The MAPS-AMEN Report

OVERVIEW

The principle of justice is repeatedly emphasized in the Qur’an, through the resolute command to “stand firmly for justice even as against yourselves” (Quran 4:135) and to “enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil” (al-amr bi al-ma’ruf wa al-nahy ‘an al-munkar). This command, an obligation on the individual as well as the collective, is an Islamic manifestation of the Golden Rule. The American Muslim Empowerment Network, a program at the Muslim Association of Puget Sound (hence, MAPS-AMEN), was established in December 2016 to fulfill this divine command by “building bridges of understanding and unity to advocate for justice together.”

MAPS-AMEN accomplishes its vision through Education, Engagement, Encouragement and Empowerment. We educate fellow Americans about Islam and Muslims; engage friends and allies in combating Islamophobia and other forms of hate, bigotry and injustice; encourage positive changes to media’s negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims; and empower advocates for justice and build future leaders of America.

This past year, MAPS-AMEN, under the leadership of its Executive Director Aneelah Afzali, pursued these goals relentlessly, touching the lives of hundreds of thousands. Aneelah spoke at over 150 venues (including at the Seattle Women’s March), built diverse coalitions, gave numerous media interviews, worked with political representatives, hosted conferences to train leaders to combat Islamophobia, inspired students and youth, and even launched a women’s empowerment program. Today, Aneelah and MAPS-AMEN are rapidly emerging as a leading voice advocating for American Muslims (al-mar’uf), while denouncing hate and speaking out against injustices involving American Muslims or other marginalized communities in our country (al-Munkar). A summary of the major MAPS-AMEN accomplishments this past year follow.
SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Faith Over Fear National Conference
Aneelah worked with local and national partners to organize a two-and-a-half-day national conference at MAPS to train 90+ faith leaders from Chicago, Washington, D.C., and across Washington to combat Islamophobia. The opening night reception drew over 250 attendees including elected officials, faith leaders, community activists, and more, and included a pledge to #NoMuslimBanEver.

Faith Over Fear Roadshow
Aneelah partnered with Pastor Terry Kyllo to take the message of combating Islamophobia and standing with our Muslim neighbors to venues across the state of Washington and even Idaho in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. The roadshow garnered press coverage in local and even national media.

Womxn Marching Forward Day of Action
Aneelah worked with the women’s march organizers to make MAPS a central “hub” during the Womxn Marching Forward Day of Action. The activities at MAPS included a voter registration table, food drive, free legal clinic (through MAPS-MCRC), and an Open House (with the MAPS-IOC) providing a mosque tour, prayer observance, Islam 101 presentation, Q&A, and a shared meal and table conversation for over 120 guests (most of whom had never visited a mosque before). Pictures of the MAPS “hub” even made the cover of the Seattle Times story on the Day of Action!

Symposium for School Teachers
In collaboration with the Washington State Council for the Social Studies, MAPS-AMEN held an all-day symposium to educate about 100 K-8 school teachers across the state about Islam and Islamophobia.

Combating Islamophobia Talks
In addition to the Faith Over Fear Roadshow, Aneelah delivered presentations on Combating Islamophobia at faith institutions, college campuses, professional associations, activist organizations, non-profit groups, governmental institutions, and more.

Parallels in Prejudice
MAPS-AMEN worked to highlight the parallels in prejudice between the experience of American Muslims to-

Hate Crimes
After a Sikh man in Kent was shot in a hate crime, Aneelah joined faith/community leaders and elected officials at a forum at Khalsa Gurmat School to discuss the response to bias and hate. The following week, she joined other faith/community leaders in a meeting with Governor Jay Inslee and Kent Mayor Suzette Cook to discuss hate crimes, followed by a press conference.

Activist Town Hall Forums

Interfaith Iftars
In May 2017, Aneelah was the keynote speaker at the Ramadan Tent Project in Portland. This interfaith iftar occurred after the horrific Islamophobic hate crime on the Max train. The overflowing audience of over 600 included elected officials, faith leaders, and an interfaith audience. Aneelah returned a week later to give remarks at the memorial service for the Portland Heroes. In June 2017, Aneelah joined Bishop Kirby Unti and Rabbi Kate Speizer for a panel at the interfaith iftar at Seattle University. The next day, she emceed the sold-out annual interfaith iftar at MAPS with 500 guests, and moderated an interfaith panel that included a Christian, Muslim, Jew, Sikh, and Hindu guest speaker.

