

# Islamic Academy of New England

## A Brief Guide to Your Children's Teachers

### 2011-2012



*The Islamic Academy of New England is honored to offer such a talented and high-qualified group of educators to the community. They are energetic, passionate, and consider the school a family. This adds to a positive and warm Islamic environment. Most of our teachers either have their graduate degree or are currently seeking a graduate degree. They come from a diverse background of professional disciplines and each teacher offers unique experiences to our students. In addition, nearly every teacher is either a licensed educator in Massachusetts or is in the application process for licensure.*

## Islamic Academy of New England

**Sr. Nur'Izzah Khalil, B.A.**

### **Principal**

Sr. Nur earned her Bachelor of Art degrees in English and Psychology, from the University of Calgary, Canada, and has worked with the City of Calgary, Tax & Assessment Division, with the Government of Singapore as an Assistant Registrar at the Registry of Companies and Businesses with additional responsibilities as a Public Prosecutor at the Subordinate Courts, and in advertising for eight years. Sr. Nur came from a family of educators and returned to her first passion, teaching, upon arrival in Massachusetts in 2002 and immediately became part of the IANE-ANA family as our middle-school Social Studies teacher first, then as our third grade teacher before assuming her current leadership role. Sr. Nur is currently completing her Master's degree in Educational Leadership at Bridgewater State University. She is ever thankful to Allah s.w.t. for this rare opportunity to make a difference in the community and to help shape the minds of our precious Muslim youth. Sr. Nur can be reached at [nkhalil@iane.org](mailto:nkhalil@iane.org).

**Sr. Aminah K. Muhammad, A.S.**

### **Assistant Registrar**

Sr. Aminah serves many roles at both ANA and IANE. She has her Associate's degree from Northeastern University. She has extensive experience, working in Islamic schools since 1984 in both Massachusetts and Mississippi. Sr. Aminah has been with Al-Noor Academy since 2000 and in 2006, started fulltime at IANE. Nevertheless, she can be found at both schools, serving as a lifeline between parents, students, and teachers. Her favorite activities include working with children, reading, and sewing – when she has the time to sew! Her email is [amuhammad@iane.org](mailto:amuhammad@iane.org).

**Sr. Dalal AlDajani, B.S.**

**Administrative Manager**

Sr. Dalal graduated from University of Jordan with a bachelor degree in civil engineering and has taught in an Islamic school in London, UK, for three years. Subsequently she participated in a Saturday Islamic school for two years in Cambridge, MA, and currently holds an administrative position at IANE. Outside of work, Sr Dalal actively leads a Girls Scout troop and is skilled in arts and crafts projects. She can be reached at [dalaldajani@iane.org](mailto:dalaldajani@iane.org).

**Sr Hoda Elsharkawi, B.A.**

**Religion Teacher**

Sr. Hoda holds a BA in Mass Communication & Journalism (1996) from University of Zagazig, Egypt. She has completed courses in Islamic Creed, Quran Exegesis, Sciences of Quran, Fundamentals of Islamic Jurisprudence and Hadith Sciences at Islamic American Open University, Virginia. Sr. Hoda was the Head of the Islamic Society of Boston (ISB) Outreach Department (1999-2002), and is now leading a support group for new Muslim women. She is married with three children who attend both the Islamic Academy of New England and Al-Noor Academy, and can be reached at [helsharkawi@iane.org](mailto:helsharkawi@iane.org).

**Sr. Asma Shaqrah, B.A.**

**Quran Teacher**

Sr. Asma Shaqrah obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Arabic Language and Literature from the University of Jordan. She has been teaching Arabic for 10 years; 3 years in Jordan and 7 at the Islamic Academy of New England (IANE). Sr. Asma has been the lead teacher in the Arabic Department at the IANE. Sr. Asma is the head of the Arabic Department at Muslim American Society Council of Islamic Schools (MASCIS) and has done many projects in the school such as "My School" video clip and the Arabic Calligraphy project. Sr. Asma's goal is to help the students understand Quran through teaching Arabic to build strong Muslims and build a strong Muslim community. She can be reached at [ashaqrah@iane.org](mailto:ashaqrah@iane.org).

