

As-Salaamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah - Peace and Blessings be with all of you!

I'm very delighted to announce the Harvard Ramadan Program, hosted by the Muslim Chaplain's Office. The Harvard Ramadan Program will consist of nightly prayers, fast breaking along with an Iftar dinner, and Taraweeh Prayers which are traditionally offered every night. My office has been working to develop Ramadan Programming that will unify all the Muslim students on campus during the month of Ramadan and provide a unified location for Iftar dinners and Taraweeh Prayer for the Harvard Muslim community. To accomplish this, my Office has formed the first ever Ramadan Committee, comprising not only myself, but also Muslim student leaders from all over the campus. The Ramadan Committee members are: Sahar Omer and Laila Taqeer of the Harvard Islamic Society of Harvard College; Ammar Waraich and Abdulhakeem Buhari of the Harvard Kennedy School; Hamzah Raza of the Harvard Divinity School; Badar Dar and Doha Tantawy of Harvard Business School; Majid Waheed of Harvard Law School; Abeela Latif of Harvard School of Education; Mohamed Gabir of the Harvard Medical School/Longwood Campus; and the newly appointed Harvard Muslim Chaplain, my amazing wife, Samia Omar.

This year my office, through the Ramadan Committee, will inaugurate the first Harvard Ramadan Program of its kind on campus that will lead the way for future, consistent spiritual programming that seeks to strengthen our communal bonds and unify our Muslim community at Harvard. I want to express my thanks to the members of the Ramadan Committee for their dedication and work in helping to make the Harvard Ramadan Program a reality for our community.

The Ramadan Program at Harvard for this year will begin the night of Monday May 6th and continue every night through Monday May 20th. After May 20th, Iftar dinners along with an after-dinner bagged meal for *suhur*, will be provided in the Adam's House dining hall to the Muslim seniors of the College who are participating in Ramadan, from May 20th until May 25th. After May 25th, there will be no Ramadan Programming offered due to the lack of space available on campus. My office is working very hard to secure a location for an Iftar dinner on Commencement Night, Thursday May 30th for graduating seniors and their families, just like last year. We will provide an update on this later after a suitable location is procured. Insha-Allah next year, we will have Ramadan Programming for all 29/30 nights of Ramadan.

For the first night of Ramadan, the Ramadan Programming will be Monday May 6th. The Iftar dinner on that night will be fully sponsored by the Harvard Office of the Arts. On that night, the Iftar dinner and the prayers, including Taraweeh Prayer, will be at the Office of the Arts building, located at 74 Mt. Auburn Street. Jack Megan, director of the Harvard Office of the Arts, has graciously requested to host our community in entire building on the first night.

On the second night of Ramadan, Tuesday, May 7th, the Ramadan Programming will be hosted in the Student Organization Center at Hilles (SOCH) located at 59 Shephard Street. On that night, our Iftar dinner will be sponsored by Professor Ousmane Kane and the Islam in Africa

Series. On that evening, one hour before iftar, Professor Kane will deliver a lecture at the SOCH, followed by fast breaking, prayer and dinner.

For the remaining nights, Wednesday May 8 to Monday May 20th, the iftar dinners will be sponsored by various persons and the Ramadan Programming will take place in Lowell Lecture Hall, the exact same place as the Friday Prayer (Jumua) service. The University has been gracious enough to provide a special exemption to our community and will allow us to eat dinner inside Lowell Lecture Hall where we pray. Usually this is prohibited but an exemption is granted to us – and special thanks to the Registrar Mike Burke, and Katie O’Daire who is the Dean of Students of Harvard College, and Office of the President for making this happen.

We also would like to thank those who have already offered and signed up to sponsor Iftar dinners from our Harvard community. We are still looking for a few more sponsors to cover the remaining nights. If you yourself are interested or you know someone who may be interested in sponsoring an Iftar dinner, please contact me at: Khalil_abdur-rashid@harvard.edu

The Ramadan Program will take place every night from Monday May 6th to Monday May 20th and will consist of the following:

1. Fast breaking with water, milk, and dates
2. Maghrib Prayer
3. Buffet Dinner (different menu each night) followed by clean-up
4. Isha Prayer and Taraweeh Prayer

As mentioned early, after May 20th, there will be no Ramadan Programming this year on campus due to the unavailability of any location on or around campus during that time. We are working diligently from now to ensure that we secure a single location next year for the full month of Ramadan Programming on campus. We look forward to seeing you all this Ramadan on campus.

Khalil Abdur-Rashid
Muslim Chaplain at Harvard University