

2017 - 2018

Annual REPORT

Islamic Society of Boston
Cultural Center



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ISBCC

Governance

The entity that owns the ISBCC and has ultimate fiduciary and management responsibility for our masjid is the ISB Trust. In 2008 the Trustees invited and signed a ten year agreement with MAS Boston to run and operate the center and serve as its board of directors.

MAS Boston Board of Directors

Hassan El-Alami
Hossam Al Jabri
Loay Assaf
Samer Naseredden
Jennifer Trickett
Hanane Wahabi

ISB Board of Trust

Yousef Abouallaban
Muhammad Ali-Salaam
Hassan El-Alami
Walid Fitaihi
Osama Kandil
Saoud Al-Haafi
Anwar Kazmi

A Landscape of Darkness

In recent times, the Muslim American community finds itself confronted with increasing challenges from both within and without. External challenges such as Islamophobia, racism and living in a secular society, coupled with multiple internal challenges such as minimal understanding of our faith, marriage issues and youth feeling alienated, result in many Muslims experiencing a spiritual crisis. The pages that follow provide a glimpse of how the ISBCC - the central mosque in New England - is seeking to respond to these challenges.

43%

Muslims who've experienced discrimination because of their faith

33%

Adults under 30 who are religiously unaffiliated

91%

increase in hate crimes against Muslims between 2016-2017

58%

Muslim students have engaged in at risk behaviors such as alcohol, gambling and pre-marital sex

"I think Islam hates us"
President Donald Trump

Rays of Hope

Civic Engagement

Muslims make up only 1% of the total population and today the faith is largely misunderstood by many people. This dynamic, coupled with the added challenge Muslims across the country face from an administration that harbors and articulates grossly Islamophobic sentiments, often undermines our efforts to effectively tell our own narrative..

Despite the odds being against us, the ISBCC has continually sought to stand up for the well being of our community. Leveraging the numbers and relationships of our community, we've been rays of hope in the darkness that currently has set on the American public sphere.

Shaykh Yasir's State of the Commonwealth Invocation

Shaykh Yasir Fahmy was invited by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker to deliver the opening invocation for the Annual State of Commonwealth address. History was made as this was the first time a Muslim clergy was invited to give the invocation.

Chief Justice Ralph Gants

Chief Justice Gants, the highest judicial power in MA, addressed the ISBCC community after khutbah on January 13, 2018. His aim was to assure our community that the judicial branch will protect our rights as American citizens even in the face of bigotry from the forces of our executive branch.

Interfaith Vigil Against Hate

Shakyh Yasir joined Governor Baker, Mayor Walsh, Attorney General Maura Healey and Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) clergy for a vigil with 1700+ community members on August 19, 2017. The Boston Globe quoted Shaykh Yasir: "We need to be together," he said after the service. "There's a lot of pain. There's a lot of hurt. And in the face of that pain and hurt we need togetherness, we need unity, we need community, we need love."

Criminal Justice Reform

In partnership with the GBIO Shaykh Yasir joined several clergy to take a stand for Criminal Justice reform at the Massachusetts State House on October 12, 2017.

Fighting for Economic Justice

Imam Abdul-Malik Merchant and a delegation of faith leaders and airport workers delivered a letter to airlines at Logan airport calling for economic justice for workers on December 21, 2017.

Hate Crimes Task Force

Governor Baker appointed Executive Director Yusufi Vali to his Hate Crime Task to ensure that Massachusetts is a place where all people can find justice.

Congressman Mike Capuano

The Massachusetts Congressman joined an ever growing list of political and civic leaders who have visited the ISBCC to show their support of the Muslim community.

City Council Forum

The ISBCC Neighbors for Neighbors team organized a debate in partnership with Reclaim Roxbury for the open District 7 City Council seat in October 2017. Candidates Kim Janey and Rufus Faulk answered questions around affordable house, neighborhood safety and clean-up issues, and Islamophobia.

U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling

The new U.S. Attorney made the ISBCC his first stop in interfacing with the Muslim community, meeting with ED Yusufi Vali and representatives from ISB Cambridge, OCRC Malden, and Masjid Yusuf.

In the Spotlight

The Boston Globe

‘What unites us is always stronger than what divides us’



CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF
Bryan Mann, a rabbinical school student, applauded comments from Attorney General Maura Healey during the Interfaith Gathering of Unity, Love, and Strength at Temple Israel of Boston.

By Danny McDonald | GLOBE STAFF AUGUST 19, 2017

More than 1,700 people attended an interfaith service at Temple Israel of Boston Friday evening to hear messages of unity on the eve of the controversial “Boston Free Speech” rally.

“What unites us is always stronger than what divides us,” Attorney General Maura Healey told the crowd.

Healey was among the public officials and clergy to promote inclusion and reject bigotry during the hour-long gathering planned by the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

She said the acts of hatred that were on display during the past week in the US were not only lawless but also “godless,” and criticized President Trump for his response to the violent demonstration in Charlottesville, Va., that attracted white supremacists. Trump blamed “both sides” for that violence.

Shaykh Yasir joined Governor Baker, Mayor Walsh, Attorney General Maura Healey and interfaith clergy from around Massachusetts for a rally against hate at Temple Israel.

BOSTON Herald

McGovern: Justice extends hand to Muslims

Asks worshippers to place faith in state's court system

Bob McGovern Saturday, January 13, 2018



Credit: Faith Ninivaggi

Senior Imam, Yasir Fahmy looks on as Chief Justice Ralph Gants thanks Executive Director, Yusufi Vali for inviting him to the Islamic Society of Boston, January 11, 2018. Staff Photo by Faith Ninivaggi.

Shaykh Yasir F. Fahmy, senior Imam at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, spoke yesterday about the “pain” Muslims across the country are facing in today’s divisive political climate.

