



# Building Communities on a Stronger Foundation



“We came to America, either ourselves or in the persons of our ancestors, to better the ideals of men, to make them see finer things than they had seen before, to get rid of the things that divide and to make sure of the things that unite.”

**Woodrow Wilson**

*28th President of the United States of America*



## Alavi Foundation: Devoted to Progress

At its core, American culture is one of inclusiveness. This land is a setting in which individuality is celebrated, for Americans know that this makes for a stronger collective. From indigenous Americans, to those who have lived here for generations, to first- and second-generation immigrants making a new home for themselves, each individual and all of their communities add unique and nuanced elements to what shapes the identity of the American people: a rich identity founded on diversity and inclusion. These ideals, and the people and institutions that uphold them, are what make the United States such a strong, vibrant, and productive nation.

Alavi Foundation, since its inception in 1973, has incorporated these principles into its own identity. Alavi is a charitable organization which, through philanthropy and community support, supports inter-faith harmony, religious and cultural education, and societal progress. The Foundation is devoted to the advancement and understanding of Persian and Islamic cultures, heritage, and history, here in the United States. The Foundation boasts over 40 years of tireless dedication to educa-

tion, pluralism, and cultural edification. These efforts have made Alavi Foundation a fixture for institutions and communities throughout America.

Alavi's contributions to furthering Islamic and Persian culture serve a diverse array of institutions throughout the country. In particular, Alavi Foundation generates philanthropic contributions and grants to organizations and institutions throughout Muslim-American and Iranian-American communities.

From the most innovative companies that produce the products that the world runs on, to agencies that the American government runs on, to the institutions that serve and educate our nation, to just about every field in America's professional and entrepreneurial landscape, Americans of Persian and of Muslim descent contribute to the growth and strength of this great nation. Providing support and services to those that offer so much to American culture and progress is the Alavi Foundation's badge of honor.

Alavi Foundation invites you to learn about its past and current efforts, and its future outlook.

## Dedication to Service: What We Do

### The Alavi Foundation's Mission Statement

*...To promote charitable and philanthropic causes through educational, religious and cultural programs. The Foundation does this by making contributions to not-for-profit organizations within the United States that support interfaith harmony and promote Islamic culture and Persian language,*

Alavi Foundation's aim is to foster a better educated, more understanding world. The Foundation recognizes that its role in making this happen is to support and empower strong and caring people and organizations that are working to achieve the same. Recipients of Alavi's contributions and aid span a diverse group of men, women, and institutions across the United States and beyond.

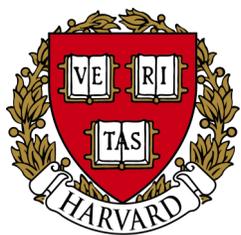
The key causes that Alavi Foundation contributes to are education, Islamic organizations, interfaith dialogue, and disaster relief.

### Education

A dedication to education at all levels is a driving force for the Foundation and its leaders. Alavi Foundation sees education as the most important way to improve society. In today's increasingly globalized and connected world, an broad and thorough worldview is an indispensable asset. Therefore the Foundation puts great effort and focus into its support for students, educators, educational events, and institutions.



## Colleges and Universities



A sizeable portion of Alavi Foundation's charitable initiatives are geared towards funding university programs and classes. Alavi boasts long-standing relationships with many colleges throughout the United States and Canada. In keeping with its identity, the Foundation provides funding for numerous Persian studies and Islamic studies programs. Alavi's support for these programs and schools come in a variety of different forms.

Alavi Foundation has earned a strong reputation for supporting academic programs by underwriting teacher salaries. Alavi's flagship 6-year funds-matching program provides colleges and universities with a funding boost to recruit solid tenure-track educators, with a balance of program oversight and long-term incentives to ensure that educational and institutional goals will be met. Through this initiative, Alavi has helped schools such as Harvard University, Columbia University, and the University of Virginia to greatly expand their Persian studies programs, and has provided the needed push for schools such as Portland State University launch theirs. These are only a sampling of the many institutions of higher learning that Alavi Foundation has supported, in its effort to further the knowledge and understanding of Persian culture, history, literature, art, and more.

