

Candidate Information

As Salaam Alaikum,

In an effort to introduce yourself to the community, please provide your brief background and your plans.

JazakAllah Khair
Election 2018 Committee

Last Name *

Zafar

First and Middle Name *

Adnan Fareed

Position *

DIR, NORTH ZONE



Introduction *

Begin with some background information about yourself. Try to include some qualities that separate you from your opposition. Keep it positive and perhaps touch on some issues that are of concern to voters.

Assalamualaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatahu. My name is Adnan Zafar and I was nominated to run as the North Zone director. I'm a 38 year old native Houstonian, a dutiful son to a caring mother, a younger brother to one of my role models, a husband to a loving wife, and father of one precocious toddler, who grew up in a family that were dedicated volunteers to ISGH and the community at large. Having volunteered on many committees and served as an area representative in ISGH for many years at multiple Islamic centers in multiple zones, InshaAllah I wish to bring a diverse and level-headed perspective into the board. Getting to know and working with many people in the North Zone through my time at Masjid Al Salam has been a wonderful experience, and InshaAllah I can bring the same dedication to the community across the entire North Zone as zonal director.

Highest Level of Education *

- High School
- Bachelors
- Masters
- Doctorate

Area of Study *

Your major for degrees or certificates earned in an institution of higher learning. Mention the name and location of the Institution.

B.S. Electrical Engineering, Minor in Mathematics - Texas A&M University, College Station and
M.S. Electrical Engineering - North Carolina State University

Current Profession *

Job title, Job Description, if Retired Previous Profession

Engineering Technical Leader - Energy Storage Control Systems at General Electric. I provide technical leadership for the design and development of software and hardware that operate, control, and protect energy storage systems at power plants and in transmissions & distribution. These energy storage systems make further increases in renewable energy possible, and help make fossil fuel plants more economical with significantly less harmful environmental impacts. Prior to this role, I spent 13 years leading the development of control systems for various jet-engine based gas turbines for GE, from 25 to 120 MW class machines. I also spearheaded the control system development of the world's first hybrid electric gas turbine + battery energy storage system at two power plants in Los Angeles, winning numerous industry awards.

Formal Islamic Education *

Please briefly share any religious training you have received, such as graduate of an Islamic University or Madrassah, Hafiz Quran, Dars Nizami, Certificate in Arabic, Islamic Finance, or if you have studied under a known sheikh.

No formal Islamic education

Previous Leadership Experience *

What experiences in your personal, professional or political life have helped shape you and made you the person you are today? Discuss your titles, community and civic work, awards and other offices you've held. How do those experiences translate into being a better candidate for the position you are running? Don't just create a laundry list of accomplishments, but work your experience into a larger narrative. A little bit about you personally goes a long way. Voters want to know about you, but maybe not every detail of your life. Include both personal and professional content that helps provide a rounded idea of who you are.

I have a successful track record of delivering in high stress environments. My 14 years in GE have included multiple product launches of products I've lead development on, wherein I've traveled around the world with the first installations to ensure everything operates to the client's satisfaction and successfully enter commercial operation. These experiences have taught me how to work well with clients rather than becoming adversarial, and facilitate teams working together for mutually beneficial outcomes under time, resource, and budget constraints. Examples are launching a new gas turbine that powered the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, where I spent 3 months in the Krasnodar Krai province of Russia, and launching the world's first hybrid electric gas turbines in Los Angeles in 2017 in less than 9 months from start to completion.

I am open minded, level-headed, and work well with others. My volunteering as an area representative for 6 years have introduced me to a variety of people rich with diversity, from age and experience, to cultural backgrounds and professions. I have found that operating with mutual respect, removing the ego, and focusing on the ideas allows for much better collaboration.

I am goal and action oriented. My time with the councils at NW-SBIC, where I was the finance secretary, and at Masjid Al Salam, where I have spearheaded successful efforts such as automated livestreaming and the recent Ramadan membership + check-o-matic drives, are examples where I am able to leverage my professional track record of deconstructing problems and developing clear action plans to meet the goals of the Islamic centers and contribute concrete improvements to the community.

Goals *

Please list three most urgent issues you will tackle first if you are elected for your position

These are my short term goals, as the more impactful goals can only be developed and informed after having been elected and conferring with the ADs, principals, and councils who are most knowledgeable about their center's needs.

1. Tour the centers and meet with administration and community to find out their needs.
 2. Hold zonal conferences to share best practices across centers as a force multiplier for positive change.
 3. Make lasting positive changes to the services we provide.
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What do you want to accomplish? *

What do you want to accomplish during your time in office? Perhaps your goals can relate to previous accomplishments in your life. Use some examples if you can. Take a situation and how you handled it and use it as a template for this section.

This is a broad list of initiatives I would strive towards as the zonal director. I am under no illusion that the zonal director can accomplish these in a vacuum by themselves. The councils and local center administration are the treasured resources that do all of the hard work, and I would hope to help them and remove any barriers wherever possible.

I aim to move with deliberate speed once the areas for improvement and new ideas are suggested. I am open to pilot testing concepts (such as the ISGH Membership Discount Book) at individual centers and leveraging across the zone prior to advocating broader ISGH adoption, if possible.

1. Improving community engagement:

- Advocate for youth in the centers, across the zone, and in the board
- Implement changes (breakdown disincentives) to make the centers more welcoming for sisters
- Engage more professionals and young professionals as committee members on key initiatives (finance, membership, fundraising, youth) so each volunteer has a lower time commitment

2. Driving sustainable growth

- Share best practices in reducing operating costs across zones
- Leverage fundraising infrastructure and methodology across zones to lower the barrier to entry
- Share best practices in membership signups (e.g. ISGH Members Discount Book) across zones and across ISGH
- Raise monthly contributions to enable greater utility from Ramadan fundraising nights beyond operating expenses

3. Providing excellent services

- Understand the current community demographics to identify any gaps for potential offerings/improvements in serving the community
 - Leverage best practices and capabilities across centers where it can be done without overburdening the volunteers
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Final Thoughts *

End on a strong note. Finish your candidate biography with a strong statement about your purpose for running and what you hope to accomplish in the office you seek. Be inspirational and specific.

It is a common thing to hear our more experienced community members proclaim that we need the next generation to get engaged, take the reigns, and drive ISGH into the future. Those of the younger generations are eager to serve, and are willing to support candidates they've grown up with, but feel disenchanted by the politics they see. On the other hand, the generation before them are concerned that the next generation may not respect the established tenets of ISGH and see potential risk to the organization.

I have great respect for what generations before mine have accomplished and the tremendous effort and good they continue to do for the community. I am encouraged by those of my generation, and that after mine, that have become engaged and been a force for positive change in the community while also seeing limitless opportunity in their untapped potential.

InshaAllah, whether or not I am elected, I hope to use my knowledge and experience as a dedicated member and volunteer of ISGH, my collaborative approach to problem solving, and my strive to work for the sake of Allah, to bridge the gap between my generation, that before me, and that after me.

I have the utmost respect for Brothers Ayman Khalil and Syed Zabeehullah Beyabani, who impress me to no end with their drive, passion, and commitment to the community through their experience and roles with ISGH and other societies around the world. Both are fair minded and hard working volunteers who, InshaAllah, will make a tremendous positive impact to the community if they are elected. Regardless of the outcome, I hope we can all continue contributing to the community.

May Allah give us the purest of intentions, help us to serve the community, accept our efforts, and make it easy for us and our families. Ameen.

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