



MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

MIT Muslim Students' Association

Executive Report

Spring 2013

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2 INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of God, Most Merciful and Ever-Merciful,

The MIT Muslim Students' Association's Executive Committee (MSA EC) is pleased to present to you our Executive Report for the spring semester of 2013.

Alhamdulillah, the semester was a very fruitful and creative term for the Muslim Students' Association. From the very beginning of the semester, the MSA EC had grand expectations as Allah had blessed us with being the largest and most diverse executive committee in the past several years. The executive committee set out to advance the mission of the MSA:

To help campus Muslims in their practice of Islam and to non-intrusively provide a structure for self-improvement; to serve Muslims on campus by providing social outlets, academic opportunities, and spiritual growth, as well as outlets for intellectual exploration and Islamic learning; and to make Islam better understood by the MIT community and to promote understanding between Muslims and other faiths at MIT.

To do this, the MSA EC began by spelling out lofty, yet concrete goals for the organization. These goals were informed by actions taken by previous executive committees and events traditionally organized by the MSA, but very importantly, also indicated an enthusiasm to try new activities and address contemporary challenges, particularly by younger members of the executive committee.

The MSA EC identified both acute and chronic challenges faced by Muslims at MIT, including communication difficulties between the executive committee and the larger student body, lack of academic support for Muslim students at MIT, and even difficulty in raising awareness of local and global humanitarian crises, and then responded by developing solutions to these problems. These solutions were innovative and diverse – for example, the MSA produced a newsletter to replace some of the regular E-mails sent out to the general body; the MSA inaugurated an academic chair to assist Muslim students in intellectual pursuits; and the MSA responded to the Syrian refugee crisis with a large clothes drive, taking advantage of the end of the semester and raising awareness about the crisis among non-Muslim students.

While many of these efforts were successful, alhamdulillah, others were not, and suggested that the MSA EC pursue a different course of action. To help us focus future events and activities, we increased efforts to close the loop between the larger Muslim student body and the executive committee, for instance, by collecting extensive feedback at our largest event this semester, the Spring Dinner, which we had significantly altered from previous years.

The results from this semester's events and feedback from our student body have given the executive committee direction that we will use to shape decisions for the following semester, and, we hope, will also guide the efforts of future executive committees.

What follows is a summary of the activities that the MSA EC organized during the spring semester of 2013, and the people who organized them.

3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Executive committee members for spring 2013 are as follows:

- **PRESIDENT:** Abubakar Abid '15
- **VICE PRESIDENT:** AbdulAziz Alghunaim '15
- **TREASURER:** Abdullah Alsaeed '15
- **SECRETARY:** Maha Shady '16
- **CO-HISTORIANS:** Shadab Dawood* '15 Tamanna Islam Urmi* '16
- **PUBLICITY COORDINATOR:** Farah Attia '16
- **SOCIAL COORDINATORS:** Usman Ayyaz '16, Hajar Boughoula '16, Amna A Magzoub '16
- **LECTURE/EVENT COORDINATORS:** Noor Eddin Amer '16, Atif Javed '15
- **ALUMNI COORDINATOR:** Mohammed Alsobay '16
- **WEBMASTER:** Abdulrahman Alfozan '15
- **EXTERNAL RELATIONS OFFICER:** Kabir Abiose '15
- **DA'WAH COORDINATOR:** Wardah Inam 'G
- **ACADEMIC CHAIR:** Maha Shady '16
- **STUDY CIRCLE ORGANIZER:** Hiba Chaabi* '16, Noor Doukmak '14, Mohammed Ghassemi 'G
- **CO-MUSALLAH OFFICERS:** Noor Eddin Amer '16, Kabir Abiose '15
- **CHAPLAIN LIAISON:** Vacant
- **CO-COMMUNITY SERVICE COORDINATORS:** Fareeha Safir'12 Maryam Zekavat '15
- **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR:** Muneeza Patel '15
- **JOURNALISM SCOUT:** Rafa Rahman '16

This committee was elected by the MSA's general body on December 3rd 2012 for a one-year term until December 2013.

