

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Beloved Readers,

We welcome you, to this, our first edition of the new calendar year, 2009. We continue to experience the great excitement we communicated at the time of the printing of the November, 2008 edition, as we awaited the Inauguration of our 44th President of the United States of America: Barack Hussein Obama. That historic day came on January 20, 2009 and with joy and gratitude to Allah, we wish President Obama, his family and staff the very best and continue to keep him in our du'as (supplications).

Sisters United was also blessed this part quarter to host international visitors from the Country, Macedonia. They included: a teacher from the Theological School Isa Beu, a professor and a lecturer, both from the faculty of the Orthodox Seminary, St. Clement of Ohrid, an Executive Director, Civil Society Research Center (CSRC) and a legal advisor, representing Helsinki Committee for Human Rights. Macedonia, like the United States of America, is a country of citizens representing great diversity in religion and ethnicity. As our Macedonian visitors continue their work to increase interfaith understanding and foster stronger interfaith relationships, they were very interested in learning how Sisters United has forged and sustained these relationships in the spirit of inclusion, cooperation and mutual regard. Praise be to G-d, we took great pride sharing our rich experience our interfaith endeavors in this great city as well as our inspiring personal stories of those who were born into the faith and those who converted to a Al Islam from other faiths and how both experiences

foster a deep regard for those of diverse faith traditions. We all thoroughly enjoyed this visit and the expanded understandings that are always born out of interacting in a cooperative, hospitable environment, filled with good food and open and sincere sharing with our brothers and sisters of faith representing another important and unique part of our *world community!*

Again, dear readers, we invite your prayers and support as we began, in February, 2009, our twelfth consecutive year of service for the pleasure of Allah, Most High. We pray for His continued blessings and guidance and mercy. We also thank you sincerely for your prayers and for your support: past present and future, insha'Allah!

.....**Khayriyyah Hanan Faiz**

The National Day of Service: Our Feeding Program

On January 19, 2009, the nation honored the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man whose tireless quest for equality and justice helped to make possible, on January 20, 2009, the inauguration of the first African American as president of the United States. That day was meant to be a day of national service, a day when our nation emulated Dr. King's sacrifice and service to others to improve the quality of life for all. It was in that spirit that President Barack Obama called all Americans to engage in community service that would help to improve life for others. We are pleased to know that our weekly feeding program is right in keeping with this call and ideal. We have created a culture of service by continuing to extend our reach to the homeless and hungry, making sure that they are fed a nutritious, balanced, and hot meal each Sunday of the month, come rain or shine. This service has, and is, continuing to improve the lives of those who, otherwise, might go without food for days at a time. Our feeding program is one of our Organization's most important programs. We are so grateful for all of our members, volunteers and contributors who have committed to this service and help us to maintain its integrity. In this, our first issue of 2009, we would like to share with you some of the highlights of our 2008 feeding efforts:

- Increased volunteers. We now have approximately 50 volunteers who assist weekly;
- Increased donations received from our supporters;
- Weekly “Dough-nations” of fresh baked breads and pastries from Panera Bread to feed to the homeless;
- Increased male support with our feedings to help provide hospitality and a secure environment for all;
- Received an official permit from the City of Atlanta, legalizing our presence on the street where we serve;
- Continuation of distribution of our hygiene packets on the last Sunday of each month;
- Showing appreciation to our volunteers for the 3rd year in a row at our Al-Ma’un Awards Program;
- Received a Certificate of Excellence for our commitment to Volunteer Service, from the Edgewood House, one of our two feeding sites where we feed every fourth Sunday;
- Our president, Sis. Khayriyyah Faiz, has begun negotiations with the Mayor's Office to have an indoor venue to feed the hungry and homeless.

The year 2008 brought for us many blessings and opportunities for our feeding program. In 2009, we seek to add one more feeding site equipped with a full team of members and volunteers. We also plan to extend our reach in other ways that will help to improve the lives of our homeless population.

We pray for Allah's continued blessings upon our humble efforts, as we continue to strive for His pleasure.



