

Islamic Center of Brushy Creek

Annual Report 2014



Our Objective

To please Allah (swt) by following the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of His Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh).

Our Vision

To become a comprehensive center of learning and spirituality for all age groups and demographics within the Muslim community.

Our Mission

To serve the Muslim community by providing various services to meet their spiritual and social needs and by promoting the values and teachings of Islam in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah of His Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh).



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Foreword

by the Executive Board

even years have elapsed since ICBC was established, *Alhamdu lillah*; and our community continues to experience a rapid growth. We started new programs and activities at our Center in 2014, to meet the spiritual and social needs of our members.

It has been a gradual transition of the governance model for ICBC. While 2012 was a watershed in that a Constitution was formally adopted, leading to the first-ever elections to the Shura Council, the year 2013 saw the transition from an Interim Governance Model to a community-wide selection process for the Shura Council. And finally, in January 2014, the Shura Council elected the Executive Board, thus fully implementing the ICBC Constitution.



As you are aware, we embarked on an ambitious project in 2012—the ICBC Master Plan— the culmination of which led to formulating a comprehensive future plan for our Center. After a lengthy permitting and approval process involving the City and other code bodies followed by a tedious contractor selection process, we have finally embarked on the actual construction phase—in January 2015!

It is only by the Grace of Allah (swt) and the continued and overwhelming support of the community that we have been able to sustain the various programs and activities at our masjid in addition to our continued work on the ICBC expansion project. The services being offered could not have been possible without your dua'a, time, financial support, and feedback. The Executive Board and Shura Council are truly humbled by the trust you have placed in us. As we strive to continuously enhance the quality of services offered at ICBC and increase attendance at our masjid, we sincerely request your suggestions and feedback to enable us to take ICBC to the next level.

Jazakum Allahu Khairan

The Executive Board January 2015

n 2014, we continued the monthly "Seerah of the Prophets" class. Offered by a knowledgeable community member, Br Akif Ali, this class served as an excellent source of knowledge for everyone, and more importantly our youth, in learning about the lives of all Prophets of Allah (swt).

The weekly **Hadith Class** was substituted by reading of hadith from the book, *Riyadh-us-Saliheen*, every day after Fajr and Isha Salaat.

The fortnightly **Sisters' Halaqa** held on Wednesdays continued this year. Several sisters participate and benefit from this class held in an interactive format, socially and spiritually..

The weekly **Qur'an Tafseer class for Sisters** held every Tuesday continued with greater participation in 2014. We have also been privileged to include the **"Arabic with Husna"** class (from the Bayyinah Institute curriculum).

We continued the **Monthly Tahajjud program**—held every second Saturday of the month. Tahajjud prayers were led by Br. Ahmed Mahmoud and Br. Kayser Nazmee, followed by a sumptuous potluck breakfast. Attended by several men, women, and children, this program allowed us to not just worship together but also get to know each other, which has been of immense help to the new members in our community.

The **Guest Lecture program**, held monthly, is continuing to benefit us enormously, with topics ranging from the spiritual to the mundane. All these programs involved detailed discussions with our visiting scholars, thereby contributing to enhancement of our knowledge of Deen.

Jumu'ah Khutbah at ICBC

During 2014, Jumu'ah Khutbah at ICBC was delivered by the following community members:

Br. Abu Dawud	Br. Ahmed Mahmoud	Sh. Ahmad Momoh	Br. Akif Ali	Sh. Atia Omara
Sh. Islam Mossad	Br. Hassan Ali	Br. Hasan Al Sukhni	Br. Junayd Oliver	Br. Mustafa Erwa
Br. Mohamed Bedaiwi	Br. Momin ur Rahman	Sh. Nur Ahmad	Br. Shoaib Malik	Br. Syed Afzal
Sh. Umer Esmail	Sh. Usama Hussain	Br. Wael El Essawy		

We were also blessed to have scholars visiting Austin give Khutbah at our masjid on a few occasions. We thank all these brothers for their assistance and pray that Allah (swt) reward them abundantly, *Aameen*!

Monthly Guest Lectures

The Guest Lecture program continued to be well attended by our community. Below is a list of our 2014 lectures.

