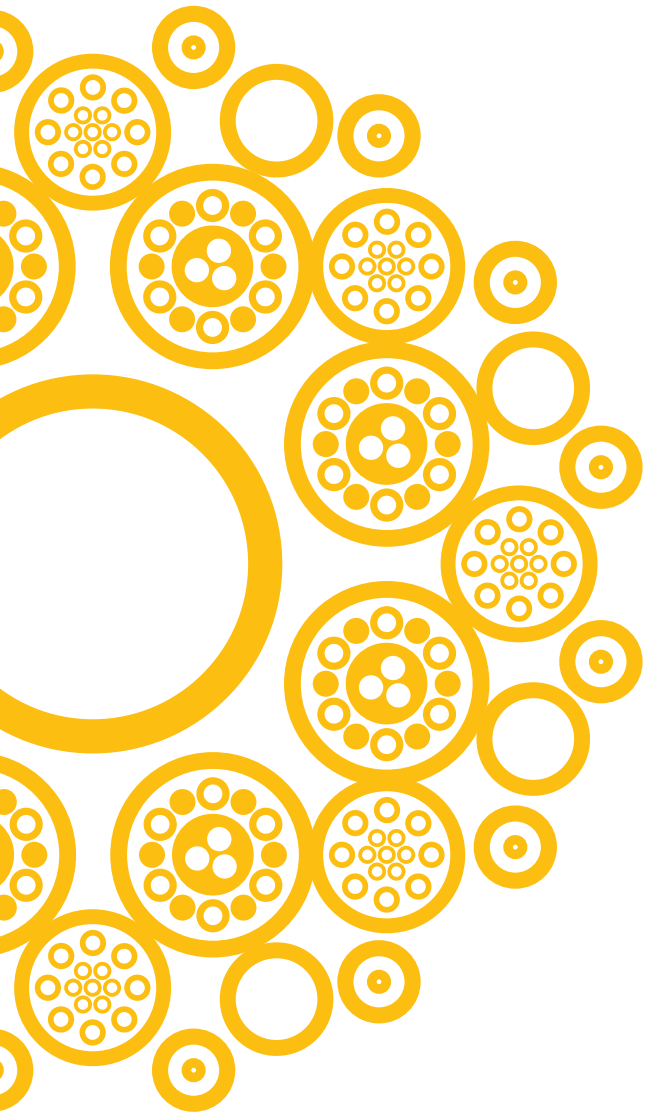




American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute
Evaluation Report



Submitted by Tobin Belzer PhD
January 2016

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BACKGROUND

Founded in 2006 and launched programming in 2008, the American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute (AMCLI) works to transform the Muslim communal landscape in the United States by empowering the next generation of American Muslim civic leaders. AMCLI is a national and regionally based fellowship for young Muslim leaders (generally between the ages of 25-45) that provides participants with leadership development training, strategic guidance, and networking opportunities. The program was designed to achieve five primary goals (*see below*).

To date, 221 individuals have participated in AMCLI: 108 took part in five cohorts of the National Fellowship, which was implemented between 2008-2013. Another 113 have participated in five cohorts of the Regional Fellowship, which included gatherings in the Midwest, West Coast (2), South, and East Coast. The National Fellowship, which took place over the course of eight months, included three five-day convenings and a series of conference calls focused on topics such as civic participation, individual skillbuilding, organizational development, and Islamic theology. The Regional Fellowship consisted of a 4-day residential retreat designed to serve as an overview of the core elements of the AMCLI curriculum. AMCLI trainers and presenters include scholars, experts, and practitioners from across the country.

Fellows are vetted through a highly competitive nomination and application process. Qualified participants are committed to civic engagement in the American Muslim community and are committed to advancing their community. They are over the age of 25, and hold a professional or volunteer position within a non-profit organization, government, network, media, or faith institution. Men and women from across the ethnic, social and geographic diversity of American Muslim communities take part. Participants hold leadership positions—as chief executive officers, chief operating officers, program directors, program coordinators, lead organizers, or board members—at organizations engaged in civic work in the Muslim community, or with organizations working on issues that affect the Muslim community.

AMCLI is housed at the University of Southern California's Center for Religion and Civic Culture (CRCC). Previously, AMCLI worked in partnership with the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim Christian Understanding (ACMCU) at Georgetown University. Funders include: the California Community Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Ford Foundation, McCormick Foundation, One Nation for All, Pillars Fund and Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock.

AMCLI Primary Goals

IDENTIFY NEEDS	CONDUCT TRAINING	BUILD A NETWORK	DEVELOP IMPACT	SUSTAIN ENGAGEMENT
identify leadership needs for American Muslim nonprofit sector, civic engagement best practices, theological resources on civic engagement in Islam	equip with practical skills including conflict resolution, public speaking, and strategy necessary for making social change	identify and connect leaders across the country	guide the development of projects and partnerships	create ongoing opportunities for the network to learn and grow together

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

This evaluation was designed to obtain comprehensive and accurate information by employing multiple methods including qualitative interviews, an in-depth survey, and document analysis. An exploratory outcomes evaluative approach was used to investigate and articulate program outcomes and to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the various impacts directly from alumni. Data collection began with qualitative interviews conducted with key program stakeholders (N=3) and select alumni from the national and regional fellowship (N=18). Data obtained from interviews directly informed the creation of the survey instrument, which was administered to all 221 alumni. The survey was designed to gather individuals' perceptions about the variety and extent of impacts of their participation. Data was collected to explore why, for whom, and under what circumstances outcomes are produced. The research was conducted over the course of six months: between July 2015 and December 2015.

The response rate to the 30-question survey was 62%: 137 of the 221 alumni from ten cohorts responded.* Responses were evenly distributed across the cohorts (Exhibit 1). 52% or more of alumni from every cohort responded, with an average of 14 respondents per cohort. With seven cohorts: 61% of participants responded and with three cohorts: 70% or more responded. 55% of respondents participated in the regional cohorts and 45% participated in the national cohorts.

The response rate exceeds the 50% benchmark recommended for applied research.** The strong representation across cohorts contributes to the probability that the sample is representative of the larger AMCLI population. The robust trends that emerged throughout the data further add to the level of confidence that can be placed in the results.

Quotes throughout the report were selected (from both interviews and open-ended survey questions), because they are illustrative of sentiments articulated by several respondents.

EXHIBIT 1

Response rate by cohort (N=137)

<i>date</i>	<i>cohort</i>	<i>response rate</i>
2008-09	National Cohort	10%
2009-10	National Cohort	9%
2010-11	National Cohort	7%
2011-12	National Cohort	10%
2012-13	National Cohort	9%
March 21-23, 2014	West Cohort	9%
May 2-4, 2014	East Cohort	13%
October 23-26, 2014	Midwest Cohort	10%
January 8-11, 2015	West Cohort	12%
March 26-29, 2015	South Cohort	11%

* Every respondent did not answer every survey question; the number of responses to particular questions is indicated throughout the report (when applicable).

** Yehuda Baruch and Brooks C. Holtom "Survey response rate levels and trends in organizational research." *Human Relations*. 61, no.8 (2008): 1155.