Similar programs have been launched through partnerships between the Foundation and university Islamic studies programs, many of which were able to hire new faculty members through Alavi funding. Throughout the United States, Islamic scholarship in general, and Shi'i studies and scholarship in particular, have expanded a great deal thanks to the Foundation's support and contributions. In addition to university curricula expansion, this has entailed key research projects, publications, and cultural outreach initiatives.

These colleges and universities are only a sampling of the schools Alavi Foundation has supported over the years. Visit [www.AlaviFoundation.org](http://www.AlaviFoundation.org) to learn more. *(Note: Mention of institutions are nominative only, and do not constitute Alavi Foundation's endorsement of them, and vice versa.)*



## Student Aid

For Alavi Foundation, supporting schools is only half of the equation—with the other half being its support of scholars. Alavi strives to aid students who are actively and earnestly pursuing their dreams through academic growth and achievement. The Foundation has provided numerous scholarships, aid packages, and low- and interest-free loan programs to students. Particular emphasis has been on students of Iranian descent, and those pursuing Persian, Middle Eastern, and/or Islamic studies, however the Foundation is not limited to these cases. It has and continues to provide aid to student applicants of all backgrounds, and those pursuing a variety of academic fields.

## PreK-12 Schools

Through its partnership with community organizations, Alavi Foundation sponsors and supports several private preschools, primary, and secondary schools throughout the country. The Foundation's monetary support allows the schools to maintain state-of-the-art facilities, hire talented and qualified educators and administrators, and provide robust learning environment for budding scholars. These community schools also provide Islamic education, preparing young minds for the future with a solid moral foundation grounded in the Islamic tenets of faith, compassion, harmony, and service.



## Persian Schools

In addition to day-schools, Alavi Foundation contributes to Persian schools that offer language instruction to youth across America. The Foundation's contributions come in the form of school buildings and facilities, ongoing funding, curricula, and learning materials.

The Foundation seeks ways to innovate and improve the teaching of Persian. This helps Persian-speaking families bridge both language and generational gaps, and offers others a chance to learn a rich language and embrace a deeper understanding of one of the world's oldest cultures.

## Conferences and Events

While investing a great deal of its resources on sustained programs in education, the Foundation also values the societal benefit of special events and conferences in forwarding its mission to promote Persian and Islamic education.

