

Year In Review



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EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS

MuBANY's year in review includes various projects that focused on giving back to the Muslim community in New York.

Giving Back: MuBANY in the Community

The Art of Giving: A Fundraiser for Turning Point

Madiha Zuberi

After a night of networking over delicious food at the trendy midtown, Indian restaurant Diwan, over 162 **MuBANY** and **Muslim Finance Professionals Association (MFPA)** members had the opportunity to participate in a live art auction benefitting **Turning Point**. Turning Point is a non-profit organization aimed at addressing domestic violence in the Muslim community. The night was successful in raising almost \$10,000, with one person donating a generous \$1,000 at the end of the night.

With so many options to see art in New York, it was pleasing to see that the auction focused on celebrating art in the Muslim community. Most of the artwork for auction aimed at honoring Islamic calligraphy and the identity of the Muslim woman. Other items for auction included restaurant gift certificates, Knicks tickets, and a sports club membership.

Art pieces included several paintings and canvases by artist Huda Tontonjii, calligraphic designs by Haji Noor, photographs by Zeenat Iqbal, and pieces by Amina Ahmed, Hashim Ali, Anjali Bhargava, Antoinett Procacci and Ron Haviv. It was a splendid display of classical and contemporary artistic interpretation.

The highlight of the evening, though, was Ms. Robina Niaz of Turning Point.

This fun and delicious event took a more serious but inspiring turn as Ms. Niaz told the audience about the important work that Turning Point is doing to help domestic violence survivors in our Muslim community. Helping to break the silence about domestic violence, Ms. Niaz told the true story of the pain endured by one of her clients and how Turning Point gave her hope.

The evening was a tremendous success. Over 160 people attended and we raised almost \$10,000 for Turning Point!. MuBANY and Turning Point are currently working on a pro bono initiative to connect lawyers with Turning Point clients. If you are an attorney and would like to provide pro bono assistance to Turning Point, please visit the "Take Action" page at www.muslimbarny.org.



Community Activism: MuBANY in the Community

Other Events

- > **Women's Rights in Islam** sponsored by the The Association of the Bar of the City of New York (ABC-NY) and co-sponsored by MuBANY & Women's Bar Association (WBA)
- > Robina Niaz on **Domestic Violence in the Muslim Community** held at Columbia University's Hamilton Hall
- > **Working Towards Peace in Darfur: Our responsibilities as Muslims**
- > An **in-house panel of attorneys** at the firm Debevoise & Plimpton, provided detailed accounts of the ups and downs of life as in-house counsel
- > MuBANY joined forces with other organizations to fight for the rights of Muslims in our community. **This includes an ongoing effort to respond to the NYPD's 2008 report on radicalization and Islam**

Wisdom

Finding a Full Time Job is a Full Time Job!

Diane Aboushi, Esq.

We have all been there. We have our Juris Doctorate degree in our hands, the gleam of pride of our eyes and the ambition to be the best attorney the legal world has yet to see. There was only one thing standing in the way of realizing our potential: a job.

If you are a recent graduate or a law school student who is looking to find a job, then below are some tips to help you. Many who have traveled this path before you will tell you that finding a full time job is a full time job. So you need to be patient with the process and determined in your quest.

#1 Know what you want to practice

Identify three areas of law that you would like to practice in and explain to yourself, in detail, why you would find this field of practice interesting. If you cannot convince yourself that you find trademark law exhilarating, then you probably will not be able to convince anyone else of your interest.

#2 Discover your field of interest

Once you identify the area of law that interest you, familiarize yourself with the cutting edge legal issues in that field. For example, if you are interested in criminal law, then you may want to learn about the federal sentencing guidelines and the recent supreme court decisions that changed how the guidelines would be applied. Or if you are interested in trademark or copyright law, then you may want to learn how the internet has affected the field. It is important for you to be able to have intelligent conversations with other attorneys who work in that field so you can make a good impression! I would rather hire someone who demonstrated interest in a field than someone who was just job hunting.

#3 Link your past work experience

Lets say you were interested in domestic violence work but you have no experience in the field. My suggestion is to go volunteer as a volunteer attorney at a not-for-profit organization, like Legal Aid, to get that experience.

#4 Network, network, and network

With this new found knowledge and experience you have accumulated in learning

about your field of interest, you can now start networking. Networking is key! You must meet people and let people know that you are looking for a job in your field of interest. Eventually, enough people will know you are looking for a job and will keep you in mind when an opportunity becomes available. Make it a point to meet with 3-5 attorneys a week until you find a job. Each attorney you meet is a contact that will give you greater insight into your field of interest and into finding the right job. After you meet an attorney, follow up with an email saying how nice it was to meet the attorney. The good thing about attorneys is that they know more attorneys. Always ask the attorney you just met if they know of other attorneys you can meet with who can give you more insight into the field you are interested in.