* Did not serve on the executive committee for the entirety of the semester

4 ACTIVITIES

Activities are listed in chronological order by start date

4.1 JUMU'AH PRAYERS

Scheduled Date: Every Friday throughout the year

Time: 1:25pm

Location: W11 Prayer Room + Large Dining Room for overflow

Planning: Musallah Officers

Summary: The MSA is dedicated to easing the life of Muslims on the MIT campus and facilitating the means of which they can become better Muslims. For that reason we have been committed to organizing Jumu'ah prayers on campus. With the help of the Muslim Chaplain, Imam Suheil, we set up a schedule of khateebis to come every week and give the khutba. We make sure that the overflow room is set up with prayer rugs and a speaker, after prayers we usually collect donations for various causes. Weekly more than 150 Muslims come to pray Jumu'ah at MIT.

4.2 ISLAMIC READING CIRCLE

Scheduled Date: Every Friday Jan-Apr

Time: 7pm

Planning: by the study circle chairs

Summary: A grad student, Mohammed Ghassemi, started a small summer discussion circle in the summer of 2012. Those discussions were among his friends and the word started to get out and more people joined them (even from off campus). As the fall term started, the group was interested in continuing the discussion so they booked a class room every Friday night and discussed different topics with a different person leading the discussion every week. Mohammed needed minimal support, if any, from the MSA to keep his circle going as all he needed was the thermos of tea he used to bring to people.

4.3 VOLUNTEERING EVENT (CANCELLED)

Reason: Originally planned as a monthly outing to a local charitable organization or volunteering service, the volunteering events were cancelled due to lack of interest.

4.4 ISLAMIC STUDY CIRCLE

Scheduled Date: Every Saturday Jan-May

Time: 3 - 4 PM

Planning: by the study circle chairs

Summary: Led by the study circle coordinators, every week, the discussion circle screened a video talk or discussion featuring a contemporary scholar, and would proceed to discuss it. Topics rotated, and covered both Qur'an and *seerah* (biography of the Prophet), as well as more contemporary topics. Attendance varied, usually between 4 and 6. The study circle coordinators required minimal support from the MSA, besides occasionally purchasing snacks to go along with the discussion.

4.5 BLOG

Scheduled Date: As deemed fit by the Journalism Scout

Planning: Journalism Scout

Summary: As a new initiative to increase the voice of the MSA and Muslims in the media, the MSA began featuring opinion pieces written by the journalism scout (though open to any Muslim student at MIT) about a variety of topics related to Muslim life in the United States and beyond. The blog posts were featured on the MSA website and Facebook page. This semester, two opinion pieces were written.

4.6 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Scheduled Date: Once every month

Planning: Journalism Scout

Summary: As a new initiative, the MSA started sending periodic newsletters to the subscribers of the mailing lists. The purpose of the newsletter is to collect all the useful information we want people to know about MSA's activities in one place that is easy to find. In addition to motivating organizers to finalize their events earlier for it to be included in the newsletter. Rafa Rahman, worked on designing the template of the newsletter (which we continued to use). The Journalism Scout sends a Google form to the EC asking them to fill in information about their events and provides a deadline. Then she compiles all that information in the template and sends it out to the mailing lists. This semester we sent out three issues of the newsletter.

4.7 ICE SKATING STUDY BREAK

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
Feb 16 st 2013	7:15 – 9:-- pm	Johnson Ice Rink	15	\$37

Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: The MSA hosted a study break in which we encouraged Muslim student to come out for a night of ice skating and hot chocolate. We didn't reserve the ice rink or sponsor the skate rental, but we did serve hot chocolate.

4.8 ISLAMIC FINANCE 101

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
March 21 st 2013	6 – 7:30pm	1-190	30	\$77

Planning: Event coordinators were occupied. Planned instead by VP

Summary: MSA hosted an enlightening panel discussion on Islamic personal finance. The discussion was led by two experts in Islamic Law, Imam Suheil Laher, the MIT Chaplain, and Imam Taha Abdul Bassar, the Harvard Chaplain. Around thirty people attended the event, with almost half coming from outside MIT. Attendees got an overview of Islamic Finance, looking at where the topic lies within broader Islamic law, whether certain practices are disallowed, and necessities and allowances. Additionally, the panel touched upon more specific financial practices, including insurance, mortgages, and loans.

For comments and budget from the event, please look in the MSA Folder for the detailed summary of this event.

