

## **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION TEAM AND SUPPORT STAFF**

### **Principal - Farhat Siddiqui**



Farhat Siddiqui obtained her M.Ed. degree, specializing in school leadership and administration from Loyola University, Chicago and is an Illinois licensed school principal. She received additional training at Harvard University's Principal Leadership Center. She has served as a Certified Chair for AdvancED, now known as COGNIA. She is an Educational Speaker and Trainer for the State Board of Education and conducts professional development training for staff and mentoring and coaching for school leaders. She has served on the ISNA Education Forum committee, CIOGC, and currently serves as a board member for Northwest Suburban College. Her educational philosophy of guiding institutions towards stability and growth has inspired her to work at the grassroots level to develop the talent within the community to nurture leadership and position individuals with capacity, motivation, character, and drive to create opportunities to better our students and community. This premise has been foundational in guiding her to move schools from a stage of infancy to maturity. She has been instrumental in increasing student enrolment, increasing top tier University admissions, initiating school spiritual retreats to perform Umrah, and establishing Jumma prayer led by students. Her contributions have garnered her recognition at the state and national level, including the Washington Post and TIME magazine.

### **Director of Curriculum and Instruction - Salma Mady**



Salma Mady has been in the education field for over 8 years holding various roles from teaching, curriculum design, to administration across various institutions - from online, private to public. She is currently enrolled in a Master's in Public Policy and Administration program from Northwestern University and has already attained a certificate in Higher Education Administration and Social Policy from the same institution. She obtained her Bachelor's from Benedictine University in secondary education with a focus in social science. She is certified to teach in the state of Illinois and Arizona. She has taught an effective essay writing course through Northwestern's CTD program and understands the intricacies of designing an effective course to attain impactful results. Her philosophy is centered around the concept of self-mastery in producing curriculum that establishes a balanced core of learning. Her goal is to promote student achievement through data driven instruction and strategic planning that enforces critical thinking skills. Curriculum should be interdisciplinary so that students can make connections scaffolding their learning from one subject to another.

### **Dean of Students - Sarah Shums**



Sarah Shums earned her Bachelor's degree in Biology from California State University, Pomona. Through honors and distinctions, she graduated Magna Cum Laude. Subsequently, she completed her Master of Arts in Teaching from National Louis University in Lisle, IL. She holds endorsements in Middle School Curriculum and Instruction along with Biology. She is certified by the state of Illinois to teach grades 6 through 12. Sarah Shums taught middle and high school science for 10 years at Islamic Foundation School, during which she served as the Head of the Science Department for 6 years. Her experience deepened her philosophy of education and motivated her to help mold the students today into the leaders of tomorrow. This year, as Dean of Students, her role includes implementing PBIS, organizing student events, and student movement, guiding student behavior, and creating a positive learning environment for our students.

### **Academic Counselor - Linda Qatanani**



Linda Qatanani is the academic counselor at Islamic Foundation School. She earned her Master's in counseling from Governors State University and is a Licensed Professional Counselor as well as a National Certified Counselor. Ms. Linda concentrates on and provides services regarding academic counseling and college/career planning for all students. She instructs and guides students on how to prepare for college through focusing on their academics and being involved in extra-curricular activities and community service. As a staff member at Islamic Foundation School, she works with students on exemplifying a commitment to scholarship, character, and service. Her goal is to shape students into mature, responsible, and knowledgeable young individuals who have bright futures ahead of them!

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### **Program and Assessment Coordinator – Shereen Hussain**



Shereen Hussain obtained her double Masters in Technology in Education and School Leadership and Administration from National Louis University and Northeastern Illinois University. In addition, Shereen obtained Illinois state certifications in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Teaching Technology, School Administration and is a National Board Certified Teacher in Library Media. Shereen also recently obtained her Google Level 1 and Level 2 Certification. For the past 20 years, Shereen has worked in Chicago Public Schools as a Teacher, Technology Coordinator and as an Assistant Principal. Her goal at IFS is to introduce and implement new programs that promote student growth and achievement that focus on STEAM concepts.

### **Social Emotional Counselor – Ahed Abufeelat**



Ahed Abufeelat is a Social Emotional Counselor for Islamic Foundation school students. She obtained her M.S degree in Mental Health Counseling from National Louis University. She obtained an endorsement in school counseling. She did her internship at a public high school as a counselor. While there, she worked with a diverse population of students. She is a licensed professional counselor in the state of Illinois. Her passion is working with students to ensure that every student has equal opportunity at a higher education. As a Social Emotional Counselor, she aims to provide support and resources so that every student is successful. She wants students to feel connected and provide strategies to help students overcome challenges that they may be facing at school. Her future goals are to expand her certifications to be able to provide support to others within the community.

