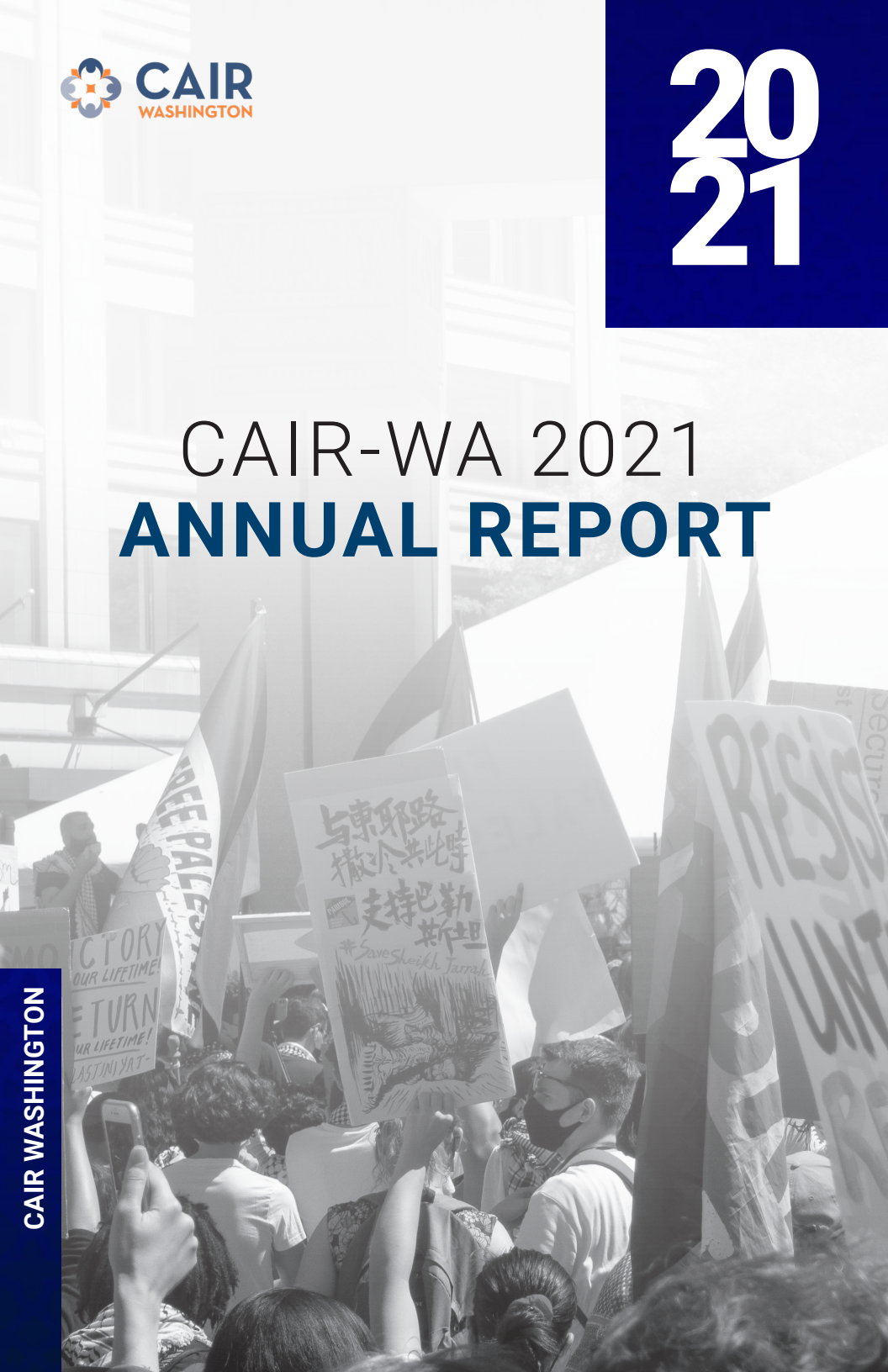


CAIR-WA 2021 ANNUAL REPORT





MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS



Amanda hiking in Arizona



Imraan at a community event

Dear Respected Community,

It has been a long year. Anti-Muslim sentiments and actions persist, but so does our strength and faith as a community. At CAIR-WA, our advocacy remains resolute and bold. Our team stays courageous and determined to champion the many Washington state Muslim communities—from Seattle to Vancouver, Yakima to Spokane, and beyond. We are steadfast and resilient, like the communities we serve.