4.9 VOLUNTEERING WITH ASTRA ZENECA HOPE LODGE (CANCELLED)

Reason: We originally planned a bake event with the Astra Zeneca Hope, but were forced to cancel, because we did not have enough time to publicize.

4.10 GRAD MIXER

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
March 30 st 2013	12 AM	Sebastian's	3	\$0

Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: The MSA hosted a graduate mixer in order for the graduate students to better know each other as well as the MSA. Unfortunately, perhaps due to location or late notice, there was low turnout.

4.11 SPRING SYMPOSIUM/DINNER

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 5th, 2013	7pm	Lobdell, W20	200	\$3630



Planning: Event coordinators + Social Chairs

Summary: Unlike previous MSA Dinners, this year's event was geared more towards the lectures and discussion rather than a social dinner. We therefore started by making the dinner a symposium, an audacious transition that proved to be a success. The MIT MSA Spring Symposium brought together three very well-known American scholars of Islam for a panel discussion on the theme of "Religion Changing With Time". The event started with the communal prayer of Maghrib, a nice reminder of Islam's focus on the community and encouragement of such gatherings. Dinner was served afterwards.. After everyone got full and settled down the intellectual aspect of our gathering kicked in. Before our reputable speakers took the stage, Quran was recited in both Arabic and English in a moment of spirituality. Dr. Mohamed Abutaleb has been a loyal contributor to the MIT MSA's annual spring dinners. His eloquence of speech, clarity of expression, choice of metaphor, and charismatic presence engaged the eyes and ears of our attendees. The Muslim Chaplain at MIT, Imam Suheil Laher, has graciously agreed to contribute to the jurisprudence perspective on the topic. Imam Suheil argued that the fundamentals of Islam, like the Pillars of Belief and Practice, don't change while other interpretations differ with. Sohaib Sultan, Muslim Chaplain at Princeton University, gave the last view on the topic with a focus on the implementation in a modern world viewpoint. Sultan proposed an interesting counter question "how does Islam change our time?" Sohaib Sultan is a public lecturer on Islam, Muslim culture, and Muslim-Western relations in the U.S. and abroad. The speakers then responded to the questions of the audience and engaged in a brain-stimulating and thought-provoking discussion. The feedback of our audience shows that this form of lecture and discussion has been a true success. The majority of the feedback praised our choice of speakers and the quality of their speech and discussion. The feedback showed deep admiration of the speakers with descriptions ranging from awesome to cute.

For comments, budget, and specific feedback (collected at the event) from the event, please look in the MSA Folder for the detailed summary of this event.

4.12 CPW: SCAVENGER HUNT

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 12th, 2013	2-3pm	MIT Campus	4	\$50

Planning: CPW Chair (one of the Social Chairs)

Summary: The CPW chair created a scavenger hunt that allowed the prefrosh to go around campus following clues that will allow them to explore the interesting parts about MIT's campus. Winners were rewarded with gifts from the MIT Coop to remember their visit.

4.13 CPW: DESSERT SOCIAL

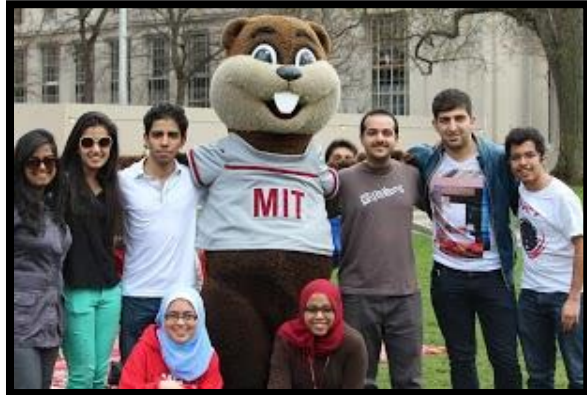
Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 12th, 2013	8-10pm	Mcc PDR	50	\$133

Planning: CPW Chair (one of the Social Chairs)

Summary: In order to create a fun engaging atmosphere for the incoming MIT Muslim students, the MSA hosted a dessert social on CPW. Muslim prefrosh came to grab dessert and meet current Muslim Students. Those CPW events are also the best way for the Muslim prefrosh to meet each other and create long lasting relationship after they come to MIT.