Demographics

As Exhibit 2 illustrates, most survey respondents are between the ages of 25-34 or 35-44. Slightly more women (56%) than men (44%) responded to the survey (Exhibit 3). This ratio roughly reflects the gender identification of the entire group: 58% of all alumni are women and 42% are men.

Slightly more than half of respondents work as employees and/or consultants in organizations working directly or indirectly on Muslim issues or advocacy (Exhibit 4). Others volunteer, and still others both work and volunteer for organizations benefiting Muslim causes. Seven respondents are graduate students who are studying about Islam or Muslims. Four of those students also volunteer, and one also works in an organization that focuses on Muslim issues or advocacy.

Just 8 of the 137 respondents no longer work nor volunteer with organizations benefiting Muslims.

EXHIBIT 2

Respondents' Ages

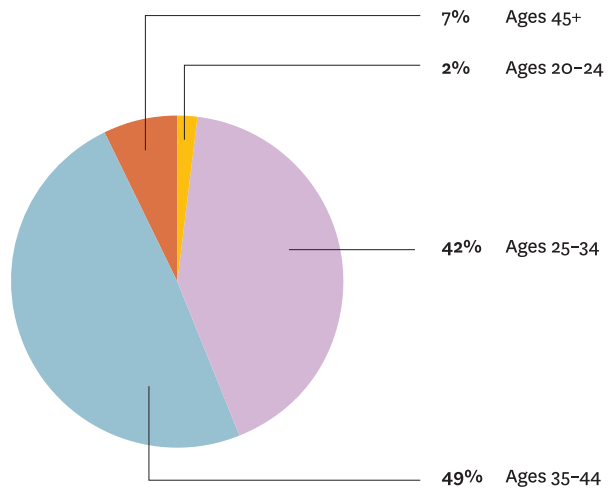


EXHIBIT 3

Respondents' Gender Identification

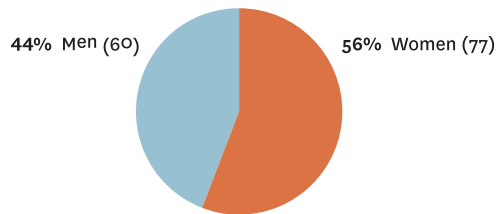
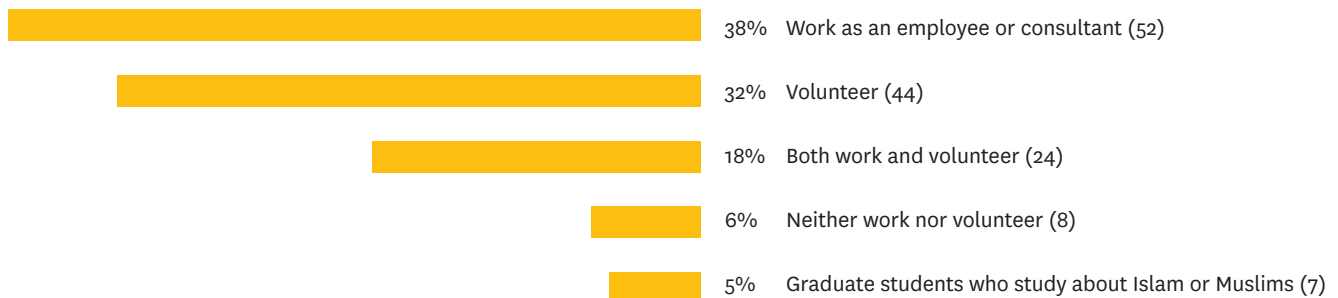


EXHIBIT 4

Respondents' engagement with organizations that directly or indirectly focus on Muslim issues or advocacy

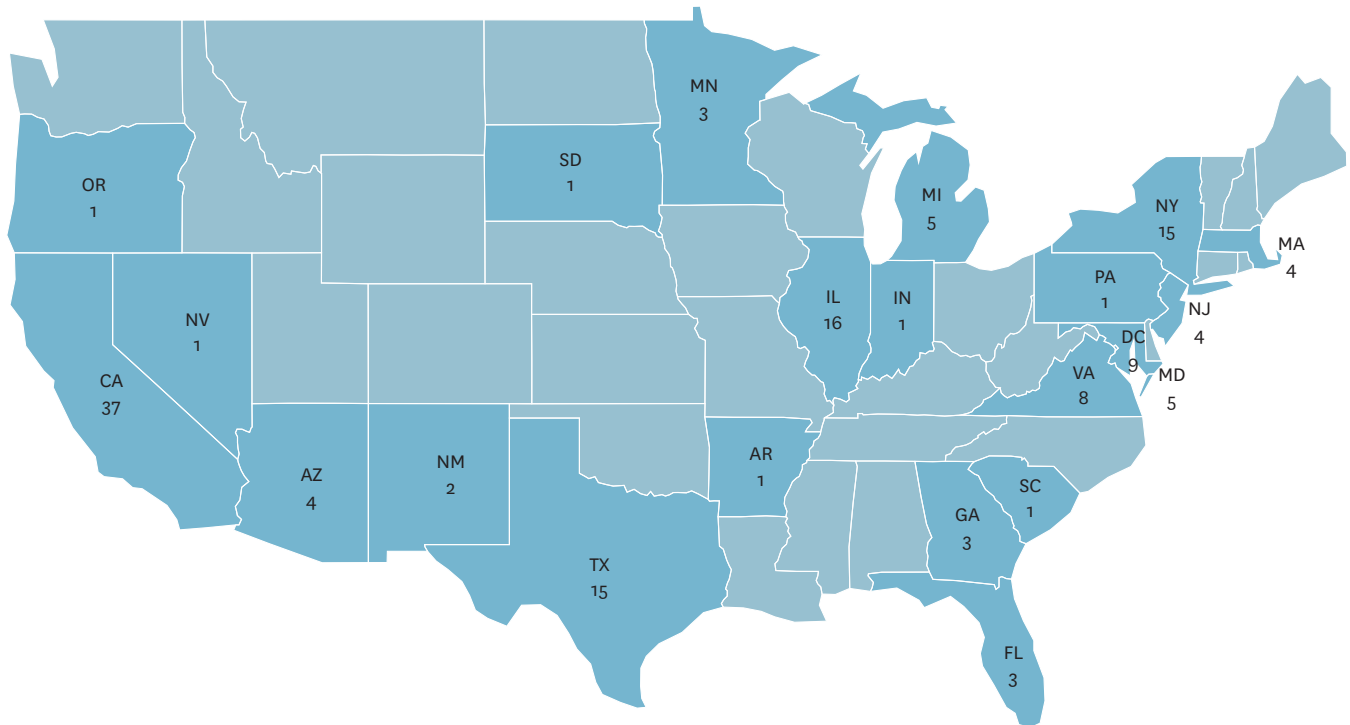


ALUMNI

Geographic Locations

Respondents live in 20 states across the US.

One respondent now lives overseas.