**Sr. Rachida Benkaci**

**Arabic Teacher**

With over five years of experience teaching Arabic language at the Islamic Academy of New England, Sr. Rachida is certainly not an unfamiliar face amongst the staff. Armed with extensive knowledge in Arabic language and literature, she has been a driving force behind the Arabic department at IANE in the past and has contributed tremendously towards instilling the love of the holy language of the Quran in the hearts and minds of our students for many years. We welcome Sr. Rachida back this year with open arms and a prayer that she may continue with her dedicated service to the school with the same zeal that has been her trademark so that our students go on to learn and excel in the Arabic language, insha' Allah. Sr. Rachida can be reached at [rbenkaci@iane.org](mailto:rbenkaci@iane.org).

**Sr. Noor Hakem**

**Arabic (Level I) Teacher**

Sr. Nour joins us this year as a part-time Level I Arabic teacher to our second and third grade classes. She has experience teaching Arabic and Quran at ICNE-Quincy Saturday school and presently has three children of her own enrolled at IANE. She can be reached at [nhakem@iane.org](mailto:nhakem@iane.org).

**Sr. Amirah Amawi-Serhan, BSc.**

**Pre-School (PreK 1) Teacher**

Sr. Amirah received her BS degree in Biology from Bridgewater State College, MA in the spring of 2003, and is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Early Childhood. Additionally, she received several other certificates as an orthodontist and dental assistant from Cuyahoga Community College, OH. Prior to joining IANE, Sr. Amirah worked as a consultant at BioAssets Corp at Natick, MA. She started as a volunteer at IANE, and later as a part-time substitute Math and Science teacher for our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in 2007. Sr. Amirah is enjoying her time here with our PreK-1 class and can be reached at [aserhan@iane.org](mailto:aserhan@iane.org).

**Sr. Hebaallah Hasan, B.A., M.Ed**

**Lead Pre-School (PreK 2) Teacher**

Sr. Heba is our Lead Teacher for two Kindergarten (K1 & K2) classes. She has a Bachelor's degree in Classical Languages and Literature from Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt and majored in Greek and Latin. She successfully received her Masters in Education with a major in Early Childhood last year. Sr. Heba is a certified pre-school teacher from the Department of Early Education and Care. She has enjoyed working with our beautiful four-year-old children for over eight years and is presently in her seventh year of teaching at IANE. Sr Heba can be reached at [hhasan@iane.org](mailto:hhasan@iane.org).

**Mrs. Souheir Al-Mousa, Assoc.Degree**

**Kindergarten (K 3) Teacher**

Sr. Souheir grew up in Damascus, Syria. She studied French literature at Damascus University, and has Early Childhood Teacher certification with EEC. She lived with her family in Saudi Arabia for four years, in Oman for two years, and in the United Arab Emirates for three years. While in the Emirates, she worked in the library at the American University of Sharjah. Sr. Souheir relocated to Massachusetts in 2002 and began working at the Islamic Academy of New England that year as a kindergarten assistant. She has continued working at the IANE for the past seven years and served as the primary kindergarten teacher for the past five years. Sr. Souheir celebrates the miracle of being able to watch her students grow and learn during the year they are with her. She enjoys the privilege of being able to see them read and write their first words and can be reached at [smousa@iane.org](mailto:smousa@iane.org).

**Miss Elizabeth Hansen, B.S.**

**First Grade Teacher**

Miss Hansen graduated Magna Cum Laude from Bridgewater State University with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. She completed a double major in English and a minor in Art. She holds a MA teaching license in Elementary Education from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She is also certified by the MA Department of Early

Education and Care as a Preschool Teacher. After graduation she worked as a K-12 substitute teacher in the districts of Hanover and Rockland, MA. During the summer months Miss Hansen enjoys working as a Preschool Counselor at a summer camp. This is her first year working with the IANE. Miss Hansen can be reached at [ehansen@iane.org](mailto:ehansen@iane.org).

**Sr. MaryLou Elhusayni, B.S.**

**First Grade Teacher Assistant**

Sr. MaryLou has a Bachelor's degree in Science from Roger Williams University. She has been an assistant in our Kindergarten class for three years and this will be her first year supporting our First grade class. Sr MaryLou has also taught Spanish to our students and has been actively involved in fundraising activities for our school. She can be reached at [melhusayni@iane.org](mailto:melhusayni@iane.org).