International Human Rights Conference
In September 2017, Aneelah joined FAN Co-Director Elise DeGooyer and Rabbi David Basior for an interfaith panel on working across faiths to advance justice, at the
“We live in a time in which dehumanization is on the rise. MAPS-AMEN is a public witness on behalf of the Muslim community to the power of love, compassion and human rights for all people. I commend MAPS for its visionary leadership in creating such a program, and am honored to be one of those who stand with you.” -- Rev. Terry Kyllo, Director, Neighbors in Faith

“At a time when anti-Muslim hate crimes and discrimination are at unprecedented levels and there is an industry spreading a narrative of fear and misinformation about Islam, MAPS-AMEN is filling the need for education, understanding, coalition-building and advocacy. MAPS-AMEN has taken on a leadership role in combating Islamophobia and other forms of hate, bigotry and injustice – seeking to fulfill the mandate of justice in Islam and promote a narrative of facts over fiction, love over hate and faith over fear.” -- Aneelah Afzali
“It has been wonderfully inspiring to see MAPS-AMEN make a real difference in the Puget Sound area, and beyond. Because of its work, hundreds of fellow Americans—everyday people and high-level decision-makers—have not only come to understand Islamic practices and beliefs but also have been mobilized to use their own voices, through media, to publicly and vocally advocate alongside their Muslim neighbors.” - Arsalan Bukhari, CAIR

Annual Conference of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies.

Panel Discussion with Jim Wallis
In September 2017, New York Times bestselling author and founder/editor of Sojourners, Jim Wallis, spoke and then moderated a spirited panel discussion with Aneelah, Pastor Terry Kyllo, Rev. Kelle Brown, Rabbi Daniel Weiner, and Estela Ortega, about race in America. Put on by the Treacy Levine Center, the event attracted an audience of over 700 at McCaw Hall.

Crossing the Difference Divide
In November 2017, Aneelah served as guest speaker with author and Pastor Brian McLaren at the Crossing the Difference Divide event by Jim Henderson, also featuring Pastor Jim Powell, Rabbi Daniel Bogard, and Imam Kamil Mufti from No Joke: When People Like Each Other the Rules Change.

Healing the Hate
In December 2017, MAPS-AMEN co-sponsored a talk by Rais Bhuiyan of World Without Hate, put on by Communities Rising-Shoreline and several other organizations. The survivor of a hate crime that nearly killed him, Rais’ personal story of healing and forgiveness is powerful, and he will share that story as the keynote speaker at the MAPS 2018 Interfaith Iftar on May 30.

MAPS-AMEN further co-sponsored and/or participated in many other events and programs including movie screenings, panel discussions, and interfaith gatherings to help educate and engage the community.
“MAPS-AMEN, through the leadership of Sister Aneelah, is a moral force that is changing the narrative of hate and fear to one of understanding, mutual respect and co-weaving of a shared future for Muslims and people of all faiths – toward the ends of democracy, community, and social justice!”

-- Michael Ramos, Executive Director, Church Council of Greater Seattle
Women’s March | Seattle

Renewal and resistance: Thousands take to streets

YEAR AFTER FIRST MARCH, ‘TOO MANY ISSUES FOR ONE POSTER’

Seattle Times staff

A year to the day after Donald Trump’s election ignited a culture of protest in Seattle, tens of thousands of people took to the streets Saturday to ensure their commitment to resist Trump’s presidency and to work toward what they see as a more just and inclusive society.

And by indigenous peoples and members of local Muslim communities, processions packed the pavement for the Seattle Women’s March 2.0, carrying signs that articulated their reasons for being there.

“Take life by the audacity.”

“No One Is Free!
When Others are Oppressed”

“Democracy: The People, Not the Plutocrats”

One sign read, “I say; ‘There are too many issues for one poster.’”