Arizona	4	Illinois	16	New Jersey	4	South Dakota	1
Arkansas	11	Indiana	1	Nevada	1	Texas	15
California	37	Massachusetts	4	New York	15	Virginia	8
Washington DC	9	Maryland	5	Oregon	1	No answer	4
Florida	3	Michigan	5	Pennsylvania	1		
Georgia	3	Minnesota	3	South Carolina	1		

OUTCOMES

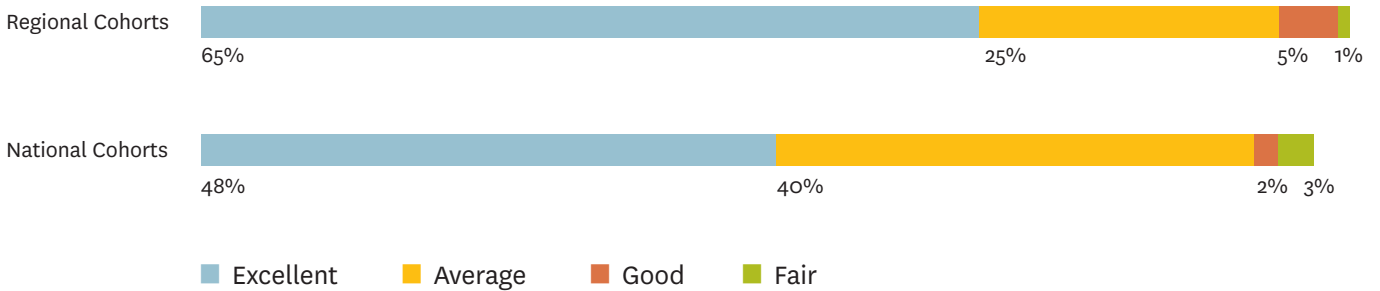
Overall Experience

Alumni described their overall AMCLI experience in positive terms. 58% of all respondents characterized their experience as “excellent” and 32% characterized their experience as “good.” A small minority of respondents characterized their experience as either “average” or “fair” and no respondents considered their experience to be “poor.”

As Exhibit 5 illustrates, a larger percentage of respondents from regional cohorts characterized their experience as “excellent.” Respondents who characterized their experience as average or fair were evenly distributed across cohorts.

EXHIBIT 5

Respondents’ characterization of their overall AMCLI experience (N=131)



86% Feel proud to be part of the AMCLI alumni network

79 alumni strongly agreed and 39 agreed



81% Agreed that AMCLI was “inspiring”

63 alumni strongly agreed and 48 agreed

Overall Experience



[The experience] expanded my view of what I could accomplish in the world and for American Muslims, and it provided me with connections and advice to pursue those things.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

[AMCLI] was life changing. It helped me redefine what it means to be successful, a leader, to pursue social justice issues and changed my perspective and offered me the emotional support I needed to continue the work I'm doing."

— an alumna from a national cohort

AMCLI motivated me to stay active in the Muslim community. It validated my perspective and that I have something to offer and that people have similar struggles. It made me feel more connected and excited about continuing to serve the community."

— an alumna from a regional cohort

I felt inspired and motivated by the quality and quantity of young leaders that are sacrificing a lot and are joining a very engaged network to make an impact. It gives me a lot of optimism for what will be achieved. And motivates me to make sure I stay relevant and live up to my idealist ambitions even as life/kids/family may slow me down.

— an alumnus from a national cohort



OUTCOMES

Continued Salience

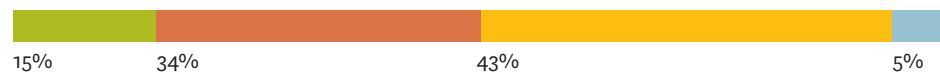
AMCLI has remained very much on the minds of alumni. More than half of all respondents (69%) have thought about something they learned or did during AMCLI within the past month and almost half (49%) have talked about their experience within the past week (Exhibit 6). AMCLI was somewhat more recently on the minds of respondents from regional cohorts (for whom the experience was more recent). 76% of respondents from regional cohorts have thought about something they learned in the past month. This was the case for 61% of respondents from national cohorts (who participated as many as eight years ago).

Most continue to use the resources provided: 68% of respondents from national cohorts and 53% of respondents from regional cohorts have revisited the learning materials at least once. 21% of all respondents have done so three or more times. AMCLI inspired 40% of respondents to read more about topics that were introduced to them during the Fellowship.

EXHIBIT 6

Extent to which AMCLI has remained on respondents' minds (N=131)

When respondents last talked about something they learned or did during AMCLI



When respondents last thought about something they learned or did during AMCLI



OUTCOMES

Sense of Connection

AMCLI respondents have a strong sense of connection with their fellow alumni:



91% feel connected to alumni from their cohort

29 feel very connected, 57 feel moderately connected and 39 feel slightly connected



64% feel connected to alumni from other cohorts

10 feel very connected, 23 feel moderately connected and 53 feel slightly connected

For 77% of respondents, AMCLI sparked relationships that have continued.

32% of respondents agreed they met people during AMCLI who are now among their closest friends.

This was the case for 23 alumni from national cohorts and 21 from regional cohorts.

Overall, respondents from national cohorts have a slightly stronger sense of connection to members of their cohorts: 68% of national respondents and 59% of regional respondents feel very or moderately connected to members of their cohorts.



67% agreed that AMCLI increased their sense of connection with the American Muslim community

40 strongly agreed and 52 agreed



66% agreed that AMCLI helped them feel like part of a community

38 strongly agreed and 52 agreed

OUTCOMES

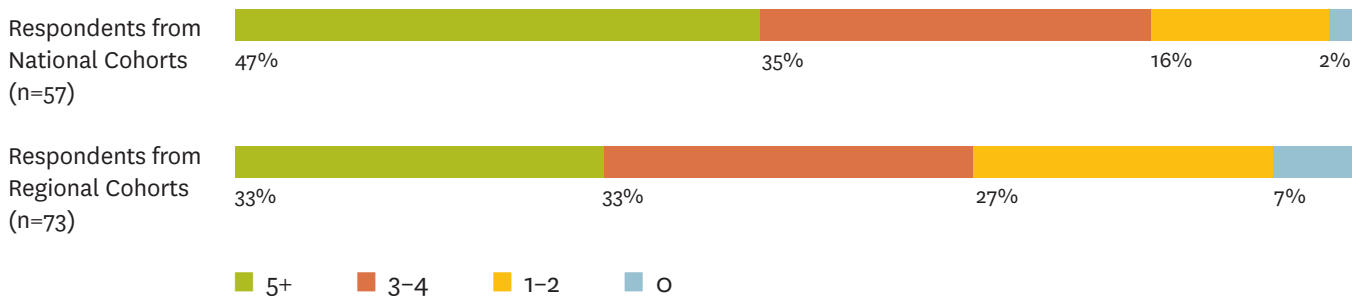
Sense of Connection

The majority of participants in both national and regional cohorts remain connected to three or more of their fellow alumni beyond being Facebook friends (Exhibit 7). Every respondent, (except one from a Regional cohort) has since communicated with alumni from their cohort. The majority of respondents from both cohort types have communicated five times or more with alumni from their cohort. 81% of respondents from national and regional cohorts have communicated with alumni from their cohort 3 or more times. Alumni have also maintained their connections in person: 73% have met with another alumni locally and 39% have traveled out of state to meet with fellow alumni.

Respondents feel less strongly connected to members of other cohorts: 34% of national respondents and 16% of regional respondents feel very or moderately connected to members of other cohorts. Almost every respondent (81%) has contacted some one from another cohort at least once and 61% have done so three or more times.