### **Social Emotional Counselor - Lujain Mahmoud**



Lujain Mahmoud obtained her Masters in School Counseling from Concordia University, Chicago and is an Illinois Licensed School Counselor. She is a certified LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor) and works with adolescents and adults outside of the school setting with Khalil Center in Lombard, Illinois. She has held extensive workshops for middle and high school ages and has been involved in various youth programs held by local mosques and community centers. She also serves as a mental health consultant for Legacy International Online High School. Her approach as a school counselor is geared towards the well-being of students and their external support systems. She advocates for collaboration between students and their external support system and believes all students should be embraced to achieve optimal personal growth, to acquire positive social skills and values, and to realize their potential in order to become productive and contributing members of society. She currently serves as a part time school counselor at Islamic Foundation School.

### **School Registrar – Amal Matari**



Amal Matari has dedicated her career to helping individuals obtain an education. She has years of experience working with international, graduate, undergraduate, and K-12 students. Amal Matari holds a Bachelor of Science in Applied Statistics from Kuwait University. While working as a university registrar for more than 15 years she earned a Master of Business Administration from Saint Xavier University, Chicago. She has worked for prestigious institutions such as the University of Chicago, Dominican University, and the Illinois Institute of Technology. She joins us after leaving an Associate Registrar position at IIT in order to dedicate her career and experience to the Muslim community. She is passionate about providing exceptional service and administrative support and strives to serve our students and families in order to promote academic success.

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### **School Nurse– Asma Khatoon**



Ms. Asma Khatoon the Islamic Foundation School Nurse. Ms. Asma has been working diligently to keep our school safe. Ms. Asma is a ECFMG certified Doctor. She worked at Marianjoy Hospital as a research assistant and completed her externship from Lorreto Hospital. She completed her nursing degree from IL College of Nursing. Furthermore, Ms. Asma worked as a Clinical Quality Analyst for home health agencies. She joined the IFS team in 2011. Since then, Ms. Asma has helped thousands of students by creating a healthy and safe learning environment.

### **Head of Quran, Arabic and Sacred Link Program – Syed Omair**



Syed Omair grew up in the Chicago suburbs and attended IFS weekend school as a child. After his family moved to Wisconsin and then to New York, he completed his bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He then moved to Amman, Jordan where he first studied and then taught Classical Arabic at the prestigious Qasid Arabic Institute from 2009 to 2017. While working, he continued to study many of the Islamic sciences under the tutelage of several well-known scholars of Jordan. After moving back to the US in 2017, he worked as an instructor and curriculum developer at the Fawakih Arabic Institute in Northern Virginia. He then worked as an Imam and Youth Director at the ADAMS (All Dulles Area Muslim Society) Center in Northern Virginia. He accepted a job at IFS in the Fall of 2021 and is settled in the Chicago suburbs with his wife and children. Syed has taught Arabic for nearly a decade and a half and is fluent in Classical Arabic grammar and translation. He has worked on several Arabic-English publications as

well as written textbooks on Classical Arabic grammar for the Qasid Arabic Institute. He has an ijazah in tajwid in the riwayat of Hafs and Shu'ba from Asim.

### **Athletic Director– Ali Abuhlaleh**



Dr. Ali is a former Olympian, and he achieved many recognitions during his wrestling career. Dr. Ali obtained his Master in Sport and Tourism Management from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and his Ph.D. in Leadership and Sport Management from Concordia University Chicago (CUC). Dr. Ali received a certificate in School Management and Leadership (CSML) from Harvard University. He completed 31 leadership training classes related to athletic management and participated in many national conferences related to sports management as a participant and presenter. Dr. Ali was recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for his contribution to developing youth sports programs for third world countries. He was recognized by Indiana University for his Outstanding Academic Achievement. In 2016, Dr. Ali was named the Athletic Director of the year in the State of Illinois. Dr. Ali is the founder and president of the Palestinian American

Athletic Association (PAAA), which works as a representative of the Palestinian Olympic Committee in the USA. He is also, the founder of the Metropolitan Prep and Southwest Schools Conferences.