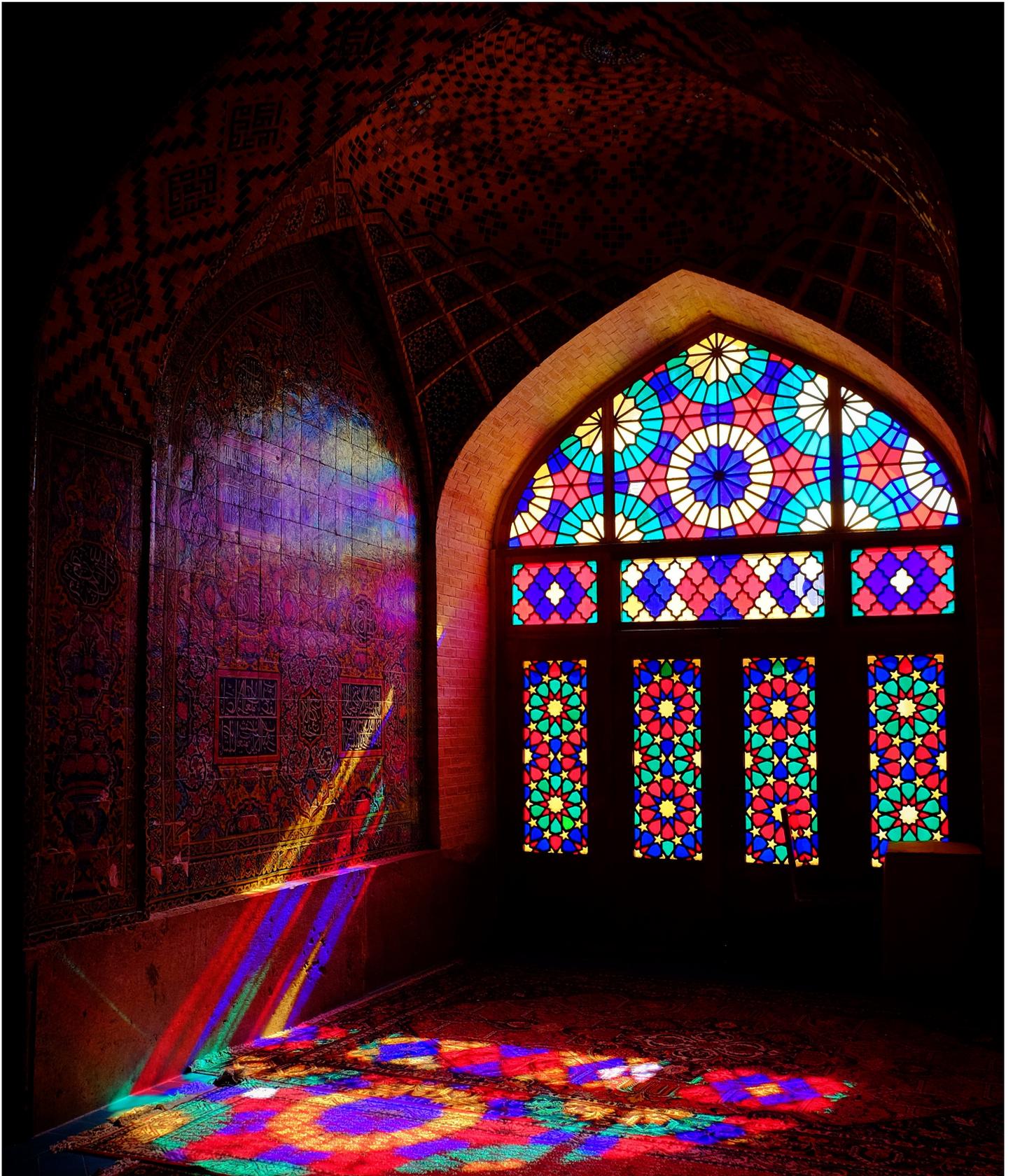
With Alavi's support, partner-scholars have successfully held conferences and seminars with far-reaching impact. These programs have helped amplify the voices of those at the forefront of spreading awareness, knowledge, and understanding of Persian and/or Islamic culture throughout the academic world.

## Scholarly Research

Alavi Foundation provides grant programs that offer applicants funding for specific research and scholarly projects. Thanks to the Foundation's support, projects that would have otherwise gone unfunded have seen the light of day. These include research initiatives which have produced publications on previously under-reported and under-studied subjects that have now been brought to the academic fore.

## Support for the Arts

In its dedication to advancing education and culture, Alavi Foundation supports art projects and exhibits through sponsorships and grants. These endeavors have successfully brought art from Iran and the Muslim world to the delight and wonder of people of all backgrounds in universities, museums, and art establishments throughout America.



# Islamic Organizations

Alavi Foundation's commitment to providing service to communities is perhaps best embodied by its support for Islamic centers and organizations across America.

As with any organization of Alavi's stature and national profile, there is a limit to the direct impact that the Foundation can provide to individual Muslim-Americans. But by the vast support and assistance Alavi has provided for decades to over 30 mosques, Alavi Foundation has made a positive lasting impact in the lives of thousands of people, their families, and their communities.

The cultural and religious institutions that receive Alavi's patronage offer for their communi-

ties a place to gather and socialize. They offer their communities a place to connect: with their creator, with their holy book, with one another. They offer their communities a place to learn: about the tenets of their faith, about their cultural heritages, and about their own individual and collective potentials for progress and advancement. They offer their communities a place to practice the spirituality, rites, and customs of their faith. They offer their communities a focal point around which people from various backgrounds come together to forge a multifaceted collective Muslim-American identity, centered on morality, love, and compassion. And they offer youth a chance to interact with others, myriad



opportunities to give back to their community, to find purpose and direction, to tangibly understand and appreciate the values of humanity, comradery, of service to others in their community and beyond, and of sharing in the joy and fulfillment of peace, harmony, and cooperation among the greater society.

With every life enriched by the presence of a cultural institution that provides spiritual and congregational services, a community is strengthened, and in turn, so is our society. The presence of such religious and cultural institutions contributes to the diversity and richness of our pluralistic society, and strengthens our democracy.