EXHIBIT 7

Number of alumni with whom respondents remain connected by cohort type (beyond Facebook)



OUTCOMES

Expanded Networks

Many respondents characterized the opportunity to interact with their peers as the highlight of their AMCLI experience. Most have continued to cultivate those connections. Many have also expanded the network beyond alumni: 75% of respondents introduced someone they met through AMCLI to their other friends and colleagues and 52% of alumni have shared AMCLI resources with individuals outside of the network.

According to the majority of respondents from both regional and national cohorts, participating in AMCLI:



85%

Connected alumni to people they would not have otherwise met

70 strongly agreed and 46 agreed



69%

Helped them make valuable professional connections

46 strongly agreed and 49 agreed



67%

Enabled them to experience the transformative power of networks as vehicles for change

39 strongly agreed and 53 agreed



55%

Decreased their sense of isolation

To a great (36) or moderate (39) extent

Expanded Networks



I didn't really know people in the other cohorts: the work they do and the impact they are making. I was honored to be chosen to be a part of the cohort, but I was even more honored once I started learning more about people's backgrounds and the company I was in. There is no other place in the US, that I know of, where this experience and energy can be harnessed.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

I feel the greatest asset from participating in AMCLI has been the networking with others who are passionate about improving the Muslim American experience. In addition to meeting NEW people who are awesome and doing wonderful things around the country, AMCLI really helped me strengthen my relationship with people I already KNEW. I feel like having gone through AMCLI helped us bond and also learn about what our strengths and weaknesses are so we can complement each other's skills and talents as we work together to achieve common goals. It's like finding out that I was sitting on a GOLD mine...right in the city (and state) where I've already been living all this time.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

It gave me a connection to the Muslim community. It was AMCLI that connected me to a circle of people doing good. When I see them doing well, it's exciting and I'm happy for them. It gave me a connection that I didn't have before....It gave me a network of people who are amazing. I helped me appreciate the importance of building those relationships to use.

— an alumnus from a national cohort

I helped me feel more connected to the broader community outside of [my city]. I have friends all over and more diverse connections as well.

— an alumnus from a national cohort

I was thinking about how many of the recognizable Muslim voices that are out there came through AMCLI. To support and create a network and amplify each other. People got belief in their value and impact. It was a catalyst. It's amazing to see how many people are working together doing amazing things.

— an alumna from a national cohort



OUTCOMES

Acquired Practical Skills

Alumni mentioned the concrete skills they acquired during AMCLI. More than 50% of respondents from both national and regional cohorts said their experience helped them (to a great or moderate extent) improve their:

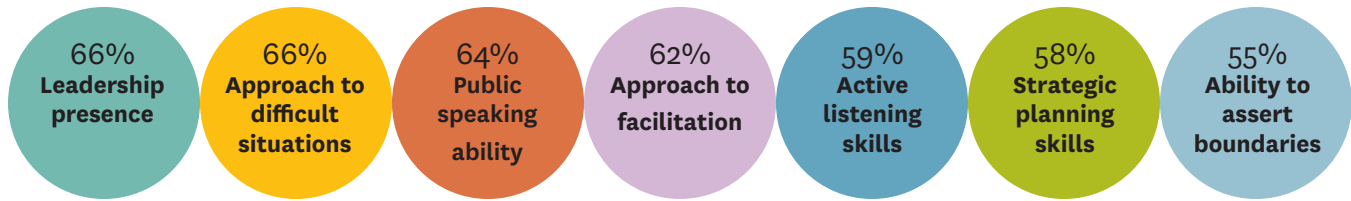
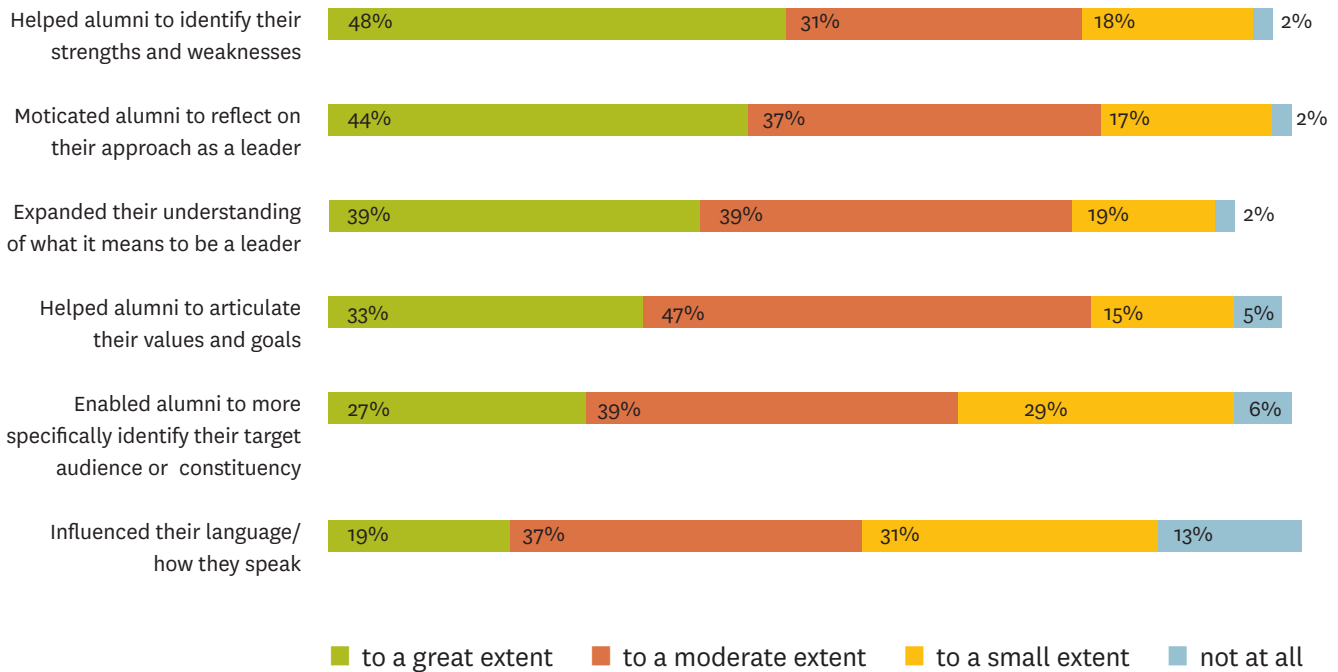


EXHIBIT 8:

Extent to which participating in AMCLI...