Sunshine Reyes of Seattle, who gave her name as a member of American Muslim Women’s Network,

MAPS Annual Report
COALITION-BUILDING & ADVOCACY

In the past year, MAPS-AMEN has continued building, expanding and strengthening coalitions and relationships with faith leaders (including as a governing Board Member of the Faith Action network and a member of the Interfaith Leaders Council), advocacy groups (including as a Steering Committee member of the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network), community activists, elected officials, and more. As part of the coalition-building and advocacy, MAPS-AMEN helped organize, participate in and/or speak at several events involving activism “on the streets.”

Women’s Marches
Aneelah was a key speaker at last year’s historic Women’s March in Seattle. She was invited to speak again at the January 2018 Women’s March. Like last year, MAPS-AMEN held a sign-making party the night before the march, helped organize a group to attend, and worked with organizers to have the American Muslim contingent march in solidarity behind the indigenous women leading the march. The group even made the front page of the Seattle Times!

Seattle Stands With Our Muslim Neighbors
In June 2017, the largest anti-Muslim hate group in our country (ACT For America) held nationwide rallies against Islam/sharia, including in Seattle. Aneelah worked to assist and guide the large diverse coalition that came together to stand in support of their Muslim neighbors; helped create a fact sheet and an action/resource sheet to distribute at the rally; and managed an “Ask a Muslim” booth.

Black Lives Matter
In July 2017, Aneelah joined other community members in calling for justice for Charleena Lyles (Black pregnant mother killed in her apartment by two officers), and attended the rally/march benefit event hosted by Seahawk Michael Bennett.

Solidarity Against Hate Rally
In August 2017, when Patriot’s Prayer held a rally in Seattle after the white supremacy rally in Charlottesville, Aneelah joined faith leaders in solidarity against hate. She was standing for the words and teaching of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) when he said in his final sermon: “All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; a white has no superiority over a black, nor does a black have any superiority over a white; [none have superiority over another] except by piety and good action.”

March on Washington Commemoration
In August 2017, Aneelah joined other faith/community leaders at a rally to remember the 54th Anniversary of the March on Washington, D.C. in 1963.

Protect DACA
On September 5, 2017, Aneelah joined an emergency rally to protest the proposed end of DACA, and spoke at the press conference. She also joined a press conference on September 21, 2017 by Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Representatives Pramila Jayapal and Adam Smith to protect DACA.

Muslim Travel Bans
On January 27, 2017, President Trump issued the Muslim travel ban. In response, thousands showed up at airports in protest, and the State of Washington successfully chal-
allenged the third iteration of the Muslim Ban. Aneelah assisted the Washington Attorney General’s office in finding and interviewing potential declarants for the legal challenges.

In October 2017, Aneelah participated and spoke at the “No Ban, No Wall, Justice for All” rally at Westlake. Later that month, she spoke at the “No Muslim Ban Ever! Rally and Pray-In.” In November 2017, Aneelah spoke at the Attorney General Annual Luncheon. And in December 2017, MAPS-AMEN helped organize a rally in support of the State of Hawaii in challenging the Muslim Ban on the day of its appellate court hearing in Seattle.

Other concrete examples of coalition work include the diverse groups that came together to challenge the disparate use of force by the Seattle Police Department at protests, and to work on improvements in police training; meeting with a college president to address defamatory material presented by a professor about minority communities; launching a “Protectors Community” of allies to stand with their Muslim neighbors when protesters show up at mosques; and a national “Mamas Day” Campaign with Forward Together to distribute Mother’s day cards with supportive messages to Muslim women.

Political Engagement

MAPS-AMEN seeks to engage the American Muslim community in advocacy through the political process, and Aneelah held meetings, press conferences and/or events with many elected officials. In April 2018, MAPS-AMEN with the Faith Action Network hosted a gathering at MAPS for faith leaders with U.S. Congressman Keith Ellison. MAPS-AMEN also co-sponsored and participated in several candidate forums.

