

JAMAAT -- Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together

MISSION STATEMENT

JAMAAT – Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together -- is an organization composed of grass roots Jews, Muslims and Allies based in the Washington DC Metro area engaged in social action, advocacy, and interfaith dialogue. JAMAAT's credo is "*Building Unity, Countering Hate, Enhancing Partnerships, Promoting Social Action.*" We believe it is a moral imperative for Muslims and Jews to support one another and build ties of communication and cooperation, cultivate closer relationships born of understanding and respect for one another, and work together to make the world a better place.

ABOUT US

JAMAAT came into being as the result of a decision reached by the 3rd Annual Summit of Washington Area Imams and Rabbis in 2016 to create an ongoing grassroots organization to promote Muslim-Jewish activism in Greater Washington.

We believed then, as we do today, that at a time when democracy and pluralism are under sustained attack in America, it is vital that our two communities--together with fellow Americans of conscience of all backgrounds--stand up for each other whenever Muslims, Jews or members of any community are victimized by hate crimes or incitement. And when we see opportunities that present themselves for productive action to protect human rights and dignity in the DC area, nationally and around the world, we have stood up and gotten directly involved.

JAMAAT has a Board of Directors, currently consisting of seven members, as well as a Rapid Response Committee which prepares statements on issues of concern to our respective communities, internationally, nationally and here in the Washington metropolitan area.

OUR WORK

Among the activities we have organized over the past few years:

- We hold two to three JAMAAT General Assemblies each year, bringing together long-standing and first-time participants to discuss issues of significance affecting Muslims and Jews, and allies.
- JAMAAT has organized social service and educational events. Our social service initiatives have included feeding hungry and homeless people in the D.C. metro area and abroad, as well as supporting emergency health care initiatives for Palestinians in Israel, and we are about to get to work to support incoming Afghan refugees.
- We have sponsored community discussions on books related to our mission like *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson and *We Refuse To Be Enemies* by Sabeeha Rehman and Walter Ruby.

- We have visited the offices of congresspeople to share our concerns about the grave dangers of climate change and have taken part in hands on environmental initiatives such as removing plastics and other trash from public parks.
- JAMAAT has participated in major rallies in Washington on behalf of the rights of immigrants and in opposition to family separation, and in support of gun reform and voting rights.
- JAMAAT has advocated on the Hill and in the media in favor of fair and inclusive immigration practices and on condemnation of Islamophobia and antisemitism in appropriate but not pretextual circumstances.
- We have spoken out at demonstrations and in statements against human rights violations around the world and in support of political prisoners.
- We have organized public vigils to declare our solidarity with and love for each other as Jews, Muslims and Allies at moments of armed conflict in Israel and Palestine.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

While many participants in JAMAAT are members of Washington area synagogues and mosques, they take part in JAMAAT activities as individuals, rather than as representatives of their congregations. Our belief is that Muslim-Jewish relations is too important to be left exclusively either to the imams and rabbis or organizational leaders. Grass roots individuals need to get involved to build a network of personal ties to bring our communities closer together.

We believe that if we empower ourselves by reaching out to each other and working together, we can make a positive difference for our respective faith communities, as well as for the Greater Washington, American, and global communities in which we live side by side.