(N=127)



OUTCOMES

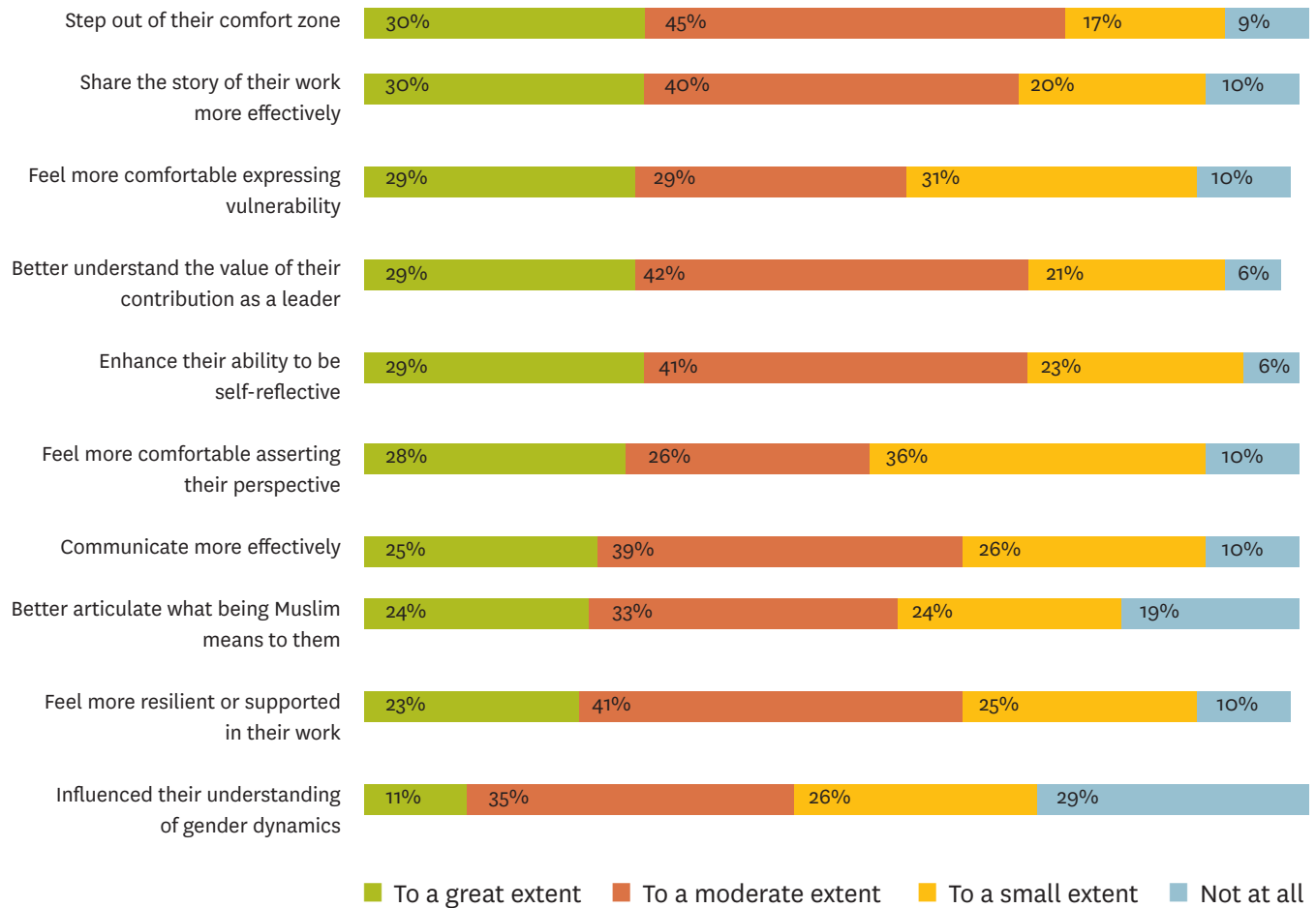
Social Emotional Understanding

AMCLI sparked respondents' self reflection and increased their self understanding. As Exhibit 9 shows, the experience helped respondents: feel more comfortable communicating, articulate their perspectives and influenced their understanding of social dynamics. 68% of respondents from regional cohorts and 55% of respondents from national cohorts said participating in AMCLI increased their confidence.

EXHIBIT 9:

Extent to which participating in AMCLI helped respondents...

(N=126)



Social Emotional Understanding



We did these exercises about presence and leadership style. It was a real eye opener. Because of that I was able to express myself in a way I couldn't before. It unlocked something in side of me. It changed all aspects of my life: personal, professional, private and public.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

[AMCLI] helped me claim my Muslim identity regardless of what I believe. I'm not interested in saying what I'm not. It helped me feel okay about how I feel.

— an alumnus from a national cohort

AMCLI helped me accept myself as a Muslim leader....It was foundational for me to accept who I am, trust my instincts and also think of myself as an individual instead of a representative from an organization.

— an alumna from a national cohort

[AMCLI] has given me the confidence to reach out to leaders within my community to bring up an issue that I would like to work at addressing.

— an alumnus from a regional cohort

I still marvel at how it was possible for Nadia, Brie and Sumaya to create such a safe space in so little time. The rawness of our experiences, sharing vulnerabilities was phenomenal and far transcends anything else I've experienced and I've been to a fair number of retreats/"safe spaces" etc....I am forever grateful for the experience and look forward to more.

— an alumna from a regional cohort



OUTCOMES

Broadened Perspectives

Their experience as AMCLI fellows broadened respondents' thinking about what being Muslim, a leader, and a Muslim leader means to them. It also expanded their understanding of the American Muslim communal landscape. For the majority, AMCLI enabled them to interact more effectively with people with diverse perspectives. AMCLI also increased the majority of respondents' awareness of the diversity of ways to express their Muslim identities.

According to the majority of respondents from both regional and national cohorts, participating in AMCLI:



80%
Broadened their awareness of the Muslim communal landscape

36 strongly agreed and 73 agreed



81%
Enabled them to interact more effectively with people who have different worldviews and/or backgrounds

To a great (30), moderate extent (45) or small extent (36)



71%
Broadened their awareness of the diversity of ways people express their Muslim identities

36 strongly agreed and 61 agreed

Broadened Perspectives



I remember saying for the first time: ‘there are Muslim communities not A Muslim community.’ For me, it was realizing there are communities, giving up on the idea of THE community and thinking more about our specific audiences.

— an alumna from a national cohort

It was a great experience meeting leaders from all over the country who have diverse backgrounds and stories. It has been amazing to see the incredible work the other members are doing in the community.

— an alumnus from a national cohort

[I gained an] understanding of the greater Islamic community outside my small little community. The richness in religion, cultural diversity, and struggle are real for so many people. Finally I am not alone.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

AMCLI expanded people’s understanding of what a leader is beyond an Imam or a male leader. A leader doesn’t have to be in a top office or an executive director to still be a leader.

— an alumna from a national cohort

AMCLI opened me up to a broader perspective of the issues and demographics facing Muslim Americans today.

— an alumna from a national cohort

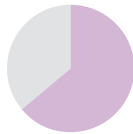


OUTCOMES

Influenced Decisions

AMCLI has affected respondents' decision making processes. 58% of respondents said they have made decisions that were influenced by their AMCLI experience. They mentioned how AMCLI motivated them to pursue additional leadership training and increased their willingness to experiment with new ideas and take professional risks. Many described how AMCLI contributed to their decisions to change their leadership approach and collaborate more frequently. They also said they now approach personal and professional relationships more thoughtfully.

The majority of respondents from both national and regional cohorts were motivated by their AMCLI experience to:



64%

Collaborate on a project or event with another AMCLI alumni

70 respondents



62%

Seek out additional leadership development opportunities

85 respondents



55%

Experiment with a new idea

76 respondents



51%

Take a professional risk

70 respondents

Influenced Decisions



One of the biggest lessons I learned at AMCLI was the importance of developing other leaders and not burning oneself out. I plan any new project, business, organization, etc., with leadership development in mind.