- In June 2017, MAPS-AMEN co-sponsored the “Seattle Candidate Jeopardy!” forum featuring Seattle mayoral and city council candidates.
- In September 2017, Aneelah served as moderator at the Inaugural Muslim Candidates Forum at MAPS.
- In October 2017, MAPS-AMEN co-sponsored – and Aneelah served as moderator of – the AAPI Eastside Candidates Forum, featuring candidates for State Senate in the 45th district and 48th district.
- And later in October 2017, MAPS-AMEN co-sponsored – and served as co-moderator – of the FAN Candidates Forum featuring candidates for the 45th district State Senate seat.

In addition, Aneelah led a candidates’ training on Racial Justice and Immigration at the “Winning as an Intersectional Candidate” program by U.S. Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal.
MEDIA & MESSAGING

One of MAPS-AMEN’s focus areas is leveraging media in a positive way. MAPS-AMEN has helped achieve positive news coverage for MAPS and the American Muslim community – people across the city, county, state, nation, and even internationally have seen or heard about some of MAPS-AMEN’s work! In addition, MAPS-AMEN uses media to raise awareness of issues and mobilize action.

Media Coverage and Interviews
MAPS-AMEN's work has received media coverage from NPR, KING 5, KOMO 4, KIRO 7, Q13, USA Today, Associated Press, Public News Service, Reuters, Seattle Times, Crosscut, Redmond Reporter, Bellevue Reporter, Renton Reporter, Kent Reporter Seattle Weekly, Diversity Woman Magazine, Seattle Magazine, The Daily News (Longview), Everett Herald, Kitsap Sun, The Columbian, International Examiner, Yakima Herald-Republic, Tri-City Herald, KEPR TV, and more. Aneelah has also appeared in several TV/video, radio and podcast interviews, including “Challenge 2.0: From Me to We”; Veterans Challenge Islamophobia video interview; an interview by two reporters from Uzbekistan TV stations producing stories on religious pluralism in the U.S; an Acts of Truth interview at the “Ask a Muslim” booth at the Act For America rally; interviews with WA Indivisible on Islamophobia and the women’s march activities; an interview about Islam and Muslims on “We Do The Work”; and an interview on The Moral Trigger about Islam, Sharia, and Islamophobia.

Social Media Campaigns
Aneelah has also been involved in social media campaigns to combat Islamophobia including the #FiveMinutes campaign by the Washington Leadership Institute (WLI) Fellows; messaging by Children’s Alliance; and the inaugural #MuslimWomensDay campaign by MuslimGirl and CAIR to feature and celebrate one American Muslim woman across the country each day of the month in March 2018.

National Media Campaign
MAPS-AMEN is working with national partners to launch a campaign to stop the defamation of Islam and change the representation and coverage of Muslims in media and entertainment.

Media Training
MAPS-AMEN has been working with CAIR-WA to train other American Muslims on talking to media and messaging discipline, including American Muslim women and youth. And MAPS-AMEN held a “Media Matters” event to engage and empower Muslim youth in combating media bias.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

MAPS-AMEN has been seeking, encouraging and providing opportunities for American Muslims to speak on panels and at events before interfaith audiences to build interfaith relationships, confidence and leadership. MAPS-AMEN has also specifically focused on American Muslim women, girls, and youth.

AMEN Sisters!
MAPS-AMEN launched a Women’s Empowerment program and, with help from CAIR-WA, provided media training, messaging discipline, and practice responding to tough questions.

Girl Scout Interfaith Ambassadors
Aneelah engaged Muslim Girl Scouts (Daisy and Brownie troops) to serve as “Interfaith Ambassadors” welcoming guests at interfaith events. Aneelah also spoke at the World Thinking Day 2018 Celebration put on by the Girl Scouts, to help inspire and empower an interfaith Girl Scout audience.

Muslim Youth
MAPS-AMEN’s inaugural event was a Youth Advocacy Workshop to combat Islamophobia, and MAPS-AMEN has continued working to engage youth in interfaith activities and to get their voices heard. Aneelah showcased the talents of some Muslim youth at the dinner program during the Faith Over Fear Conference, and connected youth to activism efforts and speaking opportunities.