**Miss Kimberly Connolly, B.S., M.A.**

**Second Grade Teacher**

Miss Connolly obtained a Bachelor's Degree in 2009 for Elementary Education with a double major in Mathematics and Psychology at Stonehill College in Easton; she just received her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Teaching at Fitchburg State University earlier this 2011. Miss Connolly has had numerous teaching experiences in Brockton, an urban and multi-culturally diverse community, as well as in Dedham and Mansfield. She took over classrooms from Kindergarten to 5th while those teachers were on maternity leave and she had a full-time Monitor Teaching Assistant position where she taught mostly 2nd grade math intervention groups and 1st grade Health. Miss Connolly took an Islamic Ethics course in her undergraduate studies, and has since been especially interested and eager to learn more about the culture. She loves reading, enjoying the outdoors, and running on her free time! She can be reached at [kconnolly@iane.org](mailto:kconnolly@iane.org).

**Sr. Jihan Mehideen, Assoc. Degree**

**Second Grade Teacher Assistant, Art Teacher**

Sr. Jihan has an Associate's degree in Philosophy from the Lebanese University, and has four years of teaching experience in Lebanon. In 2010, she joined IANE as a teacher-assistant and even taught Arabic to our Pre-School K1 class. Sr. Jihan currently is assisting in second grade and also teaches Art for all our elementary grades. She can be reached at [jmehideen@iane.org](mailto:jmehideen@iane.org).

**Miss Jennifer Gordon, B.S., M.A.**

**Third Grade Teacher**

Miss Gordon previously taught third grade in the Boston and Brookline Public School Districts. She has experience teaching in a private school in Chestnut Hill and received both her Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Elementary Education from Simmons College in Boston. This is her third year of teaching, but first year at the Islamic Academy of New England. She is very excited to be here and can be reached at [jgordon@iane.org](mailto:jgordon@iane.org).

**Sarah Boyle, B.S., B.A.**

**Fourth Grade Homeroom Teacher, ELA-Social Studies Teacher (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

Mrs Boyle is from Maryland, where she attended the University of Maryland, College Park. She graduated from the UMD in 2004 with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Elementary Education (with an emphasis in Mathematics) and a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Art History. She is

certified in elementary education in Maryland and licensed in elementary education in Massachusetts. She has experience teaching second and third grades. She has the former President of the Muslim Women of Maryland (a sister organization to the MSA) and very active in the Muslim Students Association. Sr. Sarah is pursuing her Masters' Degree in Early Education at Bridgewater State University and can be reached at [sboyle@gmail.com](mailto:sboyle@gmail.com) .

**Sr Zakkiyya Witherspoon, B.S., MBA**

**Fifth Grade Homeroom Teacher, Math-Science Teacher (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

Sr. Zakkiyya attended undergraduate school at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the University of Phoenix where she completed her Bachelor's of Science degree in E-Business. Immediately after obtaining the B.S. she went on to complete her Master's degree in Business Management. Sr. Zakkiyya has always been passionate about putting her skills and hard work to use within the Islamic community which has led her recruitment at IANE as our fourth and fifth grade math and science teacher. Sr. Zakkiyya has created a website for all parents to check-out at <http://www.oucoursesystems.com/school/webpage.aspx?id=579121&xpage> and she can be reached at [zwitherspoon@iane.org](mailto:zwitherspoon@iane.org).

**Br. Zineddine Benkaci**

**School Maintenance**

Br. Zineddine is another familiar face amongst the staff at IANE and ANA. Br. Zine has been in charge of the janitorial services at both schools for many years now. Not only have his services been invaluable in maintaining the buildings at both Mansfield and Sharon, this father of three daily presence at the school has always been a source of comfort and joy for all the staff at the school where everyone has embraced him as part of their family and has depended on his helping hand time and time again. Alhumdulillah, Br. Zine will be continuing his service to the school again this year and we welcome him back with great warmth and joy.

----- We Look Forward To Welcoming You to IANE ! -----