

## **Participants at the Citizen Dialogue Group**

(Alphabetical order)

### **Mehdi Alhassani Student, George Washington University**

Mehdi Alhassani is completing his B.A. in International Affairs at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He was President of the Muslim Student Association at George Washington University from 2005 to 2006. Mr. Alhassani also served internships with The White House, Department of State, and the Department of Labor. He worked for the Managed Assets Department of the financial company Ferris Baker and Watts.

### **Yahya Basha, M.D. President, Basha Diagnostics**

Dr. Yahya Basha is the founder and President of Basha Diagnostics, a diagnostic imaging company with four locations across Southeast Michigan. Before starting his company he was Chief Radiologist at Oakdale Medical Center and William Beaumont Hospital. Dr. Basha is currently a Foundation Board Member of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) in California, is on the Board of Governors of the Arab American Institute (AAI) in Washington, and is on the Board of the Syrian American Congress (SAC) in Chicago. Dr. Basha was also the former Chairman of the American Muslim Council (AMC), a national non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C, from 2000- 2003.

His former accolades include:

- Advisor to the American Muslim Taskforce (AMT)
- Chair of American Muslim Political Coordinating Council (AMP CC)
- Board Member of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID)
- President of the Islamic Medical Association- Midwest Region (IMA)
- President of the Cultural Association of Franklin, Michigan
- Board Member of the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit
- Board Member of the Dix and Dearborn Mosques.

Born in Hama, Syria, Dr. Basha was educated in Christian Orthodox and Muslim schools and attended college and Medical School in Damascus, Syria.

**Dr. Talal Eid**  
**Imam and Muslim Chaplain**

Imam Talal Eid is a well-known Muslim scholar, activist and lecturer on Islam, Muslims, and Christian/Jewish/Muslim relations in North America. He promotes knowledge of Islam through radio and local and national television programs, and articles published in local and national newsletters and magazines. He is an American citizen and was born in Tripoli, Lebanon.

- He is the founder and Director of Religious Affairs of the Islamic Institute of Boston, Quincy, Massachusetts.
- Muslim Chaplain at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, since 1998.
- Muslim Chaplain at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, starting February 2006.
- Previously served the Muslim community through the Islamic Center of New England, Quincy and Sharon, Massachusetts, as the Imam and the Religious Director, from March 1982 until June 2005.
- Served as the Muslim Chaplain at Children's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, from 1993 to 2005.
- Served as the Muslim Chaplain at Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, from 1993 to 1996.
- Before arriving in the United States, he served as the Imam of Al-Nasir Mosque in Tripoli, Lebanon.

Imam Eid background education:

- Doctor of Theology (Th.D. 2005), Harvard University, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S. 1991), Harvard University, Harvard Divinity School.
- Licensee Degree (1974) in Islamic Law and Sciences "shari'ah," Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt.

**Farah Pandith**  
**Director for Middle East Regional Initiatives, National Security Council**

Farah Pandith serves as the Director for Middle East Regional Initiatives for the National Security Council. She is responsible for coordinating U.S. policy on Muslim World Outreach and the Broader Middle East North Africa initiative. She reports directly to the Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Global Democracy Strategy. Farah joined the staff of the National Security Council in December 2004.

Prior to joining the NSC Farah was Chief of Staff for the Bureau for Asia and the Near East for the U.S. Agency for International Development (US AID). She worked directly

for the Assistant Administrator for the bureau responsible for more than \$4 billion in programs throughout the Middle East, South Asia, and Asia -- including Iraq, Afghanistan and Gazal West Bank. USAID has been the principal U.S. agency to extend assistance to countries recovering from disaster, trying to escape poverty, and engaging in democratic reforms. Farah spent two months in Kabul, Afghanistan in the spring of 2004. Before joining the Bush Administration, Farah was Vice President of International Business for ML Strategies. ML Strategies and its affiliated law firm, Mintz Levin, works with government agencies, international lending institutions and political leaders from around the world.

Farah received a Master's degree from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where she specialized in International Security Studies, International Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, and Islamic Civilizations and Southwest Asia. She concentrated on the insurgency in Kashmir and has spoken on the subject in international and domestic forums.

Prior to graduate school, Farah worked at the United States Agency for International Development as the Special Assistant to the Director of Policy, traveling with the Director to evaluate projects in North Africa, Eastern Europe, and Russia. Farah has been a consultant in both the public and non-profit sectors. She is a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has served on several boards with a focus on international affairs including the World Affairs Council of Boston and the Council for Emerging National Security Affairs.

Farah received an A.B. in Government and Psychology from Smith College, where she was president of the student body. She has served as a Trustee of Smith College and Milton Academy.

Will be updated