#5 Key networking tips

> Go to your local bar association website and attend events related to your field of interest.

The Association of the Bar of the City of New York ("ABC NY") has a calendar of events available online. The events hosted by ABC NY are a great place to meet attorneys.

> Join associations that focus on your area of interest. For example, if you are interested in trademark law, then consider joining the International Trademark Association. Then attend the events hosted by the associations. For the law school students, try to join a few associations before you graduate so you can get the student membership rate.

> Make sure you go to these networking events ALONE. You will be forced to socialize if you go alone.

> Almost never ask a person you meet directly for a job. Doing so may make the other person feel uncomfortable and quickly write you off. The better question should be something like, "I am interested in this field and I'd like to get my foot in the door. Do you have any suggestions on what I can do?" The person hearing this question will be able to help you to the extent she is able to and will not put her in a position to tell you "no" if you ask her directly for a job.

Good luck!



Wisdom

Facing Challenges

Aziz M. Ahsan, Esq.

Question:

What advice would you give to new attorneys?

We all are presented with opportunities on a daily basis. I have been fortunate enough to have taken advantage of many such opportunities. One thing that I learned while in college was to never shy away from a challenge, and to take the challenge with a positive attitude. Many times in my legal carrier I have felt frustrated by the demands by my bosses or clients. However, in each such situation I have tried to do the best I can with the time and resources available to me.

As I look back each such situation was an enriching experience. Some tasks I did with excellence, while others were mediocre, and still others were not as successful as had been envisioned. But, each such situation was a stepping stone and a learning experience. Having a positive attitude, even in the face of adversity, and spending time with people with positive attitudes has helped me both personally as well as professionally.

Diane Aboushi is an associate with Loeb & Loeb, LLP and advises clients on corporate and securities transactions. Prior to law school, Ms. Aboushi was a financial analyst with the Investment Banking Division of Merrill Lynch.

Aziz Ahsan is an attorney with the firm Ahsan & Associates, PLLC. Aziz's practice focuses primarily on patent law and intellectual property law. An experienced member of the New York Bar, Aziz began his career as an engineer before becoming an attorney.



A Member Experience

CAMP Conference

Saima Khan, NYLS '10

As a young Muslim aspiring to be a professional in the future, it is often difficult to discern the role our cultural and religious beliefs should play in our professional lives. Growing up as an American Muslim, I have always been raised to keep my heritage and religion central to the decisions I make here in law school; yet, at times it seems difficult to retain this balance. There are so few Muslims to converse with and even amongst those few, there is often a lack of unity, but after attending the Conference with the Council of the Advancement of Muslim Professionals (CAMP), I came back feeling refreshed and enthused to work towards my future professional goals while maintaining my identity and beliefs.

The CAMP Conference aimed to bring Muslims together on a common professional platform in order to give people an opportunity discuss their collective experiences and to gain inspiration from peers and leaders. One of the most effective aspects of the conference was the panel discussion. These panels represented different professional industries with distinguished, experienced and passionate panelists who openly doled out wisdom. Although each panel provided advice that was often specific to one industry, all the panelists reiterated one common and powerful theme: the necessity of rallying Muslim professionals together so that through the collective use of all our experiences, knowledge and expertise, we can work to further Muslim goals and ideals.

On a personal level, the conference not only provided me with insight on my legal path, and the manner in which I should strive towards it, but also on the ability to consider my future in the larger context of Muslim objectives; I learned about increasing political advocacy and activism, successful paths toward opening and establishing businesses, building the capacity of the young, and using the media to dispel myths about Islam. The panelists' ability to communicate the manner in which they incorporate these goals within their professional work definitely helped me gain perspective of the way I wish to see my future unfold.

For the Attorneys Attorney Directory

This year, MuBANY was proud to launch the first ever Muslim Attorney Directory serving NY and the Tri-State areas. The directory connects lawyers with other lawyers, lawyers to the greater community and law students with lawyers. The Directory is growing at a rapid pace and we welcome all members to send their listings. There is no cost and the directory is available to the public at muslimbarny.org. To list yourself, please download a form off the MuBANY website and email Asim Rehman: president@mubany.org.

CLE Opportunities

MuBANY aims to offer its members CLE credit when possible. This year, to help members gain CLE credit, MuBANY co-sponsored an event with author David Harris. The CLE, entitled "Religious Values and the Practice of Law. The Ethics of Surveillance: Monitoring Mosques" discussed Harris' book. Along with Harris, Foria Younis, a former Pakistani FBI agent, spoke of her experiences in the Muslim community as a law enforcer. Her account told of a Muslim community that often has difficulty accepting law enforcement. Adem Carroll, the Chair of the Muslim Consultative Network, shared that he had worked with families of detainees as well as families of 9/11 victims.