2014	Speaker	Organization	Торіс
January	Sh. Islam Mossad	NAMCC (Masjid Aisha), Austin	Obstacles to and Fruits of Cooperation
February	Sh. Abdullah Hernandez	Pearland Islamic Center of ISGH, Houston	A Golden Advice "Luqman and Son"
March	Sh. Touger Shah	Maryam Islamic Center of ISGH, Houston	The essence of Imaan
April	Dr. Main-Al-Qudah	Al-Huda University, Houston	Fiqh of Priority
May	Br. Amer Gohar	Guidance Residential, Chicago	Islamic Financing
June	Sh. Umer Esmail	Resident Scholar at Nueces Mosque, Austin	Zakaat
September	Sh. Umer Esmail	Resident Scholar at Nueces Mosque, Austin	Hajj - A life time journey
October	Br. Abu Dawud	Killeen, TX	Call to Islamic Monotheism
November	Sh. Kamil Mufti	Resident Scholar at Masjid Salaam (Peoria, IL)	Anger Management for Spouses
December	Br. Mohammed Bedaiwi	Community member, Austin	Surat Al Masad: in-depth study

As we plan lectures for 2015, we request everyone to attend and acquire valuable knowledge on a variety of topics. We will continue to work on improving the quality of the programs and add new ones, *Insha Allah*.

Ramadan Reflections

All Praise to Allah (swt)) who blessed us with yet another opportunity to worship Him during the blessed month of Ramadan, *Alhamdu lillah*! This was the **7th Ramadan at ICBC** and we were privileged to have the services of Sh. Eslam Abdel Raouf from Al Azhar University, Egypt, for a second year in a row. Sh. Eslam led the **Taraweeh** prayers and was assisted by the youth in our community— Hafiz Abdullah Mohseen, Hafiz Luqman Haroon and Saboor Irfan. It was a unique experience to listen to the beautiful recitation of young community members. They finished recitation of the Holy Qur'an on the 29th night.

Qiyaam Al-Layl prayers were led during the last 10 nights by Sh. Eslam and Br. Ahmad Mahmood. A rec-

ord number of men, women, and children attended Qiyaam prayers at our masjid. As in Ramadan 2013, we were blessed to listen to the beautiful recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Sheikh Eslam Abdel Raouf before the start of Jumu'ah Khutbah. Few community members observed *l'tekaf* at ICBC during the last 10 days of Ramadan. May Allah (swt) accept their *lbaadah*. *Ameen*.

We also had **Iftar/dinners** sponsored by generous community members every Saturday and Sunday, as well as the last two Fridays. And during the last 10 nights, **Sahoor** meals were provided by generous community members, at the end of Qiyaam al-Layl prayers. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to all the sponsors!

Visits by Other Organizations

Brothers in the Tablighi Jama'at visited ICBC in 2014 from various cities in the U. S. — Dallas, Houston, Sacramento, San Antonio, and England. May Allah (swt) reward our guests for their efforts, *Aameen*!

hildren's education has been a huge focus since the establishment of ICBC. Programs such as the *Nazira* (*Qur'an reading*) *class*, Weekend Islamic School and the Weekly Girls-Only program continued in 2014. A key mission of ICBC is instilling the role of *Deen* in the lives of our children and youth. These future leaders of our Ummah must be first and foremost educated in the Word of Allah (swt). ICBC aims to provide our children an environment in which to nurture their spiritual needs. These programs are targeted to complement the environment that children experience during their weeklong regular school.

The purpose of the **Weekend Islamic School** program:

- To enable students to understand the basic beliefs and teachings of Islam in order to be a practicing and responsible Muslim,
- To understand how to perform the Salah,
- To have a good understanding of Islamic history and the Seerah of the prophet (pbuh), and the Sahaba To develop a strong sense of morality through the understanding of Qur'an and Hadith, and practice proper Islamic etiquette.

The purpose of the **Girls-only** Saturday program:

- Focuses exclusively on middle and high school girls in our community.
- To provide comprehensive and interactive program to help girls learn more about their religion and strengthen the foundation of their beliefs.
- To reinforce the Islamic identity of today's Muslim girls through the journey of reading and studying the tafseer of the Qur'an

 Use the lessons of Surah Al-Kahf as a framework to explain the foundational teachings of Islam.

The purpose of the Qur'an Nazira program

• To teach students how to read the Qur'an.

With these goals, we have attempted to make the curriculum tailored more to the age group and knowledge level of the students.

Another successful **ICBC Summer School** was conducted in June-July '14 with over 60 students, including several teenage girls, attending. As in previous years, we had local high school Muslim students volunteering their time and talent at ICBC. These students earned credits for community service for their volunteer work.

Blessed with highly dedicated, well-qualified teachers and volunteers, enrollment today stands at over 90 students in the various programs. May Allah (swt) reward our teachers and volunteers for their tireless service to Islam, *Aameen!*



Youth Activities "looking to our future"

014 saw a renewed focus on developing activities that enable our community youth to stay connected to the *Deen* and as well as serve to reinforce the role of masjid in their lives. Several programs were launched by the ICBC Youth Committee to promote this initiative.

