



# Third Trimester Report • 2020-2021

January 1 to April 31, 2021

Muslim Students' Association, University of Toronto - St. George



**muslimstudents'**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - ST. GEORGE | EST. 1965



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# Abstract

This report covers the events during the third trimester of the Muslim Students' Association (MSA) at the University of Toronto - St. George campus, which occurred from January 1st to April 30th, 2021.

The Orphan Sponsorship Program (OSP) is the longest-standing & focused initiative of the MSA, which gives the MSA a global reach & demonstrates the importance of charity, as envisaged in our glorious religion of Islam. The details about OSP's third trimester are captured separately in this report.

The third trimester is positioned with the winter semester at the University of Toronto. Given the ending of the academic year for students, this semester included the annual Farewell Dinner event allowing all members of the MSA to come together online for a wholesome two-day event. The MSA also launched two editions of The Muslim Voice Magazine this trimester, each accompanied by their own launch event.

Two of the most important events held this trimester were the MSA Elections Forum & the Annual General Meeting. This year's elections featured the highest voter turnout in seven years, which enabled the MSA to make the seven changes to its constitution that were proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

All events hosted by the MSA this trimester were executed virtually via Zoom. However, regardless of the limitations brought upon by the online experience, the MSA was able to successfully hold 32 events that allowed the community to come together & support each other during these difficult times.

All events & activities of the trimester are outlined in greater detail in this report.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Let it Snow: Don't Let the Hunger Grow

Jan 11 - 15

This Winter Food Drive focused on providing solutions to an ongoing problem that many low-income Muslim families in the Greater Toronto Area face: the lack of availability of accessible & affordable halal food. Through this Winter Food Drive, we aimed to spread awareness on this social issue & collect donations as a form of Sadaqa, which is one of the 5 pillars of Islam, & allow Muslims to be able to donate with the intention of pleasing Allah (SWT). In total, this initiative managed to raise \$400 & all proceeds were donated to Muslim Welfare Canada.

### Best of People: Umar RA

Jan 15

This event in the Best of People series was presented by Dr. Bano Murtuja. We explored the life of the beloved Umar (RA), in an effort to gather practical tips that our attendees can implement in their own lives. Grounded in the Seerah, our attendees learned from his example of standing tall in the face of adversity and his attributes that made him from amongst the most beloved to Allah and His Messenger (SAW). The event has garnered over 380 views on our Facebook page.

### Muslim Empowerment in the Workplace

Jan 18

This town hall discussed the challenges that Muslims face within the workplace. Our goal was to provide a space for the Muslim community to interact with Muslim professionals who are prospering in our society. We hope to inspire the Muslim youth to work towards achieving their goals despite any struggles. This event was planned in collaboration with Muslim Iranian Association, Thaqalayn Muslim Association at UTSC, MAC Toronto, Imam Mahdi Youth and the Multi-Faith Centre



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### She's Malcolm X

Feb 2

This event focused on the often ignored history of Black Muslim women & their contributions to social change. Most importantly, the event highlighted the critical role that Black Muslim women played in the life of Malcolm X. The event was a panel discussion between Mustafa Briggs, artist Rania El Mugammar & Ikran Jama. It was held in collaboration with Multi-Faith Centre, Hart House, Black Students Association, & Centre for Student Engagement, & was attended by over 100 people.

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### Archive of the Forgotten

Feb 6

In collaboration with the University of Ottawa MSA, we invited Imam Yasin Dwyer to talk to our communities about the stories, achievements, & contributions of prominent Black figures within our Islamic history & the world. Oftentimes, Black Muslims within our Islamic heritage are forgotten or unmentioned, which is why we wanted to focus on their contributions & history. The event was live-streamed on Facebook with over 550 views.