Muslim/POC Students and Young Professionals
In March 2018, Aneelah was a keynote speaker at the 4th Annual Afghan-American Conference at New York University School of Law, with over 400 attendees. Two weeks later, Aneelah was a keynote speaker at the an-
nual Students of Color Conference in Yakima, with over 1,000 attendees. In both cases, she sought to inspire and engage the audience to become future leaders.

In short, MAPS-AMEN has helped inspire American Muslims and others across the country, and seeks to empower them through visibility, development and engagement.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

In just a year-and-a-half of its existence, MAPS-AMEN has made some big waves and received recognition for its frontline advocacy work and leadership, including:

Resilience Grant
MAPS-AMEN was honored to receive a $20,000 grant from the Seattle Foundation and King County’s Resilience Fund. This grant helped support the Faith Over Fear Conference and Roadshow.

Impact Project
Weber Shandwick, a global communications firm, chose MAPS-AMEN and CAIR-WA as its 2018 pro bono Impact Project partners. This selection comes with $100,000 worth of service hours that Weber Shandwick will provide to assist in communication outreach and creative assets to reach diverse audiences, encourage civil discourse, and more effectively build understanding and unity.

Most Influential Award
Seattle Magazine selected MAPS-AMEN’s Executive Director as one of 2017’s “Most Influential,” among other activists, artists, officials and neighbors making Seattle a better place to live. Aneelah was described as the “Bridge Builder.”

Interfaith Leadership Award
The Faith Action Network (FAN), a statewide interfaith advocacy organization of 130+ faith communities across Washington state, awarded MAPS its 2017 Interfaith Leadership Award, in large part because of the creation, work, leadership and impact of MAPS-AMEN.

WAISN Awards
Aneelah is also on the Steering Committee of the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) – a network of organizations involved in advocating for immigrant rights, including MAPS-AMEN. WAISN received the Seattle Human Rights Award, the ACLU Civil Libertarian Award, and the Social Justice Fund grant this past year.

In addition to the awards and recognition, MAPS-AMEN has brought greater name recognition and visibility to MAPS across the nation and has helped elevate American Muslims into a leadership role in the larger community and in the struggle for justice.
MOVING FORWARD

In only one and a half years, by the grace of God Almighty, MAPS-AMEN garnered this long list of achievements. It took a lot of hard work, long distance travel and sleepless nights by Aneelah to do so much in so little time, with the support and help of volunteers. It also took leadership, resource allocation and strategic thinking by the Board to enable these activities. However, none of this would have been possible without the prayers, support and financial assistance of the local Muslim community and its allies. We hope you will continue to provide such support and assistance moving forward into the future towards 2025, so we can build on this first step, achieve heights we have not even yet dreamed of, and fulfill the divine command to enjoin the good and forbid evil. Indeed, our investment will certainly bear fruit as Allah promises us in the Qur’an: “The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He pleases. And Allah is All-Sufficient, All-Knower.” [2:261]

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MAPS-AMEN

Aneelah Afzali, Executive Director
Email: aneelah@mapsredmond.org | Web: www.mapsredmond.org/amen

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION

Thank-you to ALL who have helped MAPS-AMEN in any way, including the support from the MAPS Board; help from the MAPS staff; the time and dedication of the many volunteers; the patience of all who have not received timely responses; the love and encouragement of family and friends; and the prayers, contributions, and good wishes of the entire community! May you all be blessed, and alhamdulillah!
MAPS-AMEN SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (APRIL 2017 – APRIL 2018)