Mr. Carroll shared his views that often times law enforcement set back their relationship with the Muslim community.

For the Law Students Mentorship Program

With over 20 Mentors and Mentees participating in this year's Mentorship program, MuBANY has good reason to be proud of its success. The Mentorship program gives law students a chance to gain insight, ask questions and get feedback from attorneys from various fields. Mentors include attorneys who work in large, private, and public firms in areas such as Securities, Tax, Civil Rights, corporate and criminal law. Mentees are paired individually with one mentor each and may correspond via email, phone or in person for advice. For more information, visit our website or email Madiha Zuberi: secretary@muslimbarny.org.

Career Day

MuBANY, with co-sponsorship from MFPA and Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs (OPEN), offered its law student members a one-day event at Columbia Business School in order to network, gain effective interview skills, and have their resumes critiqued by attorneys. Over 160 people attended and participated in a series of at least three rotations of 20-minute mock interviews. With the success of

this event, MuBANY hopes to plan for its members a comparable event this year.

Events & Celebrations NAML Conference

Safia Hussain

On November 9-10, 2007, several MuBANY board directors and Members attended the National Association of Muslim Lawyers (NAML) annual conference. The event was held at the Marriott Hotel in San Francisco, CA, and hosted by the Bay Area Association of Muslim Lawyers (BAAML). The event presented an excellent opportunity for attendees to educate themselves about current legal issues confronting Muslims in America, such as reconciling the prosecution of terrorism with upholding constitutional principles, strengthening Muslim non-profit charitable institutions, and comparing Islamic jurisprudence to American law. The conference also provided a networking opportunity for law students and attorneys. At the conference banquet, Professor Asifa Qureshi of the University of Wisconsin Law School and Justice Carlos Morena of the California Supreme Court delivered personal, thoughtful, and inspiring accounts of what motivates their work. Overall, the event was a great success!

Action **A YEAR OF SUCCESS AND GROWTH**

MuBANY ON THE WEB

In the past year, MuBANY has more than doubled its popularity on the web and is proud to have an informative and up-to-date website. Please take time to visit our site at MuBANY is also found on Facebook. To join, visit <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=7961299385&ref=mf>

NETWORKING WITH CONGRESSMAN KEITH ELLISON

In co-sponsorship with other local Muslim organizations, MuBANY offered members a chance to discourse with Congressman Keith Ellison. The event was held at NYU, where Congressman Ellison spoke of his experiences as the first Muslim in Congress. There was also a chance to network with other professionals before the event.

TELECONFERENCES

Last year, MuBANY hosted two successful teleconferences, "Public Interest Law" and "Finding a Position as a Lawyer: Job Seeking Tips." The public interest teleconference held a lively discussion with attorneys and gave law students an open forum to address concerns about the job market.

ANNUAL IFTAR DINNER

Every year MuBANY hosts an *iftar* during the holy month of Ramadan. The *iftar* is one of MuBANY's social events and is also a great opportunity to meet the board and other members. Last year's *iftar* was held at the elegant, midtown restaurant Dervish.

BUILDING BRIDGES

In 2008, MuBANY continued its efforts to promote networking within our membership, between our members and other professional organizations, and between MuBANY and other Bar Associations. In addition to managing various networking events for members, MuBANY led the effort in organizing a quarterly joint-teleconference between other Muslim attorney groups across the country. Last year, MuBANY was also invited to join the Network of Bar Leaders, an association of bar associations in New York.

SPEAKING OUT: NYC CITY HALL RALLY

MuBANY members, along with about 700 lawyers, rallied in front of the New York Supreme Court in Manhattan to show support for lawyers and judges in Pakistan battling for the restoration of the rule of law.

NEW YORK CITY HALL EID CELEBRATION

MuBANY President Asim Rehman spoke to a packed New York City Council Chambers room filled with members of the Muslim community and a few Council members about the role of Muslim attorneys and MuBANY in our community.



(Left) MuBANY President Asim Rehman engaged in conversation at the NY City Hall Eid Celebration.



(Right) MuBANY members supporting Pakistani judges and attorneys in a rally for the restoration of law in Pakistan.

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Many thanks to:
Diane Aboushi
Aziz Ahsan
Safia Hussain
Saima Khan



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MuBANY is created to serve the educational, professional, and social needs of muslim legal professionals and law students living in the New York metropolitan area.

MuBANY is a non-profit association of lawyers, law students, and legal professionals. MuBANY does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or marital status. You can find out more about MuBANY by visiting <http://www.MuslimBarNY.org>