The Foundation provides its partner centers and religious organizations with the following service and support:

## **Building Construction**

The Foundation has helped build new centers for several communities without a center of their own. These communities relied on the Foundation's contributions to buy property or begin construction of new buildings. Alavi's support has also helped communities that have outgrown their current centers and needed to expand to meet the demands of their communities' growing capacities.

## **Project-Specific Funding**

Partner centers reach out to Alavi for grants and loans to support individual initiatives and mission-specific goals. These include special events, community and interfaith outreach programs, book and publication distribution, and many more program specific uses.

## **Renovation and Repairs**

Throughout the years, the Foundation's ongoing support has been instrumental in the maintenance and repair of Islamic-American centers. From critical safety and accessibility repairs, to standard upkeep and care, to modernizing and expanding facility capabilities, Alavi has helped its partner centers to sustain its buildings and structures to cater to the various needs of their constituents.

## **Ongoing Operations**

Alavi Foundation has a list of several centers that operate on Foundation-owned property, rent-free. These and other institutions rely on Alavi's monetary support and funding to run their day-to-day operations in service to their respective communities.

# Community Needs

Many Iranian-American and Muslim-American communities rely on Alavi Foundation's community-centered grants and philanthropic contribution to provide an array of services to their constituents and congregations.



## Cultural Centers

In keeping with its mission, the Foundation supports various Persian cultural organizations and centers that promote awareness of Persian culture and Iranian heritage both within the community and for the general public.

These organizations provide their communities with an avenue for exploring the various elements of Persian life, from educational language (Farsi) programs, to holiday events and gatherings, to artistic showcases.

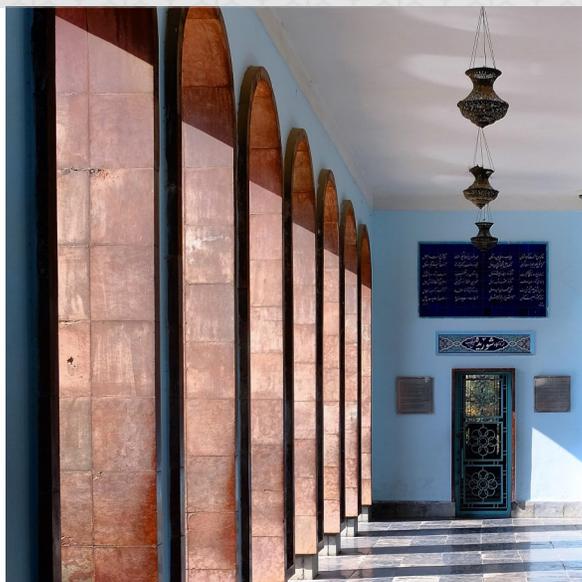
## Disaster Relief

Unfortunately, disasters of all kinds are unexpected and sometimes even unavoidable realities. Alavi Foundation sees its role as a flagbearer of hope and recovery in the face of such events. The Foundation has a proud record of aid and assistance to domestic and international victims of disasters. Alavi's contributions include aid to victims of catastrophic events such as earthquakes, floods, 9/11, and Hurricane Sandy. The Foundation also supports organizations that fight ongoing sources of human suffering such as hunger and malnutrition, poverty, and conflict.



## Health and Wellness

Alavi's cherishes the people and families that constitute its partner-communities. A healthy community starts with healthy individuals, and conversely, individual health is tied to public health. For years, Alavi has supported numerous health initiatives and community clinics. By providing monetary assistance, resources and equipment, and advising from its leadership and contacts within the medical community, the Foundation has been involved in educating and treating thousands of individuals. These programs and clinics have benefitted individuals within Alavi-supported communities, and their neighbors, with free and low-cost access to health education and treatment.



## Interfaith Initiatives

Among the Foundation's proudest accomplishments are the many initiatives and efforts it has taken to foster interfaith dialogue and understanding. These initiatives include interreligious academic conferences, special co-sponsored events that bring people of many faiths together, and even Muslim-Christian discussions and goodwill interactions that involve the highest levels of leadership at the Vatican. Alavi Foundation strongly values its role as a force for good in the path for a peaceful, harmonious, and pluralistic accord among the faithful of all creeds.