— an alumnus from a national cohort

I really appreciated my experience and the connections I made. It was a launch pad for me to pursue a project by thinking through it strategically.

— alumna from a regional cohort

My decision to pursue a career in the public sector was in part informed by my experience in AMCLI. I was inspired by fellows who were doing excellent work in government.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

I was at an international conference with many heads of state when there was an opportunity for audience members to speak. I recalled advice that Nadia Roumani gave about seizing opportunities and I decided to muster enough courage to speak. Due to my brief remarks that day, I was invited to speak at other conferences.

— an alumnus from a national cohort



OUTCOMES

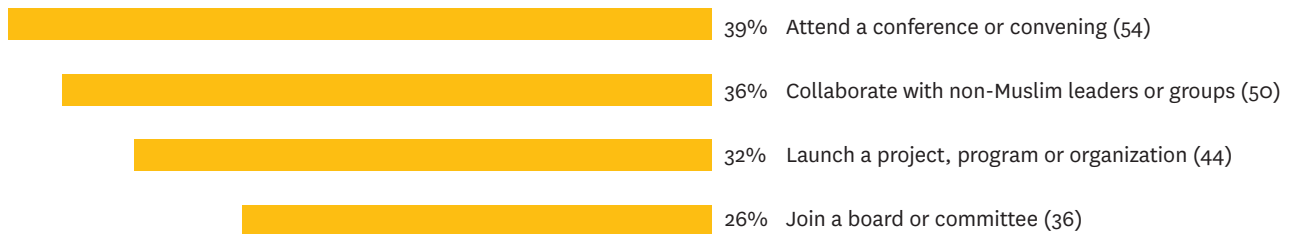
Shaped Career Trajectories

The majority of respondents from both national and regional cohorts (69%) said that AMCLI influenced their career trajectories. Motivated by their AMCLI experience, respondents have taken on new leadership roles as board and committee members. They have also launched their own projects, programs and organizations (Exhibit 10). Many have engaged more broadly, attending conferences and collaborating with non-Muslim leaders or groups. More than half said participating in AMCLI renewed their motivation to stay involved.

EXHIBIT 10:

Respondents' credit AMCLI with motivating them to...

(N=123)



Shaped Career Trajectories



69% said AMCLI influenced their career trajectories

To a great extent (18), to a moderate extent (35), and to a small extent (41)



My entire career trajectory has changed because of AMCLI. It gave me the confidence to act like a leader, to make decisions independently, not to wait for permission, to think strategically about the personal resources I commit to projects and how to make sure they strategically align with my vision. The decision to start my own firm, was directly related to AMCLI, which gave me the tools/support to change careers and trust my leadership skills.

— *an alumna from a national cohort*

I believe AMCLI helped me grow as a leader and it helped show my commitment to learning how to be a better person, volunteer, employee. It helped me as I took on a new role in my workplace. I also connected with people outside of my cohort and mentioned I am an AMCLI alum and that helped me in some freelance projects and in my current fulltime job.

— *an alumna from a regional cohort*



55% said participating in AMCLI renewed their motivation to stay involved

34 strongly agreed and 51 agreed

OUTCOMES

Applied Learning

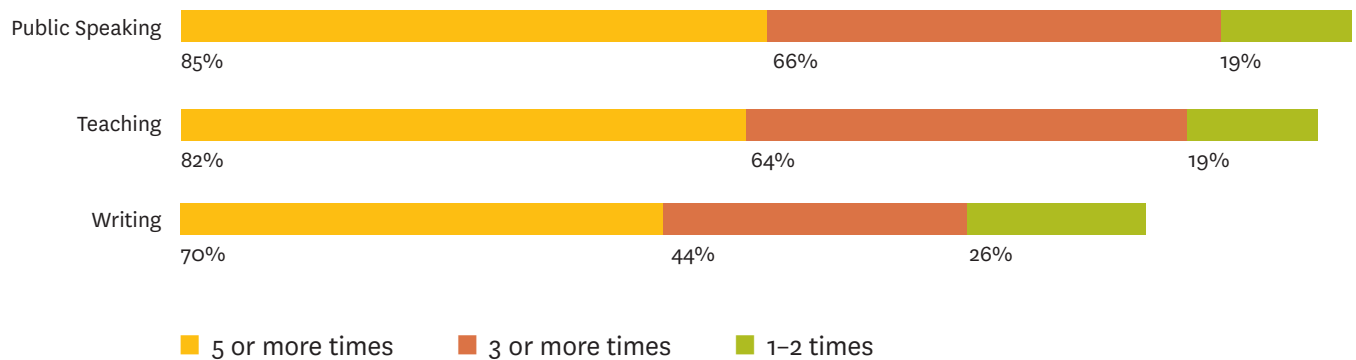
Respondents described numerous professional contexts where they applied what they learned during AMCLI. 49% of respondents mentioned using the various skills, knowledge, and understanding they gained in their: teaching, facilitation, public speaking, community organizing, fundraising, program design and implementation, mentoring, volunteering, and outreach, as well as in their roles as social entrepreneurs, board members, and community leaders. As Exhibit 11 illustrates, the majority of respondents have used something learned in their public speaking, writing, and teaching multiple times. 54% of all respondents agreed that AMCLI has opened doors for them: 29 strongly agreed and 45 agreed. This was the case for a higher percentage of respondents from national cohorts (65%) than for those from regional cohorts (47%).

Their personal lives have also benefited from their AMCLI experience. 85% have applied something they learned in their personal relationships, including 70% who have done so three or more times. Several alumni mentioned recognition, awards, and honors they received, which were in some way connected to their participation in AMCLI. They were recognized for their leadership, invited to prestigious convenings, selected for competitive fellowships, and appointed to leadership positions.

EXHIBIT 11:

Number of times respondents used something they learned from AMCLI in their...

(N=129)



Applied Learning



I applied something the day we learned about how to deal with conflict. That night I literally found myself in a very tough situation. Playing the middle man, I was able to apply what I learned immediately. Put it into practice by bringing two parties together to work through emotions and make a hard decision. It felt really empowering. I was equipped to handle it.

— an alumna from a regional cohort

One of the items that I reflect on most was the feedback seminar. Specifically, I think (frequently) about the feedback I received. ...That was a very important, and transformational learning that I still keep today.

— an alumnus from a regional cohort

To date, I haven't participated in anything like AMCLI. It had a tremendous impact on how I present myself as a leader in every sector of my life. It gave me room to reflect on my strengths and weaknesses and practical exercises to develop an individual and organizational mission. It was incredible to be able to do this in a diverse community of Muslims.