In the beginning of 2021, the CAIR-WA team launched a campaign that spoke to the persistent wave of hate facing marginalized communities including our own: “No Hate in WA State.” This campaign was in response to the rising tide of attacks against Black churches, synagogues, and other places of worship, as well as the increase in anti-Asian attacks and other assaults targeting people based on race, ethnicity, or immigration status in Washington state and around the country. Unfortunately, since then, our Sikh neighbors have had a house of worship attacked and we have had multiple Islamic centers targeted, including ones in Tacoma, Olympia, Mountlake Terrace, and, most recently, Burien. These local threats have been relentless and increasingly concerning for us all.

Like this troubling string of local incidents, we have also seen a rise in global Islamophobia, which is resulting in many minority populations being targets of oppression and violence worldwide. Whether it is the dispossession of Palestinians, the constant tide of fascist attacks against India’s Muslims, or the imprisonment and torture of the Uyghur people, it is vital that we use our voices to stand up against this surge of anti-Muslim hatred and bigotry.

Acting locally and thinking globally is key. Because discrimination and bias does not happen in a vacuum, neither does advocacy. Everything is interconnected: anti-immigrant sentiment, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian rhetoric, anti-Muslim attacks, and other forms of bias. Each community and society impacts another. We are a local community and also a global one. Connecting experiences and sharing stories across our many local communities is crucial to embodying one larger and global ummah.

Through these rising tides, CAIR-WA continues to stand up and be the leading voice against Islamophobia in our state by using advocacy in communications,

legal, and policy spaces. We have impacted millions of people with our advocacy in the media, ensuring that our local communities' stories are told and understood. Our communications team has built longstanding relationships with outlets throughout the state and nation, developing the kind of trust that is only built through authenticity and credibility. Furthermore, we have supported numerous families and individuals with our legal advocacy, providing "Know Your Rights" trainings and direct legal services in civil rights and immigration. When Islamic centers have been targeted, our legal team has been there to support them in navigating each unique situation with law enforcement. Moreover, we advocated for changes at the local, state, and federal level, building relationships, participating in coalitions, and pushing for better and more inclusive government policies and practices. Our policy and advocacy teams work to educate our community, the public, and government officials and institutions to make Washington a better home for us all.

Each piece of our advocacy work helps ensure that our communities—and all marginalized communities—are meaningfully protected and empowered for years to come. Championing racial and immigrant justice, religious freedom, education equity, criminal legal reform, and much more is how CAIR-WA continues to show up and work for a better and safer Washington each year.

Of course, the challenges that currently stand before us are substantial. Therefore, we are building the CAIR-WA team for the future—to be resilient, to be sustainable, and to be strategic. We have expanded our legal work, grown our communications department, and built out our policy and advocacy team with an increased number of policy staff and community organizers to cover more local and state advocacy issues and more geographical regions in Washington. And of paramount importance, we have created a pipeline of youth from our local community into our advocacy work, from volunteering to internships to fellowships to staff positions throughout CAIR-WA. Going into the future, our community needs a strong CAIR-WA to combat anti-Muslim efforts by private persons and government actors alike, to uplift Muslim voices and stories, and to educate and advocate for our legal rights.

To accommodate this amazing growth in our organization and in the larger Muslim community of Washington state, we have moved to a larger office, still centrally located in downtown Seattle. In our new space, we envision community seminars, trainings in classrooms, youth movie screenings, delicious iftars, and much more. All of this growth in our work, staff, and space could not have taken place without your support. **CAIR-WA is your organization, and we thank you for the continued support and faith in us, and faith in the notion that advocacy truly does work.** Advocacy makes a difference—a meaningful and positive impact. We are here as a reliable community resource and a powerful advocate during these difficult times.

JazakAllah Khair,

Imraan Siddiqi, Executive Director

Amanda Azad, Deputy Executive Director

March 2022



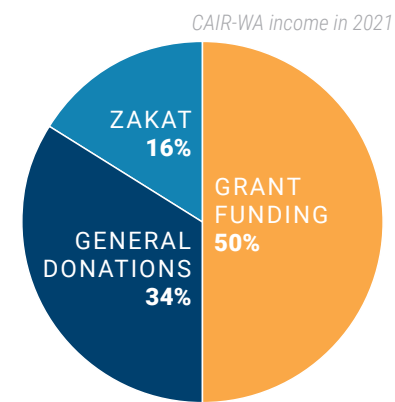
2021 BY THE NUMBERS

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

In 2020 CAIR-WA was awarded a **Systems, Power, and Action grant from the Group Health Foundation**, totaling \$720,000 over three years. Our main focuses for the grant in 2021 have been:

- Using our virtual setting to lay the groundwork for becoming a truly statewide organization
- Expanding advocacy and grassroots organizing capabilities
- Creating and expanding our immigrant justice work
- Using new technology and tools to empower and educate our community

In 2021 CAIR-WA was awarded a **School's Out Washington grant, via the CARES Act**. The COVID-19 outbreak, extended school closures, and social distancing have deepened inequities and hardships for young people across Washington. In response, youth development programs quickly



adapted their services. This \$10,000 was used for youth work, including our Youth Advisory Committee and their virtual programming and enrichment activities.

In 2021 CAIR-WA was awarded a \$25,000 grant from **King County** for Afghan resettlement. The evacuations from Afghanistan caused a sudden influx and an increased need for immigration services in our region. This grant is used to train lawyers, ensure our team has the resources they need to keep Afghan refugees safe, and for legal fees that will be incurred as pro-bono volunteer attorneys work on submitting applications.

	61 media mentions in local and national press
33	informative live online events with guests such as Dr. Cornel West
over 950	pro-bono attorneys trained to help process immigration applications for new Afghan arrivals
	117 requests for civil rights legal help from community members
over 700	requests for immigration help, including from Afghans seeking refuge in the U.S. and WA state

MUSLIM DAY AT THE CAPITOL 2021 AND POLICY UPDATES

102

PARTICIPANTS



60

MEETINGS



MUSLIM DAY AT THE CAPITOL: MDAC 2021

Muslim Day at the Capitol (MDAC) is an annual lobby event for Muslims across Washington state, where participants meet lawmakers and advocate for bills that affect their communities. MDAC 2021 was held from February 1 to 5, and included evening and lunch-hour programming with guests like Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

In the 2021 Washington legislative session, our policy team advocated on issues impacting our community like Police Oversight and Accountability, the Licensing of International Medical Graduates, and

the closing of private, for-profit detention facilities in our state. We also helped kill a corporate-friendly “data privacy” bill that put Muslims, immigrants, and other marginalized groups at risk.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY TEAM GROWTH

The CAIR-WA Policy and Advocacy Team now includes three Community Organizers, Ayoub Ahmed, Aydin Anwar, and Seemab Hussaini, respectively located in South Seattle, Yakima, and Vancouver, WA. Najma Osman has stepped into the role of Policy Associate, and new Deputy Executive Director Amanda Azad is overseeing CAIR-WA’s policy and advocacy work.

27

**DISTRICTS FROM
ACROSS
WASHINGTON**



11

**BILLS
ADVOCATED
FOR AND
DISCUSSED**



62

REPRESENTATIVES



WHERE CAIR-WA'S COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS ARE LOCATED





COMBATTING THE RISING TIDE OF GLOBAL ISLAMOPHOBIA

Even as CAIR-WA takes pride in focusing on local policies affecting Washington Muslims, we believe that it is also critical to understand how global waves of Islamophobia directly affect our communities as well. The Global War on Terror launched by the U.S. in 2003 marked the start of an unprecedented wave of hate and discrimination globally, leading to unimaginable destruction in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries abroad.

Prime examples of this include China's genocide of Uyghurs and other Turks and continued occupation East Turkistan, using the pretext of "erasing terrorism" in order to put millions of Muslims in torture- and death-ridden concentration camps and prisons. Our very own Community Outreach Fellow, Aydin Anwar, has 93 missing

relatives, with dozens of her family detained and imprisoned in China's dark and secretive camp system. Her family members who are not in camps live in an open-air prison with constant surveillance and fear of punishment from the Chinese government.

Practicing Islam throughout occupied East Turkistan is severely restricted and is often met with lengthy prison sentences. Last year, CAIR-WA's policy experts spoke with local representatives to explain how they can empower and protect Uyghurs in Washington, especially those in university who may feel endangered, surveilled, and silenced by Chinese government informants on their campuses. Our media department has also worked tirelessly to share relevant news and action alerts regarding the genocide in occupied East Turkistan.



Sculpture: at Redmond Lights (L), installed with artists Omar Sourour and Amal Khalaf and Civil Rights Attorney Luis Segura (R)

Concurrently, the Indian government has been espousing fascist rhetoric against Muslims in India and empowering Hindu extremists to conduct open murder of their Muslim neighbors. Similar to the Chinese government, the Indian government is now building detention camps that are designed to hold up to 1.8 million Indian and Kashmiri Muslims. Such events are likely to reverberate and have real impacts on local Indian and Kashmiri Muslim families who have loved ones abroad.