## A New Direction: Who We Are

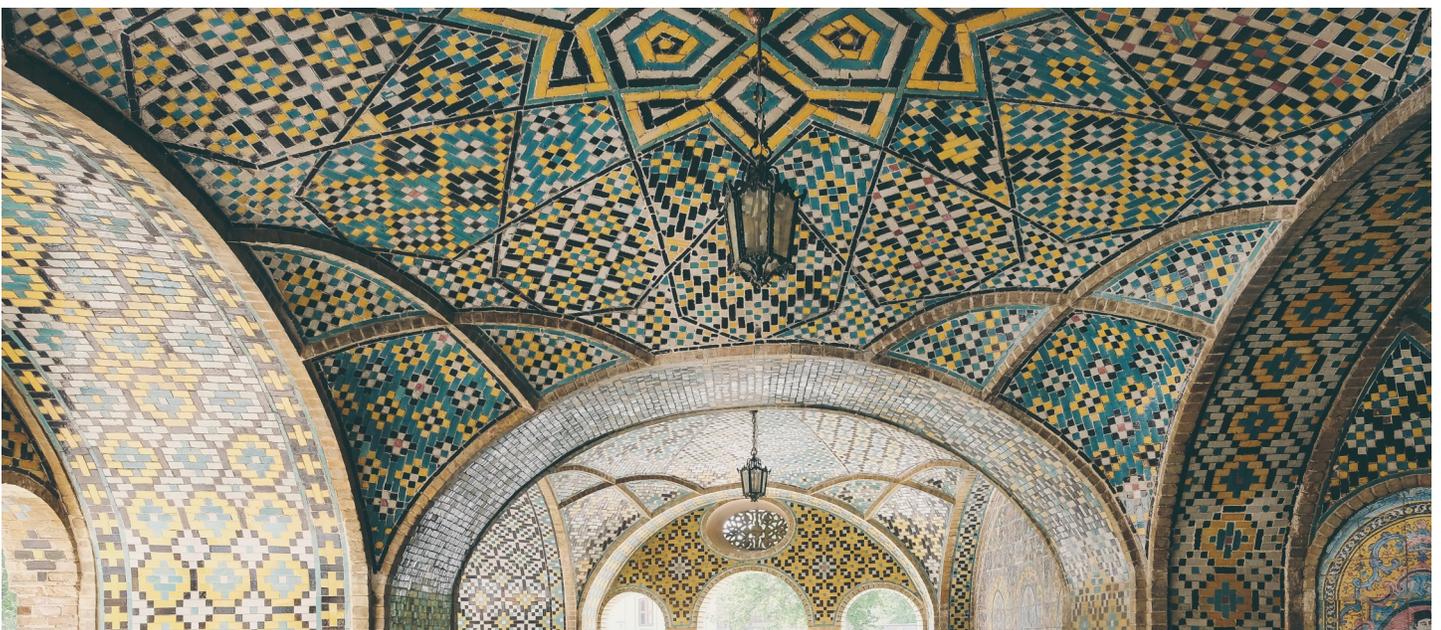
The Foundation is led by its Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the guiding the Foundation's actions, and oversees its management, investments, and financial decisions. The Board also sets the direction for Alavi's contributions and philanthropic activity.

Since 2013, the Alavi Foundation Board of Directors has undergone a thorough rejuvenation, ushering in a new team to provide a fresh perspective and infuse a new vigor into the Foundation. In addition to adhering to a strict code of ethics, the new Board members have all pledged to "abstain from involvement in political matters, whether local, national, or international."

Alavi's new Board of Directors is comprised of a team of distinguished professionals, each of whom has a track record of community involvement, service, and accomplishment. All of them

have chosen to live, work, and raise their families in the United States, and embody American ideals of hard work, community outreach, and tolerance. The Board includes three medical doctors who, in addition to their professional success, have devoted countless hours of service to low-income and veteran patients. Two of the members are university educators who have dedicated their lives to education, and moreover dedicated to using their education for the betterment society.

The members hail from the very same cultural and religious backgrounds that are at the center of Alavi's mission. Collectively, they bring to the Alavi Foundation a service-focused mindset, a pride in their shared heritage, and a strong desire to enrich American pluralism with a stronger understanding of Persian culture and history, and Shi'i values.