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### Destress Week

Feb 15 - 19

Destress Week was an opportunity for UofT students to get a break from their exhausting midterm season. Throughout this week, our aim was to help students relax & destress themselves. We realise how important one's mental health & wellbeing is during the hardest time in the semester, & we organized our events with this in mind. We hoped to create a fun & welcoming atmosphere for the Muslim community on campus through a diverse range of Programmings, including a Paint Night, a Games Night, a Netflix Party, Sisters' Baking Night & Brothers' Among Us.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Story of Mansa Musa

Feb 26

In common day, Mansa Musa's fortune is estimated to be \$131 billion dollars making him the richest man in the world. Mansa Musa, as the ruler of the Mali Empire from 1312-1337, made a lot of reforms & conquered many lands. During this event, our speaker Imam Yasin unpacked why Mansa Musa is an important figure to know about, not only within the Islamic realm, but the entire world. The event was live-streamed on Facebook with over 400 views.

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### TMV Petite Launch

Feb

In February, The Muslim Voice Magazine published its second issue of the academic year, the Petite Edition. This edition has been published for a third consecutive year & is aimed towards younger Muslims, centered around fun stories & activities. This year, the Petite Edition focused on Ramadan & included stories about Imama Nana Asma'u, Prophet Ayub, a Ramadan lantern making guide, & trivia questions, among others. The TMV team also collaborated with two Islamic Schools in the GTA and facilitated virtual launch events with their classrooms and distributed the physical copies to each student. The TMV team also organized & facilitated a workshop with a grade 7/8 classroom to help them through the publishing & magazine-making process for a new class project they had begun.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Islam Awareness Week

Mar 1 - 5

Islam Awareness Week is an annual event that aims to spread a positive understanding of Islam & tackle misunderstandings. This year the objective was to shed light on under-discussed topics, such as the Fiqh of Finance, & Islam and the Environment. The week concluded with an event held in collaboration with several other MSAs, focusing on the life of the Prophet (SAW). Leading up to the event, we worked with over a dozen MSAs to organize & deliver Care Packages to 400 students across Ontario, ensuring that despite the distance, they had access to essential resources like Qurans & prayer mats.

### Owning our Identity: Resilience in the Face of Hardship

Mar 8

This event was geared towards empowering Muslim youth with the tools & mindsets required to practice their religion & be confident in their faith while navigating through the social pressures of the world. As we lead our lives in a world filled with distractions & negative perceptions of the beautiful faith of Islam, we need to be mindful of our true purpose in the world & strengthen our connection with Allah. The session was lead by Imam Khalif Latif on how to confidently own our Muslim identity & currently has over 2000 views on our Facebook page.

### Root of the Problem

Mar 9

In collaboration with UTERN for EcoFest, this panel discussion explored if our current economic system; one that aspires for infinite growth in a finite world can exist with our need for sustainable growth. We were joined by former Environmental Commissioner of Ontario Dr. Diane Saxe, environment & religion lecturer Dr. Simon Appolloni, & PhD candidate Martin Sers. They discussed topics such as the value of economic growth, human responsibility & action to our current condition, & alternative economic systems each from their own expertise. The panel had an audience of 35 people.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Your Body as an Amaanah

Mar 10

As summer approaches, we know our brothers are looking for ways to get in shape. Hence, we invited guest speaker Muhammed Qandil, creator of Champion Method, who spoke about the importance of physical fitness in Islam & recognizing the duties that we have as Muslims to take care of our bodies—since they are ultimately our Amaanah.

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### Annual General Meeting

Mar 15

The MSA Annual General Meeting opened up the floor for the general membership to converse about the MSA's constitution & propose amendments. This became especially important following adjustments to university club guidelines. After the full 2-hour meeting, we landed on the final phrasing of all the proposed changes that would go up for election. With crucial changes that cover directorship management & financial reporting rules, we are very happy to say that we have passed all the proposed changes. This should open the doors for a great deal of opportunities for the coming years.

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### Muslims in Politics

Mar 17

The third and final Islamophobia townhall of the year, Muslims in Politics, hosted various influential Muslim politicians including MPs Iqra Khalid, Salma Zahid, and the Honourable Ahmed Hussien. They shared their experiences within the political sphere and how as Muslims we can advocate for ourselves. The goal of this event was to provide Muslims with the resources to overcome challenges and advocate for their community. This event was in collaboration with Muslim Iranian Association, Multi-Faith Centre, Imam Mahdi Youth, and Thaqalayn Muslim Association at UTSC.





# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Elections Forum

Mar 18

Kicking off the election season, the MSA hosted our election forum where candidates presented their platforms & answered questions. Essential for informed voting, the election forum provided a stage for all the candidates to speak about their candidacy. After a brief speech from each candidate, the floor opened for attendees to ask questions where they stressed concerns for the future & inquired about candidates' plans to deal with them. This forum, like the written candidate statements, was essential for making sure our voters could make informed decisions on their ballots, & guarantee that the MSA was placed in the most equipped hands in the coming year.

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### Annual General Meeting

Mar 20

The Muslim Women's Professionals Panel was held in collaboration with 11 other MSAs. It was an opportunity for the sisters on campus to hear from a spectacular group of women who are all in very different fields such as journalism, business, & psychotherapy. We got to hear from Ginella Massa, Wala'a Farahat, Sr. Maissam Ahmad, Nagham Azzam & Sudduf Wyne & how they specifically balance deen along with their personal lives in these different positions. The attendees were also able to ask them specific questions that they had towards the women as well.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Women to Watch: Muslim

### Women's Professionals

Mar 20

Held in collaboration with 11 MSAs, this event featured a spectacular group of women in different fields such as journalism, business, and psychotherapy. Our speakers, Ginella Massa, Wala'a Farahat, Sr Maissam Ahmad, Nagham Azzam, and Sudduf Wyne specifically discussed how they balance deen along with their personal lives in these different positions.

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### Beyond Words: Introduction to Deaf Culture and American Sign Language

Mar 22

A beautiful characteristic of Islam is its inclusion, diversity, & the importance of making spaces equitable for everyone. During the event, the Deaf Muslim of Canada Organization conducted an educational & interesting workshop on learning American Sign Language (ASL). This event is a first step towards equitable spaces & was organized in collaboration with McMaster MSA, OCADU MSA, University of Ottawa MSA, & Deaf Muslims of Canada. We also live-streamed the event on Facebook & it has over 500 views.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Best of People: Khadija RA Mar 23

As the first woman of Islam, the Mother of the Believers, & an esteemed and successful business woman, the life of Khadija (RA) offers countless lessons to learn from. She stood by the Prophet (SAW) & demonstrated unequivocal support for him & remained steadfast & patient in the face of adversity. Under the guidance of Dr. Bano Murtuja, our attendees gathered practical tips from the life of Khadija (RA) in an effort to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to emulate her beloved qualities. The event currently has over 230 views on our Facebook page.

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### The Sisters' Cultural Chat Mar 30

The last sisters' event of the semester proved to be a time to unwind & relax from studying or stressing about exams. We talked about several different topics about our cultures such as entertainment, clothing & childhood experiences that are linked to our culture & found some similarities within that.

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### Our Duty As An Ummah: Social Justice in the Quran and the Hadith Mar 31

We invited speaker Abdullah Oduro from the Yaqeen institute who discussed what the Quran & Hadith say about social justice & how we can advocate for our brothers & sisters around the world. This event catered to Muslims living in a time where a number of social issues are coming to light and the idea of "social justice" has become mainstream. This was an opportunity for our attendees to recognize their duty, as Muslims, in getting involved and helping those in need within our community & around the world. The event was live streamed on Facebook & has over 150 views.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Digging Deeper

Apr 1

With Ramadan approaching, this event sought to provide Muslim students with an Islamic reminder on environmentalism. This is a time when waste in Muslim households is at its peak and by sharing knowledge on Islamic environmental principles it can provide Muslim students with a deeper meaning and motivation to live sustainably. We were joined by Brother Fazlun Khalid who shared his insight on how the Quran is inherently environmental. He also shared four principles in the Quran that communicate the environmental message by looking at the limits to the human condition. The event has 100 views on Facebook.

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### Masalaama: Farewell Dinner 2021

Apr 4-5

Masalaama 2021 was an opportunity for participants to enjoy a two day event that allowed students to rekindle friendships and joy before a stressful exam season. Attendees were grouped into houses that competed against each other in friendly competition to win a series of prizes over the two days - giving everyone the chance to enjoy some activities while meeting other members of the MSA. This was a collaboration with the OSP, who hosted a fundraiser over the course of the two days.