SUIHS, INC. Annual Meeting Highlights

On Saturday, February 7, 2009, Sisters United In Human Service, Inc. members convened for the 11th consecutive year to reflect on our *Service Year, 2008* and review goals and objectives for *Service Year, 2009*. This important meeting, required by the organization’s Bylaws, is always an inspiring and exhilarating gathering, affording members the opportunity to hear the *State of the Organization Address* by our beloved President. This address highlights our achievements for the year and focuses us on our opportunities for growth and improvement, as well as, for the pleasure of Allah, (SWT) for the new service year. During the course of this full day meeting, all SUIHS Committees had opportunities to do just that. It was very inspiring for members to witness the good works of these Committees: Economic

Development, Education & Research, Health & Human Service, Membership, Public Relations and Welcome & Hospitality that have been sustained and enhanced over time. It was equally inspiring to take the time to offer and receive input and shura on the focus of these Committees and for our Organization in Service Year 2009. Our Holy Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) reminds us that whenever a Muslim endeavors to do a thing, he/she seeks to perfect it. We take that counsel very seriously, al hamdulillah, and were thus left inspired to continue to do just that!

Another highlight of this important meeting was the installation of our 2009 Board of Directors: Sisters Majeedah Ali, Khayriyyah H. Faiz, Marjorie Karim, Kim Mujahid, Deborah Najee-ullah and Shahidah R. Sharif. This activity was skillfully facilitated by SUIHS, Inc. Associate Member, Dr. Zaheerah Shakir-Khan, who involved everyone present in this special Ceremony, using as her theme: “Change, Construct, Connect and Celebrate”. Sis Zaheerah’s words were not only powerfully appropriate for installing our newly-elected BOD, they were renewing, as well, for our participating members. We were reminded of how our membership as well as our personal leadership and commitment levels must also reflect the important need for change, constructing/building (on the past and for the future of our organization), connecting (with our leaders, with each other and collaboratively with others of faith and good will) and celebrating our personal and organizational growth and successes. This important meeting launched us on our twelfth year journey in a spirit of gratitude and commitment to serve - for the Pleasure of Allah (Most High) - for another exciting year to come,

AIB TELEVISION PROGRAM

Once again, we are very proud to announce that our television program, “Faith and Good Works” has entered into continued production at Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters (AIB), Comcast Channel 295. Please tune in to watch these most informative and enlightening discussions: **March 9**-Law and Islam, The Importance of Education in Islam Part 1; **April 13**-The Importance of Education in Islam Part 2, Islamic Diversity; **May 11**-Islam Promotes Peace Not Violence, Islamic Faith and Decision Making: Shuura Baynahum.

Healthful Hints

*Did you know?.... Studies have shown that the **calcium** in low-fat dairy products (Such as cheese, yogurt and milk) helps to promote weight loss. In fact, these studies showed that those who ate diets rich in dairy were losing weight with twice the efficacy as those who weren't! The **calcium** works by helping to increase the breakdown of fat in fat cells, so grab a glass of milk (lowfat, skim, whole) and watch the pounds melt away!*

UPCOMING EVENTS!

February 21-May 16, 2009 -Rites of Unthaa Program

May 23, 2009-Rites of Unthaa Celebration

October 9-October 10, 2009-12th Annual Interfaith Health Conference

Your Contributions Are Needed and Appreciated

Your help is needed to help us continue this very important work! If you would like to provide financial assistance in support of our efforts, you can do so online or you can mail your tax-deductible donation to: P.O. Box 360893, Decatur, Georgia 30036. You can also visit **Good Search** to search for information and enter Sisters United as the beneficiary. Invite your family and friends to do the same. Each search benefits us in small, but important ways! If you are interested in supporting the works of SUIHS, Inc. in other ways, please contact us at (770) 465-2995 or at www.sistersunited.org. Newsletter Layout and Editor, Na'dira Abdullah; Newsletter Logo, Sis. Akanke Abdul-Khaalq; Contributing Writers, SUIHS, Inc. Members