



Launch of QAU Alumni Association North America

Summary of the Event

On 8th October 2022, the Quaid-i-Azam University Alumni Association North America (QAUAANA) was launched in a gathering at Oakville, Ontario, of about seventy members and thirty of their family members from different parts of the United States and Canada to grace the occasion.



Oakville, Ontario
8 Oct 2022

It was the first large scale gathering of Quadians in North America after the pandemic. Quadians from Canada included Toronto, Scarborough, Brampton, Mississauga, Milton, Oakville, Vaughan, Markham, Ottawa and Vancouver. Quadians from the USA included Detroit, Chicago, New Jersey, Virginia and virtually from Dallas. This was a diverse gathering of Quaidians ranging from 1973 to 2013 from several departments including Administrative Sciences (MBA, MPA), Chemistry, Computer Science, DSS, Economics, Electronics, Geophysics, History, International Relations, Mathematics, and Pakistan Studies.

Before the formal start of the event, the Quaidians got many opportunities to mingle, indulge in reminiscence, network, and savor delicious Pakistani cuisine in a beautifully decorated, cozy hall as some soft Pakistani melodies of flute and tabla played in the background. In this wonderful ambiance everyone was savoured the cuisine comprising of Aloo ki tarkari, Suji Halwa, Puri, Fish Pakora, Chaat papdi , Goat korma, Chicken keema masala, Chicken Biryani, Garden Salad, Macaroni Salad, and Mint Raita.

The formal event started with a soul-stirring recitation of the Holy Quran by Ali Dogar, who also read the Urdu translation. Shahbaz Shirazi recited a Naat Sharif from his own writings. A dua was made for people in Pakistan affected by floods and overall prosperity of Pakistan and Quaidians in general. Subsequently, Farkhanda Shamim formally welcomed the participants and talked about how this QAUAANA platform provides an excellent networking opportunity for Quaidians in North America.



Arshad Bhatti, in his trademark style, identified each set of 'culprits' who were behind the germination of the QAUAANA and quipped if an FIR has to be registered for this act, then do remember these first set of men and women present here. This triggered a big laughter from the very excited Quadians in the hall. These included Kashif, Riaz Cheema, Tariq Mahmood, Ali Dogar, Faisal Saeed, Mr & Mrs Bashir Sheikh, Mr & Mrs Sarfaraz Akhtar, Mrs Qamar U Samad, Liaquat Ali, Mr & Mrs Iftikhar Ahmad, Mohammad Shafique, Javed Agha, Arbab Khan, Ahmed Naeem, Shahid Mahmood. He also presented the purpose of the day and gathering.



After the ice-breaking, Tariq Mahmood took the floor and shared the purpose and structure of QAUAANA. He highlighted that QAU alumni association in North America is formed for the mutual benefit of members and to create programs and events to strengthen the mutual connections among members in North America. He shared that QAUAANA membership will form a general body that will select a Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Standing Committees.



He further shared that the Board of Directors will have seven to eleven directors, with a 40/60 or 50/50 ratio between Quadians from USA and Canada, and at least 30% of the Board shall consist of women members. The Executive Committee will comprise of four elected members designated as a President, Vice President, Treasure, and a Secretary. There will be six standing committees for Strategic Planning & Priorities, Finance & Alumni Services, Incident Resolution, Communication & Engagement, Elections, and Awards.



Sajida Ahmed virtually presented the QAUANA working model. She shared that the Board of Directors will manage the Association's affairs, approve all projects for the years, and be the official spokesperson to the University. She also talked about the Executive Committee members who will also be part of the Board of Directors. The President will chair all board meetings, annual and general meetings, and the executive committee will supervise all activities of the associations. Regarding the Standing Committees, the Board of Directors will appoint a chair for each standing committee. The Board will appoint the members of each committee. The President will be an ex-officio member of all standing committees.



Arshad Bhatti grabbed the mic again and shared that the current interim Board of Directors will be in place for next two years to get the Association on its feet. The interim board consists of Ali Dogar (CS 1996), Arshad Bhatti (IR 1988), Faisel Saeed (CS 1986), Farkhanda Shamim (Economics 1999), Saifullah Chaudhry (DSS 1991), Sajida Ahmed (CS 1982), Umair Siddique (Electronics 2008), and Tariq Mahmood (CS 1979). He further shared that a new board will take over the Association affairs after the elections. The key focus of the present board is to ensure that the nascent QAUANA becomes a functional organization with its set of procedures and becomes strong enough to continue to operate in years to come.



Arshed Bhatti also informed the participants that, with the interim board members support , that the association had been formally registered and that today (Oct 8) was our first large-scale get-together. He said members' registration for the general body is in progress.

Faisel Saeed discussed we need an

association to connect QAU alumni in North America for mutual benefits of members and to create programs and events to strengthen the mutual connections among members in NA & also with QAU, Islamabad, Pakistan. He presented the purpose of QAU AANA to create an informed and engaged QAU alumni community in North America in a position to help guide and facilitate the progression of QAU as a source of higher education and meaningful research enabling a culture of entrepreneurship. While talking about the future, he shared that QAU AANA will decide on the activities/ projects based on input from its members.

The event was also graced by Salma Zaid, a Member of Parliament in Canada and a Quaidian herself. She talked about her recent Pakistan visit, where she got a first-hand experience of floods affecting people in different parts of the country. She encouraged Quaidians present on this occasion to donate generously. One of the former professors of the Computers Science Department, Javed Aga, graced the occasion and appreciated the organizers' efforts to initiate the QAU AANA and host this event.



After the formal presentations, Quaidians and their families present at this occasion introduced themselves. Each Quaidian exhibited their joy, love, and appreciation for the organizers and the current board members of the QAUAANA for taking the initiative to register and launch the alums. They also expressed their full support to make it a success.

Many members and in some cases their family members shared their ideas of a need gap within the community at large. Notable ideas included setting up a matrimonial service and helping to educate the poor population of Pakistan especially living around the main campus of QAU.

Members also suggested finding ways to connect innovation-minded members leveraging wide expertise available within this body of Quaidians. Many stressed the need for having regular get-togethers like this one to help socialize and connect the community of members.

Umair Siddique, in the spirit of financial transparency, provided a summary of registrations, revenue generated to organize the event, and expenses incurred to arrange this event.

In the end, Saifullah Chaudhry recapped the whole event. He thanked the five volunteers, sons and daughters of the Quaidians, for their time and courteous manner in which they assisted in setting up the banquet hall and seamlessly handling the registration process. He thanked

Farkhanda Shamim for identifying the venue and her ideas to transform the hall aesthetically through creative decoration. He thanked the venue management, the chefs, and the servers who took care of the guests and kept serving them fresh tea and coffee throughout the event. In the end, he thanked all the Quaidians who had come to the event from all over North America on behalf of the Organizing Committee of Quaidian volunteers.