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### A Discussion About Faiths: MSA & P2C

Apr 9

In collaboration with the Power 2 Change Christian group, this event was held with the purpose of opening an inter-faith dialogue between the two groups. With Chaplains from both clubs present, the attendees were split into groups where they discussed various questions about their faiths and their relationships with their religion. The event stressed discussions about shared experiences and challenges, while highlighting similarities and differences between the faiths. When returning to the main room for a larger discussion, we discussed key questions including how people of faith can better work together when dealing with shared challenges.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Reclaiming Muslim Narratives:

#### TMV Issue #3 Launch Event

Apr 24

The Muslim Voice Magazine launched its third issue for the academic year with a panel event. We hosted best-selling author Jamil Jan Kochai & award-winning journalist & human rights advocate Amira Elghawaby. The panel discussion focused on themes of representation & storytelling. Along with the panel discussion, there was also an opportunity for members of the magazine to reflect on our past year & celebrate the publishing of our third issue titled "Petrichor." Event attendees in Canada had the opportunity to receive a mailed copy of the magazine. The entire panel was also broadcast to Facebook & has been viewed over 160 times.

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### Law School: The Muslim Experience

Apr 30

Law School can seem like a daunting experience, and the lack of Muslim representation can further this narrative. This information session was an opportunity to learn about the experiences of four Muslim law students in the field. The panel included law students from University of Western Ontario, University of Ottawa, York University and the University of Toronto. Attendees had the opportunity to ask a variety of questions about the LSAT, application process and perspectives, and were encouraged by the panelists to pursue the career of law, as a worthy pathway for young Muslims.



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Make an Eid card for Syrian Newcomer Families - Free Art Workshop

Apr 30

This Eid Card Art Party was an event in collaboration with the University of Toronto Students' Union Student Refugee Program: Community Connections Team. It was an online lead art workshop featuring Farid Abdulbaki, a Syrian painter, sculptor & ceramicist. Attendees were invited to follow Abdulbaki's work by using water paint & any other art supplies of their choosing to design Eid cards. These cards will be shared with Syrian newcomer families in Toronto & the GTA. During the event attendees were able to ask Abdulbaki questions & engage with his work & experience.

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### Ramadan Reminders

weekly during Ramadan

Throughout the month of Ramadan, the MSA organized short, pre-recorded reminders to increase sources of reflection. Each week, the reminders focused on a characteristic embodied by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and how to implement that characteristic in our lives.

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### Shama'il Muhammadiya

weekly every Sunday

Following the sunnah of the Prophet (S.A.W.) is guaranteed to bring success in this life & in the hereafter. Therefore, we must dedicate time to learning about every detail of the sunnah so that we may imitate & follow. Shama'il Muhammadiya, or the Sublime Qualities of the Prophet (S.A.W.), is a weekly online halaqah that seeks to increase our understanding of the Prophet (S.A.W.) & the intricate details of his life including his appearance, his belongings, his manners, etc. Every Sunday, under the guidance of Shaykh Zacharia Al Khatib, we seek to increase our knowledge of our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) & thereby increase our love for him (S.A.W.).



# Events Held This Trimester

## 32 Events Held by the MSA

### Jumu'ah Gems

weekly every Friday

Jumu'ah is a weekly religious congregational prayer followed by a sermon (khutbah). It is held by the MSA every year since its establishment for all Muslims in the local community on Fridays to enjoy a greater spiritual connection with God. Like the previous 2 trimesters, we continued to provide our services online by streaming khutbahs on our Facebook page. The khutbahs are conducted by learned Muslims in our community to serve as reminders on how we should carry ourselves as Muslims in order to best serve our communities. The khutbahs are very popular & tend to garner approximately 150-200 views each.

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### The Mentorship Program

ongoing

The Mentorship program ran from January to April where students were paired with an upper year student or professional mentor to help guide them through their university & upcoming post-grad journey.

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### Humans of the Ummah at UofT

ongoing

Humans of the Ummah is an initiative that aims to discuss major crises & issues happening around the world in Muslim countries & to Muslim people. Overall, we want to create a sense of curiosity & proactivity among our fellow university students by cultivating an environment of both knowledge & action that allows them to be informed of what is happening outside of their social bubble. In the past 3 months, we have published numerous posts around Islamophobia happening in Canada & around the world, domestic abuse, as well as mental health within the Muslim community. This initiative was also recognized by Her Campus Magazine by them sharing the work that we do. Our posts regularly reach over 300 people with multiple reshares.