4.14 CPW: LUNCH PICNIC

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 13th, 2013	1:30pm	Killian	40	\$218



Planning: CPW Chair (one of the Social Chairs)

Summary: In order to create a fun engaging atmosphere for the incoming MIT Muslim students, the MSA hosted a picnic on Killian court where students engaged in interesting conversations, ate pizza, played sports, and got a chance to take a picture with TIM the beaver.

4.15 IN BETWEEN: A ONE MAN PLAY

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 24th, 2013	6-9pm	E15-070	No Count	\$0

Planning: Da'wa Chair

Summary: The MSA Co-Sponsored this play. There were no organizational obligations on our part, except for publicizing the play to the Muslim community. The play featured a Muslim actor as he explored his conflicted identity as a Jewish-Arab Muslim.

4.16 GOODWILL BAKING

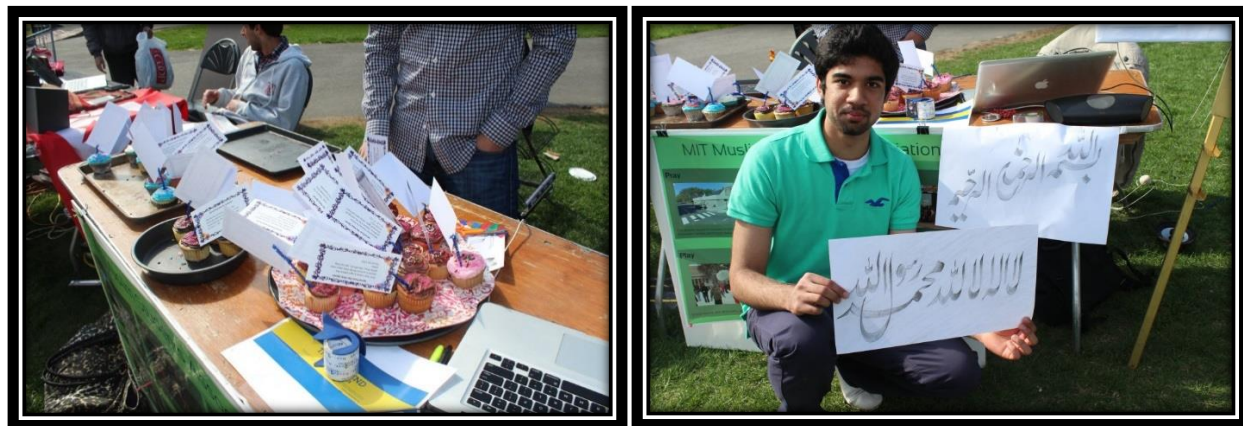
Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 25th, 2013	6-9pm	<i>Mcc Kitchen</i>	15	\$146

Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: Members of the MSA and few guest gathered at McCormick on Friday to bake cupcake to be distributed in iFair (MIT international fair). We baked around 100 cupcakes and attached ribbons and notes containing verses from the Quran to them. The cupcakes were themed after the Boston Strong Campaign in support to the cause. We ran out of cupcakes at iFair, which means that people liked them.

4.17 IFair

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 26th, 2013	11-4pm	<i>Kresge</i>	No Count	\$0



Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: Members of the MIT MSA created an interactive board game to teach people a little more about Islam and played the game with visitors of the MSA booth at iFair. At the same time, we served cupcakes that were baked the night before for the same reason with a suggested donation that goes to support the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings. People enjoyed playing the game and loved the delicious and pretty cupcakes.

4.18 ALUMNI DINNER

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 27th, 2013	7pm	Sydney Pacific	50	\$1119



Planning: Alumni Chair

Summary: The event started at about 6:30pm with a networking session for about an hour, along with drinks and snacks. After that, we broke for a communal *Maghrib* (sunset) prayer. Then we had dinner along with introductions from alumni. The event officially ended at about 8:45pm. However, people stayed at the event's location until very late hours discussing matters and socializing. We thought this event created valuable bonds between MIT students and alumni, and gave MIT students an idea about the outside world and career plans. Attendees complemented the food a lot. We got both private complements and public ones.