- May 3, 2017: Panelist at 1st Annual Law & Religion Symposium at UW Law School
- Oct. 15, 2017: Speaker at emergency No Ban, No Wall, Justice for All Rally
- Oct. 18, 2017: Speaker at #NoMuslimBanEver Rally and Pray-in
- Oct. 24, 2017: Interview with KPLU 98.1
- Nov. 22, 2017: Speaker at “Ask a Muslim” Event at Admiral United Church of Christ
- Dec. 21, 2017: Co-moderator of FAN Candidates Forum with Manka Dhinga (D) and Jenny Young (R)
- Nov. 2, 2017: Presentation on “Women in Islam” in Pullman, WA
- Nov. 3, 2017: Presentation on Combating Islamophobia at University of Idaho
- Nov. 7, 2017: Presentation on “Islamophobia” at Indivisible Seattle
- Nov. 4, 2017: Speaker at “Crossing the Difference Divide” with No Joke Live and Brian McLaren
- Nov. 8, 2017: Panelist at Washington Women’s Foundation “Intersect: Mindful Community Engagement”
- Nov. 10, 2017: Interview with Washington News Service
- Nov. 14, 2017: Speaker at attorney General Annual Luncheon
- Nov. 14, 2017: “Ask a Muslim” Table at Seattle Arts & Lectures event featuring Reza Aslan
- Nov. 28, 2017: Panelist at “Community Matters” Event with Pastor Ellie VerGowe and Rabbi Ruth Zlotnick
- Dec. 7, 2017: Speaker on National Strategy Conference Call with leaders from CAIR affiliates
- Dec. 9, 2017: Facilitator at AMEN Women’s Empowerment Media Training with CAIR-WA
- Dec. 10, 2017: Keynote speaker at Rachel Corrie Foundation’s Annual Human Rights Celebration
- Dec. 19, 2017: Interview with Washington State Indivisible about Combating Islamophobia
- Jan. 3, 2018: Speaker at Eastside Muslim & Immigrant Safety Forum
- Jan. 16, 2018: Interview with Washington State Indivisible about Women’s March activities
- Jan. 18, 2018: Presentation on Islam to St. Andrews Episcopal Church and St. Therese Parish at MAPS
- Jan. 20, 2018: Speaker at Seattle Women’s March 2.0
- Jan. 21, 2018: Presentation on Islam at MAPS Open House / Womxn Marching Forward Day of Action
- Jan. 18, 2018: Presentation on “Women in Islam” and “Islamophobia” at Three-Part Series on Islam by St. James Cathedral
- Jan. 28, 2018: Presenter and panelist at national Faith Over Fear: Empowering Faith Leaders to Combat Islamophobia conference at MAPS
- Feb. 11, 2018: Facilitator at Media Training: Tough Topics, for Muslim women
- Feb. 12, 2018: Speaker at Girls Scouts World Thinking Day 2018 at MAPS
- Feb. 14, 2018: Interview with Zahid Chaudhry of Veterans for Peace, with Pastor Terry Kylo
- Feb. 20, 2018: Presentation on Combating Islamophobia at Mercer Island Rotary Club
- Feb. 23, 2018: MC of “The Rohingya” by Dr. Azeez Ibrahim” at MAPS
- Feb. 28, 2018: Interview with King County
- Mar. 9, 2018: Speaker at “Women and Islam” event at MAPS to celebrate International Women’s Day
- Mar. 18, 2018: Facilitator of “Responding to Tough Questions” Training for Muslim women
- Mar. 22, 2018: Presentation on Combating Islamophobia to Yakima Rotary Club
- Mar. 24, 2018: Keynote Speaker at 4th Annual Afghan-American Conference at NYU
- Mar. 26, 2018: Interview with Security and Rights Collaborative of the Proteus Fund
- Apr. 4, 2018: Speaker at 50th Anniversary Commemoration of MLK Assassination at Mt. Zion Baptist Church
- Apr. 6, 2018: Facilitator of meeting with U.S. Congressmen Keith Ellison
- Apr. 6, 2018: Interview with Northwest Asian Weekly
- Apr. 9, 2018: Interview with Women Business Exchange
- Apr. 18, 2018: Keynote Speaker at Student of Color Conference in Yakima
- Apr. 16, 2018: Interview with KXFG, public radio station
- Apr. 18, 2018: Presentation on Combating Islamophobia at Pacific Lutheran University
- Apr. 22, 2018: Presenter at the MAPS Open House program on Combating Islamophobia
- Apr. 27, 2018: Speaker at Eat With Muslims Anniversary Dinner
- Apr. 28, 2018: “Answerer” at KUOW’s “Ask a Muslim” event at MAPS

MAPS Annual Report