# Third Trimester Income Statement

Muslim Students' Association, University of Toronto - St George  
January 1 to April 31, 2021

## Revenues:

Heart Works Fund (Our Duty as an Ummah)	\$400.00
UTERN Funding (Root of the Problem)	\$250.00
* SIF Funding (TMV Launch Event)	\$1,352.57
UTSU Funding	\$2,607.94
Donations	\$100.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,835.51</b>

\* Denotes revenue approved but not yet received for an event held this trimester.





# Third Trimester Income Statement

## Expenses:

Our Duty As An Ummah	\$400.00
Owning our Identity	\$500.00
Islam Awareness Week	\$54.00
Beyond Words: Introduction to Deaf Culture & ASL	\$50.00
Root of the Problem	\$390.00
Digging Deeper	\$150.00
TMV Petite	\$731.31
Women's Panels Event	\$12.00
Masalaama: Farewell Dinner 2021	\$875.00
OSP Art for Action	\$49.32
TMV#3 Launch Event	\$1,352.57
Bank Fees	\$114.00
Paypal Service Fees	\$432.91
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,480.29</b>

Due to the restrictions in place because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the majority of our events were conducted online via Zoom. Thus, compared to previous years', our expenses for this trimester were much lower due to the lack of food and venue costs. The MSA was also very fortunate to have secured corporate sponsorships and on-campus grants for multiple events held this trimester which helped to cover bigger initiatives such as the TMV and Virtual Dinner. This substantially increased our revenue and when combined with the lower expenses, led to an overall lower net loss than the previous trimester and previous years'.

**Net Income (Loss)**

**\$(275.60)**



# OSP Events Held This Trimester

## 3 Events Held by the OSP

### Art for Action

Feb 23 - Mar 7

The Orphan Sponsorship Program hosted its very first art-themed charity silent auction. The gallery featured art by some of our community's most talented and socially-responsible artists who came together to create beautiful and unique pieces for this charity auction. The auction featured 13 art pieces, including calligraphy paintings, custom embroidered pieces, wooden art, and digital prints. The event attracted donors from both Canada and the United States. All the pieces featured in this gallery were especially constructed and donated to OSP. The event helped raise over \$800 for orphans.

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### Rise to the Challenge

Apr 4-12

The Orphan Sponsorship Program presented Rise to the Challenge online fundraiser as part of the MSA's Masalaama event. Rise to the Challenge aimed to raise \$1000 before the start of Ramadan. There were 3 tiers on the road to \$1000, each associated with a challenge. The OSP announced three silly and fun challenges that would be performed by different students each time a tier was met. The event helped raise \$600 for orphans and gave us the fun opportunity to inaugurate our 2021-22 MSA President, Fatima Mohammed, with a pie in the face, and to watch a specially curated carpool karaoke session with Omar and Mohammed M'Hiri.

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### Spirit of Giving: Ramadan Campaign

Apr 12 - May 12 \*

OSP's final campaign of the year was the annual "Spirit of Giving" Ramadan donation drive for 1442 A.H. The campaign took a multifaceted approach towards generating community engagement with regular social media posts coupled with outreach to existing OSP donors. Cumulatively, the campaign successfully raised over \$34,000 from 70 unique donors during Ramadan.

\* This campaign is the only reported initiative that continued beyond April 30, 2021. The financial statement on pg 19 only includes donations collected before May 1, 2021.



# OSP Third Trimester Income Statement

## Orphan Sponsorship Program

January 1 to April 31, 2021

### Revenues:

Art for Action	\$827.75
Rise to the Challenge	\$610.00
Spirit of Giving	\$9,307.11
Donations via PayPal	\$8,454.43
Donations via e-Transfer	\$3,260
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$22,459.29</b>

**Total Expenses \*** \$0

**Net Income (Profit)** \$22,459.29

\* As there were no scheduled payments to our affiliate charities during the time period covered in this report, there are no expenses recorded for the OSP this trimester.

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### Orphan Sponsorship Program (OSP):



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### The Muslim Voice Magazine (TMV):



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