We repeated the program—"Entering Adulthood"—in Spring '14 for adolescent boys. An interactive lecture delivered jointly by Sheikh Umer Esmail, this two hour session was of immense help in helping the boys understand their duties and responsibilities from an Islamic perspective upon attaining puberty. We also held a separate session for teenage girls conducted by a community sister.

During Ramadan, we held a daily quiz competition on Islamic topics for our children and youth. The contest was hugely popular, with several boys and girls participating with great enthusiasm. Prizes were awarded after every 10 days of Ramadan.

The youth committee organized several fun activities for boys. **Father-Son Hike** held in both Spring and Fall time attracted participation from about 12 youth, wherein we prayed Fajr prayer at ICBC followed by a 2 hour hike at a trail on Highway 360.

The winter event of **Top Golf** will be held at an outdoor golf park endeavored to get the young adults to interact together as a team.

Sister's Corner

he weekly **Sisters Halaga** held on Tuesday mornings focuses on learning Arabic in a classroom format. Conducted by Sr. Shafaq Kazi, This class consists of brave sisters who love to challenge their learning capabilities and are not intimidated by the words "Arabic Grammar", Alhamdu lillah. The Arabic lessons come with handouts, notes, exercises and Quizzes. With the help of excellent teaching skills of Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan, sisters learn Quranic Arabic via their Bayyinah TV subscriptions. The most popular "Arabic with Husna" course makes learning Arabic fun and easy. This course intends to take the student to very advanced Arabic. This means that by the end of the series, one will have the ability to explain Arabic in Arabic Insha Allah! In terms of the understanding of the Arabic language upon completion, the student will have knowledge of classical Arabic (used for Qur'an



studies) and modern Arabic (used for modern conversational Arabic), *Insha Allah*. Everyone is encouraged to get their own Bayyinah TV subscription and the ones who cannot afford it may apply for free sponsorship.

Another halaqa is conducted by Sr. Hella Cloyd every other Wednesday for sisters. The goal of this **Bi-Weekly Halaqa** is to seek knowledge from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh), to implement Islam as a true way of life. The format of the halaqa involves listening to lectures by mainstream scholars like sheikhs Yasir Qadi and Abu Ameenah, Bilal Philips, etc. The participants studied together several books by Muhammad Ali Jibali such as "Life in Al-Barzakh" and "Rights and Obligations between the spouses in Islam", "Funeral Regulation and Exhortation", and "Sickness Regulations and Exhortations". Next, they will be studying the book, "Usool at-Tafseer: The Methodology of Qur'anic Interpretation" by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips.

In addition to enhancing understanding of our *deen,* these programs also provide a platform for sisters to socialize with one another and build stronger bonds.



I-Qur'an: Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth, best who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance. (Surah Al-Nahl, Ayat 125)

Alhamdu lillah, as in previous years, da'wah activities at ICBC continued in 2014. In cooperation with local experts and scholars, we reached out to more people and organization this year. We identified and contacted other organizations such as churches and libraries and reached out to them. We have started the process of having da'wah workshop at ICBC; helping, encouraging, and training brothers and sisters in our community to come forward and join us in our outreach efforts.

In 2014, by the Grace of Allah (swt), three people—one couple and a young man—took shahadah at ICBC. Like many new Muslims in America, some of our newly

reverted brothers and sisters adopted Islam against the will of their family members and continue to face extreme difficulties in their lives. They need a great deal of moral, social, and educational support from us. Keeping this in mind, we started a new program specifically for the new Muslims. Currently, we meet with the new Muslims once a month; however depending on the needs of attendees, this program will be enhanced this year, *Insha Allah*.

Throughout the year we have hosted many people and families of other faith and no-faith at ICBC. These meeting involved presentations on various Islamic topics: relating and comparing Islam to other religions, showing how Muslims pray in congregation, and providing Da'wah materials and copies of translation of the Holy Quran. The ICBC website continues to be gateway for inquires about Islam.

"Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching..."
(Surah Al-Nahl, Ayat 125)

Social Activities "it's not all work"

e held **Community Potluck Dinner** events on the first Friday of several months; we took a break during Ramadan and have suspended this activity during the winter months. We will resume in April '15.

The **monthly breakfast** following Tahajjud prayers have also been well attended by both men and women. The social events provide a platform that has helped newer members to integrate themselves into the community. It has also allowed our youth to socially interact while within the premises of our Center.