Palestinians are no exception to being victimized by this harmful and blanket categorization of 'terrorism'. Such rhetoric has enabled and justified Israel's continued illegal occupation of Palestinian territory, as well as the U.S.'s funding of Israel's military. CAIR-WA recently won the right of two artists to display their sculpture which read, "Remember Palestine" at the Redmond Lights display, only days after initially being prohibited from displaying their art. (*The piece, pictured, is now permanently installed at CAIR-WA's new office.*)

It is of utmost importance that we keep our fellow Muslims abroad in our thoughts and prayers, and take action by advocating locally: in protests and directly to lawmakers. Clearly, the Global War on Terror has been ongoing and intercontinental, with everlasting effects on our communities. CAIR-WA will continue to amplify and advocate for our Muslim communities abroad that are undergoing such atrocities under the guise of 'fighting terrorism'.



Protest against India's Hijab Bans in Feb. 2022



THE AFTERMATH OF THE U.S. WITH- DRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN 20 YEARS AFTER 9/11

HELPING AT-RISK AFGHANS

In August, as the 20-year occupation of Afghanistan came to an end, thousands of Afghans—many with connections to Washington state—were left vulnerable. Within days, CAIR-WA'S legal team began working around the clock to get people on flights as thousands of Afghans were left at risk. In response, our team at CAIR-WA, along with Washington Immigrant Defense Network (WIDEN), organized a program that trained over a thousand pro-bono attorneys to help process applications. We have since launched a legal clinic to help Afghans apply for humanitarian parole and long-term status in the U.S.

After helping a number of Afghans with ties to Washington state successfully evacuate, CAIR-WA, along with local partner organizations, has been working on humanitarian parole applications. Currently, we are working with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) and other local organizations to create an immigration funnel for Afghan community members who are currently in Washington or the U.S. and seeking longer-term immigration solutions.

WORKING AGAINST HATE

INVESTIGATING ANTI- MUSLIM BULLYING

CAIR-WA notified the Department of Justice (DOJ), about multiple complaints of harassment based on religion and national origin, including complaints from Muslim students that they were subjected to repeated verbal and physical harassment. After a multi-year investigation, the DOJ found the district in question had failed to respond promptly and appropriately to numerous students' complaints. As a result of the settlement reached, the school district must update its anti-harassment policies and ensure it responds quickly to student complaints. Our legal team is overseeing the settlement plan and acting as a community liaison by monitoring and notifying the DOJ of further complaints.

RESPONDING TO ATTACKS ON OUR MASAJID

In the fall of 2021 we saw multiple attacks against our masajid. In early October, the Islamic Center of Tacoma was set ablaze in a reported arson attack with worshipers inside. A week later, Masjid Umar Al-Farooq in Mountlake Terrace was vandalized and Qurans and religious items were thrown in a dumpster. In late November, an explosive device was dropped in front of the Islamic Center



Interfaith gathering in Olympia

of Olympia by drivers who fled the scene by car. Each time, the team at CAIR-WA worked with masjid leaders, urging law enforcement to fully investigate these crimes. We sent our "Best Practices for Mosque and Community Safety" guide to over 50 mosques and Muslim organizations and held a "Responding to Masjid Attacks" educational webinar weeks after the attacks.

These incidents came in the second half of a tense year, following the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol Building. In February 2021, three attacks occurred in Spokane, Puyallup, and Kent. Temple Beth Shalom Synagogue was vandalized with swastikas, damaged windows, and red paint covering a statue. The attack on the temple came just days after two Somali women at a WinCo

in Kent were threatened and verbally assaulted in a racist attack by a man who reportedly tried to run them over with his car. Additionally, a community in Puyallup demanded the city take action and remove a vile anti-Black statue displayed on a neighbor's roof.

The impact of these attacks is amplified by the current climate of political tension and anti-Islamic rhetoric occurring nationwide and at the highest levels of government. CAIR-WA seeks solutions via policy and advocacy, in coalition work, and in direct conversations with lawmakers, as well as through media attention and community education.

If you have been in a similar situation, please reach out to CAIR-WA at bit.ly/cairwareport or (206) 624-0506.