# Alavi Foundation: Looking to the Future

Alavi Foundation faces many challenges ahead. It is meeting those challenges, however, head on, and by fully mobilizing every resource available to facilitate a successful future for the foundation and the many thousands of Americans who benefit from its work. In recent months, the Foundation has been fortunate to see a series of legal successes. With a newly invigorated leadership, a dedicated team of experts working to further the Foundation's mission, and a multitude of advocates throughout the communities across the country which Alavi supports, hope and resilience are leading its charge forward.



## Modernizing Alavi

Moving forward, the Board of Directors of Alavi Foundation is turning a keen focus to professionalizing the Foundation and its grant-making processes. The Board plans to recruit new, and retain current, qualified staff, experienced in running similar non-profit organizations. The Foundation believes this to be the key first step in rebuilding the organization and ensuring its continued success.

## Expanding Efforts

Step by step, Alavi Foundation is rejuvenating its current and past efforts, and breathing new life into the initiatives that have earned for the Foundation its stellar reputation for philanthropic

activity and progress. The Foundation knows that its current and future strength rests on its continued support to the communities it has been serving since its founding. That is why the Board plans to further strengthen the Foundation's support for community organizations and to increase civic engagement among its constituents and partners.

In the past 40 years, we have seen remarkable increases in the Muslim-American and Persian-American populations. These increases have been even more astounding since the turn of the century. These increases come with a commensurate growth of public awareness of Islam and of Persian culture, and in turn, Muslim and Persian identities have contributed more and more to the tapestry of the eclectic American identity. Knowing this, the Board believes that Alavi should deepen its support for the kinds of community organizations it has assisted since its founding, and in so doing, deepen its encouragement of integration and coexistence.

# *Alavi Foundation: Looking to the Future*



## **Challenges Ahead**

Of course, there are many challenges along the way. Forces of division and discord, be they racism and hate, or the specter of radicalization, threaten from all sides. Nevertheless, Alavi Foundation is firm in its belief that robust community organizations and educated people help foster understanding, and counteract the effects of conflict.

Increased awareness and understanding both within the communities that Alavi supports, and beyond, hold the key to resisting and reforming prejudice, and ushering in harmony.

The shadow of radicalization of young Muslims looms over communities throughout the Middle East and Europe, and as deviant groups threaten to spread this further west towards our shores, the Foundation believes that it must be proactive and comprehensive in its efforts to help defend our nation and the world from this menace.

Alavi Foundation strongly maintains its hope for a better and more harmonious future. Firstly, the American Muslim population is more diverse, more moderate, and better integrated than the Muslim populations in any other Western society, and are far less likely to be radicalized than Muslims in the European Union or the Middle East. Furthermore, no Alavi-sponsored entity has lost any of its members to causes associated with violent extremism. The Foundation is proud that it subscribes to, and simultaneously contributes to, Muslim-American ideals of peace and harmony. Alavi Foundation and its leadership, however, are by no means complacent.

As it vigilantly looks to the future, Alavi Foundation takes seriously the role that it and other Muslim-American organizations play in our society. It is mainstream Islamic voices that can and will drown out messages of hate and violence, from wherever they stem.

To this end, Alavi Foundation has been striving for years within the greater Muslim-American community, and intends to intensify this effort. The Foundation's leadership is working hard to engage Federal, state, and local governments and to serve as a bridge between them and Muslim communities to foster better cooperation and integration of efforts. Simultaneously, the Foundation is geared to working more closely with its partner organizations to generate deeper youth engagement, more outreach programs, and stronger social activism. All this will foster stronger communities and more solid and upstanding individuals, which are the best assets in countering hate and radicalization.

As the Foundation looks onward to the future, it knows that in an ever-changing world, the one certainty it can rely upon is the integrity of its people. Alavi Foundation garners its hope from its leadership and staff, and from the thousands of individuals who have benefited from Alavi Foundation and who are in turn advocates and allies in the cause for a better America, and a better world.

## Connect with us

We at Alavi Foundation welcome you be in touch with us. To learn more about the Foundation and to connect with us, visit our website at <http://www.AlaviFoundation.org>. Whether you want to learn more about our work, learn more about Islam or Persian culture, or if you or an organization you represent wish to partner with Alavi Foundation, we want to hear from you.

With our sincerest regards, and wishes for peace and wellness for you and yours,



