

## Seminar for nonprofits gets high marks

By Fuad Dadabhoy, Special to IFN

IRVINE, Calif. – Leaders from local nonprofit organizations attended a free legal and financial educational seminar Muslim nonprofit organizations and mosques on Feb. 21. The seminar was hosted at the UC Irvine Student Center Muslim Advocates, a Bay Area-based nonprofit, as part of their Muslim Charity Works Campaign.

The day began with a continental breakfast and an opportunity for attendees to network with other leaders in the community, followed by a welcome address and introduction by Akil Vohra, staff counsel, and Farhana Khera, president and executive director for Muslim Advocates.

One of the goals of this introduction session was to give an opportunity to attendees to introduce themselves, their organization and what they hoped to gain from attending the seminar.

The seminar, which consisted of six sessions – including Non-Profit Governance 101, Financial Best Practices and International Charitable Operations – aimed to better prepare Muslim charities and inform them about transparency and their ability to gain donor confidence.

Furthermore, Muslim Advocates hoped to inform leaders of nonprofit organizations of the importance of their roles, responsibility that comes with serving on the board and the dedication that is required to achieve success.

“I think Muslim Advocates’ goals are exactly what is needed,” Todd Gallinger of Gallinger Law said in an e-mail interview.

“What is sometimes lacking is the knowledge about the American legal and financial systems, which sometimes h back organizations.”

A key goal of Muslim Advocates in hosting these seminars is to prepare Muslim charities for the next step in the Muslims Charity Works Campaign, which is gaining accreditation for Muslim charities through the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance.

According to the Muslim Advocates Web site, “This program is designed to enhance the knowledge and ability of nonprofit leaders to meet the demands of governance, legal and financial compliance.”

“Charities [need to] recognize the need to adhere to the best practices of running their business that is consistent v the standards the Better Business Bureau has set,” Issa Edah-Tally, president of the Islamic Center of Irvine said.

As part of this program, Muslim Advocates hopes to educate community nonprofit leaders about the BBB-WGA Standards for Charity Accountability and also assist with evaluation by the BBB-WGA.

The goal with this is to work with the Better Business Bureau to ensure the needs of Muslim nonprofit organizations are met.

“I think anyone who is in a leadership position of a nonprofit organization must attend this seminar,” said Hisham Labanieh, co-founder of Muslim Sports and Entertainment Foundation. “Muslim Advocates provides those leaders with support through education and consultation,” he said.

*On the Web: [www.muslimadvocates.org](http://www.muslimadvocates.org)*

*Fuad M. Dadabhoy serves on the Board of Directors at UPLIFT Charity, a nonprofit organization with the goal of empowering the impoverished Muslims of Southern California.*

Close Window