to get her out of the targeted and punitive hold of ICE. Mahsa is the founder of Khanbabai Immigration Law and a 2025 CAIR National Muslim Civil Rights Champion. *Pictured (L-R): Rümeysa Öztürk & Mahsa Khanbabai.*

Dr. John Robbins

In 2015, Dr. John Robbins helped build CAIR-Massachusetts from nothing – no office, no staff, only conviction. He led the organization through its formative years, laying every foundation that made this 10 year anniversary milestone possible.





Wayland Ramadan Iftar Dinner

Each year, CAIR-MA's Wayland Iftar is one of our most important fundraising events – and this year, we did something new. **We opened our arms wider than ever.** The Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland filled with Muslim community members alongside Christian and Jewish partners, all gathered around a shared table to break bread and build bridges.

Interfaith voices took center stage. **Rev. Darrell Hamilton** and **Carrie Pollack** of the Boston Workers Circle spoke to why our communities need each other now, more than ever. Worcester City Councilwoman **Etel Haxhiaj** delivered a powerful keynote on belonging and what it means to show up for one another.

The evening concluded with CAIR-MA honoring **Senator Jamie Eldridge** for his unwavering commitment to civil rights and for his partnership with Muslim communities across Massachusetts.

CAIR National Banquet

In September, CAIR-MA's Executive Director **Tahirah Amatul-Wadud** (center) **was honored to serve as emcee** for the CAIR National Banquet in Washington, D.C., bringing Massachusetts energy and pride to the nation's capital. She was accompanied by CAIR-MA's Deputy Director Vincent Ware (left) and Youth Advocacy Director Omar Farhan (right).





MEET OUR TEAM

2025-2026 staff (L-R): Mariam Aydah, Noor Rahman, Barbara J. Dougan, Tahira Amatul-Wadud, Vincent Ware, & Omar Farhan.

Board (2025)

- **Rev. Corey J. Sanderson**, President
- **Raheela Rahman**, Vice President
- **Zahid Siddiqui**, Treasurer
- **Sarah Khatib**, Secretary
- **Yasmin Abdulatheem**, Board Member
- **Inash Islam**, Board Member
- **Othman Ladan**, Board Member
- **Mouaad Lebeche**, Board Member

Staff (2025)

- **Tahira Amatul-Wadud, Esq.**, Executive Director & Chief Legal Officer
- **Barbara J. Dougan, Esq.**, Legal Director
- **Vincent Ware**, Deputy Director
- **Mariam Aydah**, Civil Rights Attorney
- **Fatuma Mohamed**, Youth Advocacy Director
- **Aneeqa Abid**, Community Engagement & Advocacy Specialist
- **Noor Rahman**, Community Engagement Specialist

Interns

We are grateful to the law students who brought their skills and dedication to our work and to the broader Muslim community we serve.



Aiman Hameed,
Boston College
Law School



Amaan Rahman,
University of
Massachusetts
School of Law



Payton Rogers,
Northeastern
University
School of Law



Zeno Temple,
Western New England
University
School of Law



We also thank **Omar Aydah** of Westfield State University for completing his undergraduate internship with us, by contributing to the development and execution of the Muslim Youth Leadership Program.

WITH OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION

THANK YOU for your unwavering support!

We deeply appreciate all of our donors, friends, volunteers, and our entire community! *Special thanks to:*

- American Muslim Community Fund
- Boston Advertising Professionals for Good
- Boston Bar Foundation
- Boston Children's Hospital
- Cummings Foundation
- Hyams Foundation
- Islamic Council of New England

We are also honored to partner with several *Mosques That Support*, including:

- Islamic Center of Boston (Wayland)
- Islamic Center of New England (Quincy/Sharon)
- Islamic Society of Boston (Cambridge/Roxbury)
- Islamic Society of Greater Lowell
- Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts
- Masjid Al Hamdulillah
- Masjid Al Quran



L-R: CAIR-MA's Tahirah Amatul-Wadud with Sajida Khudairi. Mrs. Khudairi, along with her husband & others, co-founded the Islamic Council of New England 41 years ago.

SUPPORT & CONTACT CAIR-MA

Get Involved

Sign up for our mailing list:

cairma.org

Follow us on social media:

 **facebook.com/CAIRmassachusetts**

 **instagram.com/CAIRmass**

 **linktr.ee/CAIRma**

Give Your Time

Volunteer or Intern with CAIR-MA:

cairma.org/employment

Donate



Make a general donation to support our legal & advocacy work:

cairma.org/donate

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