We expected an attendance of about 80 people, from our Facebook and infinite connection records. However, attendance was less than expected. We had about 10 alumni attending and about 50 attendees in total. The attendees ranged from grandfathers to children, with a majority of graduate students and young professionals.

4.19 SPRING BBQ WITH VOLLEYBALL

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
April 27th, 2013	11-4pm	Kresge BBQ pits	100	\$733



Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: The MSA Spring BBQ was successfully held co-sponsored with the MIT Arab Student Organization. We had a large attendance of 100+. The guests enjoyed eating, socializing and playing volleyball. The event was also supported by Dunkin Donuts and The Coop, giving prizes to the winners of the volleyball tournament. Throughout the event we were collecting donations for UNICEF Syria.

4.20 END OF THE YEAR SCRAPBOOK NIGHT

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
May 16th, 2013	7-9pm	Mcc Penthouse	10	\$55

Planning: Social Chairs

Summary: The MSA Social Chairs organized a small 2-hour study break before finals for people to take some time off from studying and come join the Social Chairs in creating a scrapbook for the MSA Activities during the semester. During the study break there was lots of snacks, drinks, and arts and crafts.

4.21 MSA CLOTHES DRIVE

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
May 16th, 2013	N/A	Mcc	No Count	\$0

Planning: International Development Coordinator

Summary: The MSA started this new project of collect used clothes towards the end of the semester and donating it to NuDay Syria to help the Syrian refugees. This was a great success as we collected more than 50 bags of clothing, bedding, and hygiene items. The Drive lasted for a week where as people were packing they were given a drop off location to leave their donations.

4.22 MSA GRADUATE RECEPTION

Date	Time	Location	Attendance	Expenses
June 7th, 2013	3:00	McC Penthouse	80	\$450

Planning: Hana Khalil, as well as several EC members

Summary: The MSA organized a reception for the graduating class of 2013, as well as several other graduates from the Masters and Doctoral Programs at MIT. A total of 15 graduates were recognized, and small gifts were handed out to each graduate. Desserts and light snacks were provided for the graduates and their families.

5 SUMMARY

Alhamdulillah, this semester, the MSA EC organized 20 activities and events for the Muslim community of MIT and the larger Boston area on a total budget of approximately \$6,600.

Many of our events, particularly social events and study breaks, attracted only MIT Muslims. Others, such as the Spring Dinner and the Fiqh of Finance, attracted Muslims from other Boston universities, while other outreach-themed events saw participating by non-Muslims as well (e.g. the iFair and the Clothes Drive).

These events were made possible only with the help of Allah (SWT) and the tireless efforts of an active and enthusiastic MSA EC.

We pray that Allah continue to give us the strength and creativity to continue planning events for, addressing the challenges faced by, and improving the lives of Muslims at MIT for the semesters to come. *Ameen!*

6 APPENDIX (FLYERS)



MIT MSA presents
a panel discussion

Fiqh of Personal Finanace

Discussion lead by:
Imam Suheil Laher
Ustadh Taha AbdulBassar

Answering:

What is **riba** ?
How to make **Halal** earnings?
I need **loans** for medical school!
...plus **your** questions.

Thursday March 21st
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Room 1-190



MIT MSA
MUSLIM STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

MIT's MSA and ASO invite you to...



BBQ



& volleyball fundraiser

May 11

11 AM - 4 PM

Kresge BBQ Pits

BBQ and Volleyball Tournament FREE.

Suggested Donation \$5.

ALL PROCEEDS TO UNICEF FOR SYRIA.