SPEAKING OUT AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA

As Deputy Executive Director Amanda Azad writes in an October opinion piece for the South Seattle Emerald, "[t]he legacy of the War on Terror is an America where everything about the Muslim identity has been criminalized and that criminalization is embedded in our criminal justice system. Institutionalized Islamophobia has permitted the classification of Islam, a religion, as a threat. In turn, this has allowed a different set of laws, or lack of laws, to govern Muslims' interactions with police, prosecutors, and the criminal justice system." At CAIR-WA, we continue to combat anti-Muslim sentiment and actions in both private spaces and government institutions.



ABOUT CAIR WASHINGTON

MISSION

CAIR-WA's mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower Muslims in Washington state.

WHO WE ARE

CAIR-WA is a grassroots advocacy and civil rights organization based in Seattle that serves the Muslim community across Washington state. Our purpose is to defend the civil liberties of Muslim Washingtonians no matter where they live or their level of income. We do this by 1) providing free legal services to Muslims who've been discriminated against because they are Muslim, 2) working to combat Islamophobia and bigotry through education and storytelling, and 3) empowering our community to be politically and socially engaged while shaping laws and policies that impact us.

CAIR-WA is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and a chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a grassroots civil rights and advocacy group. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties group, with regional offices nationwide and in Canada.

WHAT WE DO

DEFEND PEOPLE

CAIR WA's Civil Rights team provides free legal counseling and referrals for



The CAIR-WA policy team prepares an election guide

Muslims in Washington state who are facing issues because of their Muslim identity. We also help those who are perceived to be Muslim, such as Sikhs or non-Muslim Arabs, who are harassed or discriminated against because of that perception. Our cases range from racial profiling, harassment and bullying in schools and workplaces, police misconduct, incarcerated persons' rights, and workplace discrimination. We also meet regularly with community partners and government agencies and leaders to advocate against hate and discrimination in our workplaces, schools, and communities.

EMPOWER MUSLIMS

CAIR-WA's Policy and Advocacy team works with Muslims in Washington state to increase civic engagement and to ensure our laws and elected officials reflect the diversity of our state. We help community members

understand how to use the political system to work for them. Projects include voter registration drives, community workshops, “know your rights” educational campaigns, and training of mosques and Islamic centers on how to contact local and national politicians.

BUILD COMMUNITY

CAIR-WA’s Policy and Advocacy team works to connect the Muslim community in Washington state to one another and to resources and opportunities while building political, social, and communal power. We do this through educational campaigns and projects, hosting events that bring Muslim communities together, and creating professional development and other opportunities for young people.

AMPLIFY MUSLIM VOICES

CAIR-WA’s Media and Communications team works to elevate Muslim voices through authentic storytelling and real representation. We do this by working with local and national media to elevate the stories of Muslims in Washington state, creating original content to shift narratives about who Muslims are, and training our community to tell their own stories while working within the media landscape.

OUR TEAM

Staff:

Imraan Siddiqi, *Executive Director*
 Ayoub Ahmed, *Community Organizer*
 Noor AlSaleh, *Director of Operations and Philanthropy*

Aydin Anwar, *Community Organizer*
 Brianna Auffray, *Immigrant*

Justice Manager

Amanda Azad, *Deputy Executive Director*

Mariam Badr, *Media Coordinator*
 Seemab Hussaini, *Community Organizer*

Jim Maher, *Legal Program Administrator*

Najma Osman, *Policy Associate*
 Angelique Rodreguiz, *Immigrant Justice Legal Assistant*

Luis Segura, *Civil Rights Staff Attorney*
 Katie Walker, *Senior Communications and Marketing Strategist*

Board:

Osama Hamdan, *Board President*
 Ahmed Gaya, *Board Treasurer*
 Nimco Bulale
 Yusra Hamidani
 Adasha Turner
 Sumayyah Waheed

Youth Advisory Committee:

Noor Aamir	Mariam Haris
Huda Farah	Aleena Haris
Afifah Kashif	Senna Mohaisen
Imaan Khaki	Abdul Muhsin
Zain Khaki	Yasmin Mustefa
Mariam Kazmi	Liyana Salameh
Sarrah Khan	Murwareed
Shayma Khan	Sayed



CAIR WA'S NEW OFFICE

CAIR-WA recently moved into a new office just down the hall from our old office in the Melbourne Tower in downtown Seattle. Our new space is much larger and has room for youth programming, press conferences, private client-attorney rooms, get-togethers, and so much more! We are so grateful to be able to expand and grow as a chapter. This major milestone will enable us to continue to serve our community and protect the civil rights of local Muslims.



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