— an alumna from a national cohort



OUTCOMES

Broader Impact

Alumni described how AMCLI is training, empowering, connecting and reenergizing the next generation of Muslim leaders. An alumna from a national cohort asserted that AMCLI: “has put scaffolding into place across the country for American Muslims to build a future.” An alumna from a regional cohort credited AMCLI with:

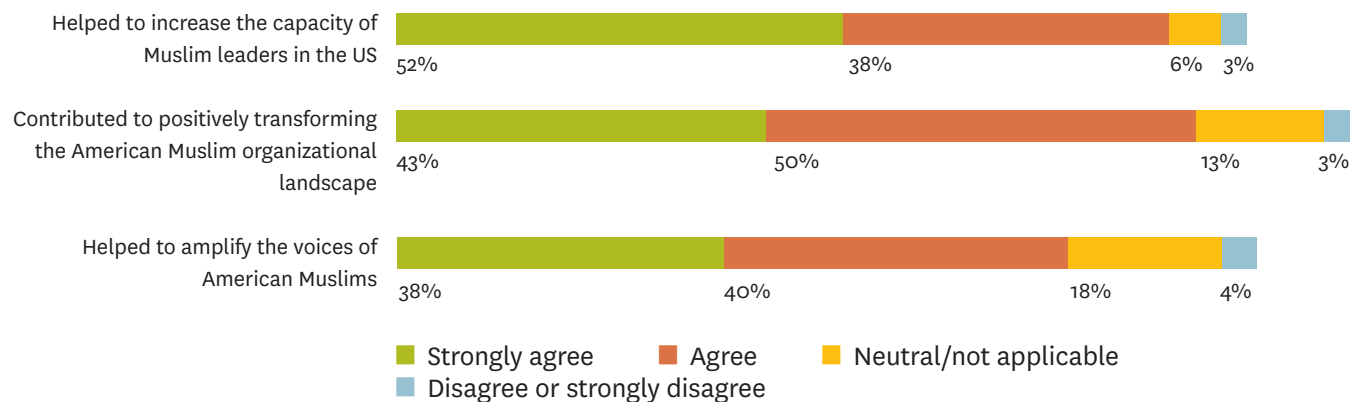
“ **...ensuring to the next generation of Muslim leaders that their perspectives’ are valid, their leadership is needed, and their vision can be transformative.** ”

Respondents described how AMCLI has helped participants to build authentic relationships and decreased their sense of isolation, which has served to change communal culture. According to an alumna from a regional cohort, AMCLI has:

...created common ‘language’ through the consistency of training modules, has effectively challenged certain ‘tendencies’ within the community, and demonstrated power of giving and receiving constructive feedback. ”

EXHIBIT 12:

Extent to which respondents agree that AMCLI has... (N=125)



Broader Impact

Alumni mentioned the importance of the network, which has fostered collaborations and partnerships among individuals from diverse backgrounds, sectors, and communities. An alumnus from a regional cohort explained:

“ I think one of the impacts AMCLI very successfully does is allow people from different parts of the Muslim Community to spend face time together. This is a critical opportunity, because it allows disparate communities to realize they have allies in some important issue areas even if they do not align on other issues.

An alumna from a national cohort described how:

AMCLI has become a benchmark of Muslim activism and leadership in the US, has increased the capacity of individuals and the organizations they work with, and continues to guide the careers of the most prolific American Muslims.

Alumni described how training young leaders has amplified the impact of the American Muslim communal landscape by increasing organizational capacity. An alumnus from a regional cohort described AMCLI as having a:

...major positive impact on the quality and quantity of the organizational, entrepreneurial, and activist Muslim work in the U.S.

An alumnus from a national cohort observed:

I see that most of the most prominent Muslim leaders were AMCLI cohorts at one time and that says a lot.



When asked about their perspectives on AMCLI’s influence more broadly, a few respondents characterized the impact as “covert” or “profound in a stealth way.”

OUTCOMES

Broader Impact

Respondents mentioned more than 100 organizations where they have applied what they learned during AMCLI, including: local and national non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, universities, schools, foundations, consulting firms, festivals, social service organizations, professional associations, councils, boards, marketing agencies, publishers, campaigns, and civic institutions.

Affinis Labs	Muslim Public Affairs Council	Islamic Center of Greater Miami
Allied Media Conference	Muslim Student Organizations	Islamic Center of Irvine
American Academy of Religions Conference	Muslim Uumah of North America	Islamic Center of North East Florida
American Civic Liberties Union	muslims@haas student organization at UC Berkeley	Islamic Relief USA
American Leadership Forum	National Black Programming Consortium	Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center
American Muslim Health Professionals	National Muslim Democratic Council	Noor Kids
American Muslim Women Civic Group	National Science Foundation	One Nation
American Muslims Care	Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Program	Open Society
American University	NESMA Holdings	OurVoices Campaign (by GreenFaith)
Baltimore Jewish Council	New America Foundation	Pakistan Literacy Fund
Bill of Rights Defense Committee	New Ground: Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change	Panthera Capital Group
Bureau of Social Services Ghana	New Horizon School	Plymouth-Canton Community School
CAIR-Michigan	New York City Council	Project Downtown Ft Lauderdale
CAIR-Philadelphia	New York City Mayor's Office, Community Affairs Unit	Push Brand Marketing LLC
Center for Global Understanding	Next Wave Muslim Initiative	Ready LA
Center for Religion and Civic Culture at USC	Nida Ul Islam: An Islamic Center of Knowledge	Religious Competition and Creative Innovation project
Cinetopia International Film Festival	Emerge USA	Sabeel Food Pantry
College Program on Islam	Expeditionary Learning/ Outbound River Trip	Safe Nation Collaborative
Coming of Faith	Explore Islam	San Francisco Organizing Project/ Peninsula Interfaith Action
CORO New York	Foundation for Muslim Culture	Sharia Re'Voiced
Council for the Advancement of Muslim Professionals, Chicago	Green Muslims	Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom
Council for the Advancement of Muslim Professionals, National	GreenMasjid Project (by ISNA)	South Asian Journalists Association
Council on American-Islamic Relations	HEART Women & Girls	Speak Up! Listen Up! Campaign
DarkMatter Digital Media	Helping Hand for Relief and Development	St. Mary's College
Daybreak Press Global Bookstore	Humanitarian Day USA and Internationally	Sundance Film Festival
DRUM - South Asian Organizing Center	ILM Foundation	Ta'Leef Collective
Islamic Society of North America	Impact Southern California	Texas Impact: People of Faith Working for Justice
LA Voice	Inner City Muslim Action Network	UDiON Foundation.
Legal Aid Society	Institute for Diversity & Civic Life	University of Michigan Course
Los Angeles Attorney's Office of Dispute Resolution	Institute for Social Policy and Understanding	US State Department Reception in Honor of Eid al-Adha
Los Angeles Police Department	Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace	World Parliament of Religions Conference
Many Languages One Voice	Interfaith Dialogues: The Beloved Community	Youth Coalition of South Florida
Masjid AnNur Islamic Center of Sacramento	IQRA Bilingual Academy	Zaman International
Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion	Iranian American Muslim Association of North America	Zawiya Perspective
Mobile Loaves & Fishes	Islah: LA	Zaytuna College
Mount Holyoke University	Islamic Center of Conejo Valley	
Muslim Aid		
Muslim Leadership Initiative		

OUTCOMES

Broader Impact

When asked to name organizations that are similar to AMCLI, most echoed the sentiments of this alumnus from a regional cohort who said, “I don’t know of any organizations like AMCLI—it’s a truly unique and innovative program.” Other respondents mentioned the following programs, in which they haven taken part or have heard about:

Capacity building networks

Bend the Arc’s Community Organizing Residency and Selah Leadership Program
The Concordia Forum
Council for the Advancement of Muslim Professionals
Harvard Center for Public Leadership Fellows
Islah LA’s Next Steps Fellowship
Jewish Organizing Institute
Muslim Public Affairs Council Young Leaders Summits
Muslim Public Service Network
Jewish Organizing Institute and Network for Justice’s Jewish Organizing Fellowship
New Ground: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change
New Leaders Council
Studio/E
Ta’leef Collective’s Mu’allif Mentorship Program
The Truman Security Fellowship

Leadership training programs

The Auburn Theological Seminary’s Trainings
The Coro Fellows Program
Rockwood Leadership Institute

Community organizing and advocacy organizations

American Society for Muslim Advancement
Council on American-Islamic Relations
ILM Foundation
Iranian American Muslim Association of North America

Geographically specific leadership development programs offered by Chambers of Commerce

Leadership: Dallas, Jacksonville, and Plano

Moving Forward

When asked to prioritize how they would like to see AMCLI move forward, the majority of respondents asserted their interest in a focus on networking and capacity building on issue-specific work. They also hoped that AMCLI would help to facilitate more collaboration across cohorts. Their lowest priority was to continue to enlarge the network. Respondents'

investment in the future of AMCLI was illustrated by the numerous thoughtful suggestions they articulated about how they would like to see AMCLI move forward. Alumni offered the following ideas for additional ways to enhance the power of the network and increase the capacity of individual alumni:

Develop more intentional ways for alumni to connect:

- Organize gatherings around specific sectors or issues of common concern
- Host formal and informal opportunities to connect by geographic location
- Develop a stronger virtual presence
- Offer webinars that could benefit those in more isolated communities
- Create more opportunities for networking, conversations, mentorships
- Utilize online platforms to foster more substantive collaboration beyond email
- Utilize a knowledge management platform to share resources
- Plan online meet-ups focused around particular topics
- Create a website where alumni can inform others about their work
- Develop opportunities for alumni to learn from established leaders
- Create opportunities for alumni to learn from one another
- Host think tanks for alumni
- Facilitate discussions in major cities
- Create a safe space to engage in discussions or strategizing about the civic issues that are a source of misunderstanding or disagreement among the American Muslim community.
- Make AMCLI a place for trying out tools and strategies for dealing with communal issues
- Give alumni access to city-specific alumni contact information
- Create an incubator for social enterprises
- Create a train-the-trainers program to enable alumni to empower their own communities and organizations

Engage alumni around specific issues, like:

- Changing the Muslim American narrative/messaging
- Pastoral care
- Mental health
- Policy/advocacy
- Electoral work
- Policies aimed at the Muslim community

To continue to build leadership capacity among alumni, provide trainings on:

- Speaking, presence
- Visioning
- Strategic planning
- Fundraising
- Governance
- Media/communications
- Political activism
- Career development
- Racial and gender equity
- Policy advocacy
- Internet privacy and etiquette

Offer alumni opportunities for coaching from consultants and AMCLI staff members:

- Bring back personal development funds

Moving Forward

While continuing to grow the AMCLI networks was the lowest priority among respondents, several asserted how they would like to see the network expanded. Respondents suggested:

Engaging more leaders from Shi'a, African American, Latino, Arab, Indo-Pakistani communities

Including more diversity in terms of political views and socio-economic statuses

Including leaders from financial sectors, entrepreneurs, venture capitalism and technology

Shaping the leadership training to be more inclusive of the professional development needs of entrepreneurs and policy professionals

Including more Muslim men in the planning process

Other respondents offered suggestions for expanding the impact of AMCLI. They recommended creating more visibility about the benefits and value of AMCLI and collaborating with organizations that align with AMCLI's approach and/or mission.

A couple of respondents asserted that AMCLI and the American Muslim community could benefit from information gathering. An alumna from a regional cohort said:



I would like to see AMCLI make time to study various Muslim communities around the United States that have created excellent models of community life. (i.e. healthy spaces of worship for men, women, and children; successful private schools/home schooling models, successful non-profit/businesses and economic practices, etc.) It would be an incredible resource for leaders in the American Muslim community.



Moving Forward

When considering the future of AMCLI, an alumnus from a national cohort offered this observation:



AMCLI should stay community centered in terms of data gathering. Time are changing. The landscape today is much different than it was when AMCLI was birthed, so I think it's time for another in-depth census of what are the main trends, needs, challenges and success within the Muslim community today. This in-depth study should be from general Muslim members of communities, workers in these communities and Muslims who are unaffiliated with any group or Mosque. It would be a great tool for leaders to study and use to develop programs. The results, I hope will keep AMCLI relevant and strategic in the future.

A few alumni (who participated in both regional and national cohorts) offered the following critiques of AMCLI, which could prove to be useful as AMCLI stakeholders consider how to move forward:

AMCLI has become a club or clique... I need professional relationships ... This whole fAMCLI thing has gone overboard.

The network is impermeable to negative feedback, which it needs for even higher quality growth.

AMCLI has produced a sense of elitism among several participants and connected some American Muslims engaged in respectability politics, which amplified their voices.

Much of the AMCLI community and initiatives tend to skew left, and my work doesn't fit that worldview all the time, so in some sense the experience has increased my sense of isolation.



Concluding Thoughts

This evaluation has clearly shown the powerful and diverse ways that participating in AMCLI has affected alumni's professional and personal lives. As many as eight years later, alumni continue to benefit from participating in the Fellowship. The experience was positive for almost every respondent, inspiring for most, and life changing for some.

Alumni from both national and regional cohorts reported numerous changes to their skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. They acquired leadership skills and gained social emotional understanding. They have extensively utilized these lessons: alumni mentioned more than 100 organizations where they have applied something they learned.

AMCLI broadened respondents' thinking about what being Muslim, a leader, and a Muslim leader means to them and expanded their understanding of the American Muslim communal landscape. AMCLI has affected respondents' decision-making processes and influenced their career trajectories. There is a strong tendency among respondents to remain engaged as leaders: just eight are no longer working on Muslim causes. More than half said participating in AMCLI renewed their motivation to stay involved and agreed that AMCLI has opened doors for them.

Alumni are proud to be a part of the AMCLI network. They feel a strong sense of connection to one another, and an increased sense of connection with the American Muslim community. Respondents from across cohorts value their relationships with alumni and continue to actively cultivate those relationships. Their investment in the future of AMCLI was illustrated by the numerous thoughtful suggestions they articulated about how they would like to see the organization move forward.

These findings illustrate the many ways in which AMCLI is successfully achieving the goals of equipping emerging leaders with practical skills and creating a network of civic leaders. The ubiquity and variety of positive outcomes, coupled with alumni's passionate interest in continuing their involvement bodes well for AMCLI's future. The following issues for consideration are offered to guide the development of AMCLI moving forward.

Concluding Thoughts

When developing the next phase of AMCLI, consider:

Continuing to expand the network by engaging additional leaders in AMCLI regional and/or national cohorts.

Creating and implementing additional avenues to foster the development of projects, partnerships and resources.

Heeding the resounding call from respondents to offer additional capacity and relationship building among current alumni.

Supporting alumni in the creation of action committees, which could foster a culture of empowered peer-driven leadership while enhancing the impact of the network.

Engaging in a listening campaign or community study to identify current leadership needs and human capital gaps, which could be used to inform AMCLI's work moving forward.

Forming an advisory committee or board that can support an organizational strategic planning process.

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