

The Young Muslim American Voices Project

The Young Muslim American Voices Project increases public awareness of Muslim-American communities' vibrancy and diversity and their engagement in and contributions to our nation. The project pushes back against anti-Muslim hate rhetoric and helps to strengthen young Muslim-American leaders in their civic involvement. It is made possible by a generous grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

Young Muslim American Voices Roundtable

The Faith and Progressive Policy Initiative convened 15 young Muslim-American leaders at the Center for American Progress for a roundtable event last November. The day-long meeting addressed the challenges and opportunities these leaders face, and it explored ways to strengthen their work. The participants were selected from an in-depth interview process, and they came from across the country and from various professional fields. They were lawyers, youth workers, environmentalists, playwrights, musicians, college chaplains, bloggers, entrepreneurs, media consultants, civic activists, community organizers, poets, and venture capitalists. Participants met with CAP policy experts and several Capitol Hill staffers to share information and brainstorm ideas on issues such as health care, international rights and responsibilities, the Middle East, and blogging and communication.

Highlighting Muslim-American civic involvement



The Young Muslim American Voices Project has produced a series of interviews with our 2009 roundtable participants and Senior Policy Advisor Sally Steenland to illuminate the gap between public perceptions of Muslim Americans and the reality of their lives. From grassroots organizing in Chicago around urban food deserts and community health services, to advocating environmental change, to increasing Muslim-American voices in mainstream media, to strengthening Muslim-American participation in the 2010 Census, these leaders are inspired by their faith and patriotism to better their communities and their nation.

Multimedia

The Faith and Progressive Policy team also produced “Coming of Age in a Post 9-11 World,” a video capturing our roundtable participants’ views as they define their identity, faith, and civil participation. The video was featured in *The Washington Post*.



“Muslim Americans and the Quest for a More Perfect Union,” another short video produced by Jamiah Adams, captures the Muslim-American community’s history and diversity. It shows that Muslim Americans have been contributors to this country since before we were a nation.

These videos were widely promoted to Muslim-American, interfaith, and civil rights organizations as well as other groups across the country. They were also disseminated through social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook

and posted on websites and blogs. Through @YngMuslimAmer on Twitter, the project continues to amplify the roundtable participants’ voices and other Muslim-American organizers, artists, writers, and more. This social media format allows the Young Muslim American Voices Project to stay continually in contact with Muslim-American organizations and government agencies.



Policy events

The Faith and Progressive Policy team, with CAP’s National Security team and the National Security Network, co-hosted a panel event in July, “Strengthening America’s Security,” to address the identification, prevention, and response to domestic terrorism. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN) gave the keynote address, emphasizing the key role Muslim Americans play in fighting terrorism at home. A panel of policy experts, administration representatives, law enforcement officials, and Muslim-American leaders then discussed why it’s important to build community partnerships and strengthen communication among law enforcement agencies and Muslim-American communities.

Moving forward

The Young Muslim American Voices Project will expand its work in the coming year, bringing together young Muslim-American leaders on selected policy issues, connecting them with CAP policy experts, and highlighting their work. The project will also continue its focus on national security issues as well as civil liberties and the media.

For more information on the Young Muslim American Voices Project please visit: www.americanprogress.org/faith/yma. You can also follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/YngMuslimAmer](https://twitter.com/YngMuslimAmer)

The Faith and Progressive Policy Initiative of the Center for American Progress works to identify and articulate the moral, ethical, and spiritual values underpinning policy issues, while also working to safeguard the separation of church and state and promote a society and government that strengthens the common good and respects the basic dignity of all people.