Facilities Improvement "work always in progress"

acilities Maintenance is a full-time job at ICBC. Before Ramadan 2014, the outdoor decks were cleaned and stained. The storage shed was cleaned and organized in the summer of 2014. As part of the annual maintenance, the air conditioning units were serviced regularly. Additional video cabling and a TV monitor were also installed at the Men's deck for use during Ramadan. Lawn maintenance is done by an outside firm that cuts grass and shrubs as needed.

Financial Update "money matters"

e conducted fundraisers in Ramadan '14 to execute the ICBC Master Plan and the community support was truly overwhelming! We raised approx. \$225K in pledges and donations in 2014. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* for your support. May Allah (swt) reward you and your families by multiplying manifold your generous donations and effort, *Allahumma Aameen!*

SADAQAH AND ZAKAT FUNDS: We collected approx. \$18K in Zakat funds and approx. \$19K in Sadaqah funds in 2014. The money was disbursed to the needy after a careful and thorough review of the applicants.

ZAKAT UL FITR: As in prior years, it was collected and distributed to the needy before Eid sala'at.

Several organizations held fundraisers at ICBC in 2014, as listed below:

- ♦ Darul Uloom Austin (DUA)
- ♦ Islamic Relief
- Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA)

Our community youth conducted a fundraiser (at Jum'uah time) for Gaza relief, and raised approx. \$9K. The funds were sent through Islamic Relief.

Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your generous support for all these worthy causes.

ICBC is a tax-exempt organization, under IRS tax code 501 (c)(3). EIN 22-3970054. Your donations are tax-deductible.



particularly to neighborhoods near ICBC, the Welcome & Orientation Committee is assigned the task of welcoming newcomers to our community and addressing their immediate needs. As part of its scope of work, the Committee has developed a welcome package that provides details about local Austin-area masajid, membership benefits, Islam-

ic schools, grocery stores selling halal foods, etc. New members are immediately added to the ICBC mailing list so they can stay tuned to our events and activities.

In recent years, several refugee Muslim families moved to Austin from other parts of the world. This committee is tasked with providing the necessary assistance to these brothers and sisters.



Pursuant to the ICBC Constitution, the Shura Council held elections to form the Executive Board (EB) in January, 2014. Five Shura members were elected to the Executive Board; the names and positions are as follows.

Chairman	Altaf Hussain
Vice-Chairman	Shaik Mohseen
Secretary	Ahmed Mahmoud
Treasurer	Hisham Hammour
EB Member	Imtiaz Hussain



Various committees manage the day-to-day tasks at ICBC to ensure a smooth and efficient operation. They are:

Administration	Education	Sisters' Affairs
Community Welfare	Facilities Maintenance	Social Activities
Communications	Financial	Welcome & Orientation
Da'wah	Masjid Activities	Youth Activities

The scope of each of these committees is detailed at the ICBC Web Site. Additionally, the following ad hoc committees are in place—Fundraising, Imam Search, and Master Plan.

Shura Council Elections "continued community involvement"

elections for the 5 open Shura Council positions in December 2014. This was the **third election at ICBC**. As part of the preparation for the elections, we launched an extensive membership drive for several weeks. Approx. 280 community members became eligible to vote based on the criteria set forth in the ICBC Constitution, *Alhamdu lillah*.

We received 5 nominations, out of which 2 candidates accepted the nominations. Since we had 2 qualified nominees for the 5 open positions, both of the nominated candidates were automatically elected the Shura Council. The remaining 3 positions will be filled by the Shura Council, as per the ICBC constitution and bylaws.

We take this opportunity to thank the community for participating in the election process by nominating dedicated and committed people to serve on the Shura Council. It is truly a blessing for our Center that we had an excellent group of our community members who were nominated for the open positions.

During last year, five Shura Council member's term expired, and during the election two members were elected as shown in the table below.

We thank the retiring members for their tireless service as ICBC Shura members. May Allah (swt) reward them for their effort, *Aameen*!

Shura Council Coordinator	Bazil Farid		
Shura Council Members	Ahmed Mahmoud Bazil Farid Farhat Siddiqui Imtiaz Hussain Khwaja Murshed Shaik Mohseen	Altaf Hussain Chand Basha Hisham Hammour Kalim Mirza Mujahid Masood	Asif Zaidi D'Shah Karanch Iba Sambe Kayser Nazmee Seyed Naina
Members Whose Term Expired (in Dec '14) Members Elected (in Dec '14)	Asim Humayun Hisham Hammour D'Shah Karanch	Faisal Hasan Sheik Abdul Hameed Hisham Hammour	Haroon Rashid

Imam/Youth Director "investing in the intellectual"

n 2012, we formed an ad-hoc committee to conduct feasibility studies on hiring an Imam and/or Youth Director for our Center. The charter for this Committee was to understand the needs of our community and plan ahead, in parallel to the master planning process, to ensure we have the best person who will enable us to take ICBC to the next level. After detailed deliberations, the committee conducted a survey for this purpose, and received about 70 responses from community members. Based on the feedback, the Committee recommended to the Shura Council to start the search for an Imam for our Center. We have formed an Imam Search Committee with a mandate to initiate a search and submit a short list of candidates this year.