Scrapbook Night



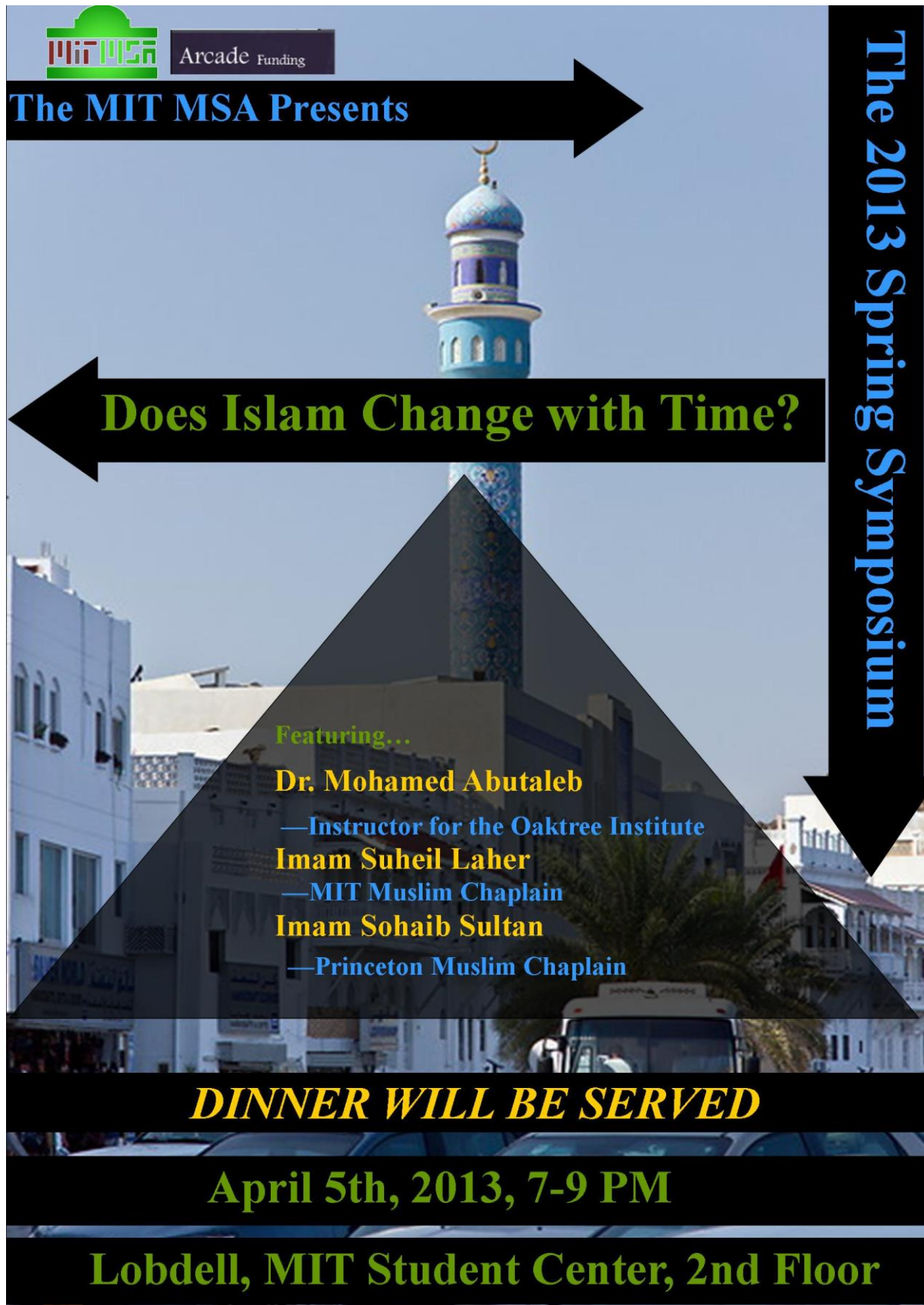
MIT MSA



Thursday May 16th 7-9 PM McCormick East Penthouse

MIT MSA

**Clothes Drive
For Syria**





The MIT MSA Presents

Does Islam Change with Time?

The 2013 Spring Symposium

Featuring...

- Dr. Mohamed Abutaleb**
—Instructor for the Oaktree Institute
- Imam Suheil Laher**
—MIT Muslim Chaplain
- Imam Sohaib Sultan**
—Princeton Muslim Chaplain

DINNER WILL BE SERVED

April 5th, 2013, 7-9 PM

Lobdell, MIT Student Center, 2nd Floor

The MIT MSA PRESENTS

MIT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

MIT MSA

THE 2013 ALUMNI DINNER



Register Online by Monday, April 22, 2013
At <http://tinyurl.com/c5g5lfd>

Date: Saturday, April 27, 2013
Location: Sidney Pacific Multipurpose Room

Schedule:
6:30- Networking
7:30- Dinner
8:30- Closing Remarks

ARCADE

Event sponsored by
Graduate Student Council
of Graduate Students' Association