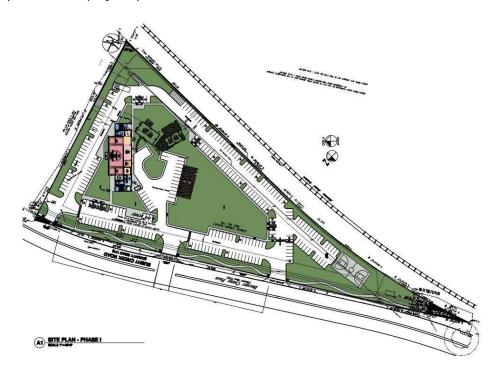
ICBC Master Plan "working towards the DREAM project"

e embarked on an ambitious project in 2012—the **ICBC Master Plan**—the culmination of which led to formulating a comprehensive future plan for our Center. At various stages during the planning process, we solicited your opinion and feedback, and organized community meetings to understand your wants and needs, which was greatly instrumental in helping us convert the conceptual Master Plan into a phased-out Implementation Process. The Master Plan includes a new Masjid, Parking lot, Educational facilities, Sports area, and Multi-purpose Hall.

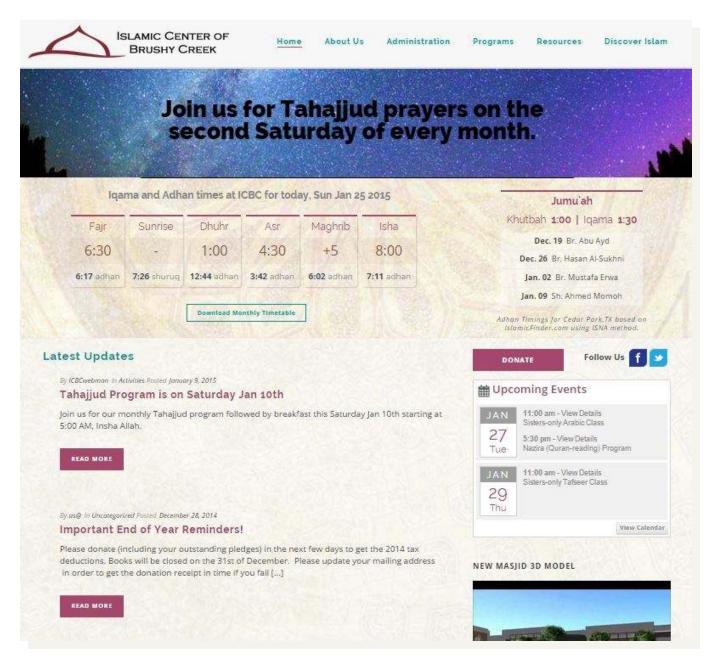
When we presented the master plan in Ramadan 2013, we expected to start construction in 2013 Q4. Unfortunately, we had underestimated the time it takes to obtain the necessary permits. The location of our property necessitated the approval of the site development plans by TCEQ (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality). The plan involves the design and construction of a water detention pond and we have faced unique design challenges due to the topography and the odd triangular shape of our property. We not only had to align all structures in the direction of the Qibla, but also had to ensure that the masjid was in front of all other buildings. After several design iterations and numerous attempts at TCEQ submittal, we submitted the application to TCEQ in May '14 and received the approval in July 2014, *Alhamdu lillah*.

One important aspect of the detention pond design is the joint developmental work with our adjacent property owner, which has been of immense benefit to ICBC by allowing us to salvage land, thereby increasing the number of parking spaces. The engagement with our neighbor involved lengthy and complicated negotiations between our respective engineers, culminating in a legally-binding easement agreement. After several discussions with the City, we received the approval to start parking lot construction in November 2014.

To be executed in multiple phases, Phase I consists of the Parking Lot; construction started in January 2015, *Alhamdu lillah*. A professional play scape for children was installed in March 2014.



www.icbrushycreek.org "staying in touch in the digital age"





Our focus in 2015 is two-fold: executing the Master Plan and identifying qualified candidates to serve as Imam for our Center. As always, we will, *Insha Allah*, continue our focus on the educational activities, for both adults and children, even as we work towards increasing attendance at our beloved Center.

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