He said certain politicians have shouted “some of the ugliest opinions about us” and that this discourse “trickles down to our kids in our schools. ... It creates a bully culture.”

Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Ralph Gants, who was visiting the ISBCC, told worshippers he felt their pain.

Massachusetts Chief Justice Ralph Gants joined the ISBCC for a third year running to show his support for the Muslim community.

The Boston Globe

Volunteers, homeless gather for Thanksgiving lunch



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF
Melissa Rogers, who is currently homeless, helps blow up balloons to decorate for the celebration.

By Rowan Walrath | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT NOVEMBER 24, 2017

Kenneth Thopsen lived in Florida until Hurricane Irma forced him out. At 45 years old, he journeyed north to Massachusetts — losing his luggage in the process — to stay with family members in the Berkshires.

“I went out there and I didn’t really connect with them,” Thopsen said. Now, he is one of thousands of homeless individuals in Boston. As he began to set up his new life, trying to find housing and health care, he turned to the Cathedral Church of St. Paul on Tremont Street, across from Boston Common.

“The church here has been a big part of helping me stay off the streets, away from drugs and alcohol,” Thopsen said. He says he goes there every Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, and he’s part of the Black Seed Writers Group that produces [The Pilgrim](#), a literary magazine.

ISBCC community members gathered at St. Paul’s Church to serve the homeless Thanksgiving meals.

WBUR News

Governor's Hate Crimes Task Force Will Look At Reporting, School Curricula

November 02, 2017

By Matt Murphy, State House News Service

Twitter Facebook Email



Public Safety Secretary Dan Bennett and Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston CEO Josh Kraft were appointed Monday by Gov. Charlie Baker to lead the revived Governor’s [Task Force on Hate Crimes](#) to advise the administration on ways to better prevent such acts and support victims.

Baker swore in the 17-member task force in a ceremony in his office where he said his goal is to work with the group “to make Massachusetts as safe as we possibly can.”

The task force was first created in 1991 by Gov. William Weld and from 1994 to 1996 help lead the legislative effort to amend the Hate Crimes Penalties Act to increase penalties for those who commit hate crimes. The task force was formalized by Gov. Paul Cellucci in 1997, but “sort of faded away,” according Baker, around the “turn of the century.”

ISBCC ED was invited to join Governor Charlie Baker’s Hate Crime Task Force.

THE BAY STATE Banner

District 7 candidates debate at Islamic Society Ctr.

District 7 candidates debate at Islamic Society Cultural Center

Yanni Miller | 11/2/2017, 6 a.m.



Artist Napoleon Jones Henderson listens to Faulk and Janey debate. LAUREN MILLER

In a debate last week, both candidates in the race for the District 7 City Council seat agreed to push the city to require deeper affordability on new housing developments, to update the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan and make the body that oversees it more democratic, and to push for greater transparency for development projects on public land.



Lauren Miller
District 7 candidate Kim Janey. (Below) Artist Napoleon Jones Henderson listens to Faulk and Janey debate.



Lauren Miller
Rufus Faulk gives opening remarks during the District 7 debate.

“I worry that with the developments coming into Roxbury and the rising rents, I’ll be priced out,” said Amanda Govan, before the two candidates were asked whether they would sign onto a letter calling on the Boston Planning and Development Agency to require income guidelines for affordable units built in Roxbury to be capped at 30 percent of the HUD-designated area median income, which would mean \$31,000 for a family of four. Currently, units designated as affordable in Roxbury can be sold to people making as much as 120 percent of the AML, which comes to \$124,100 for a family of four.

Candidates seeking to represent Roxbury on the Boston City Council gathered to debate the issues before the election.

The Boston Globe

Local mosques open their doors to promote understanding of faith



Joan Schwartz stopped by the try-a-headscarf table at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center. Muslims and non-Muslims sat together to drink chai and eat sambusas, and people took home free paperback copies of the Koran.

By [Jeremy C. Fox](#) and [Aimee Ortiz](#) | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT | GLOBE STAFF APRIL 02, 2017

Across Eastern Massachusetts Sunday, Muslims gathered, shoulder to shoulder, to begin afternoon prayers. But at the back of the room at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury, a crowd of Christians, Jews, agnostics, and atheists had gathered to observe.

On the first Massachusetts Open Mosque Day, hundreds of non-Muslims attended the center and 17 other area mosques to observe religious practices and ask questions about the faith and its perception.

“We need to engage in genuine community, camaraderie, fraternity, sorority: people coming together, learning about their cultures, their backgrounds, what people are struggling with,” said Sheikh Yasir Fahmy, the senior imam at the cultural center, in an interview.

The ISBCC opened its doors to neighbors as the 2nd annual Open Mosque Day to place in April.

Embodying His Light

Religious Programming

At a time when truth is under assault and what is and what is not is perpetually in question, the ISBCC's spiritual team is seeking to ground us in the light of our Islamic tradition.

"The peace and tranquility that are felt at the ISBCC are gifts from Allah (SWT)"

Nana Abdelkader

Seeking Guidance

160

students attended Imam Muhammad's Quran Classes

Continually Seeking

80%

of students in Shaykh Yasir's ilm classes are returning students.

Growing in Knowledge

85%

graduated Imam Muhammad's introductory level Quran course by demonstrating a significant improvement in their ability to read the Quran



Shaykh

Yasir Fahmy

Khutbah
Friday Nights at the Mosque
Umrah
Ilm Classes

- Shama'il
- Usul ul Fiqh
- Inner & Outer Dimension of Salah

- Tazkiya Intensive
- 99 Names of Allah



Imam

Muhammad Nabeel

Quran Classes

- Reading the Quran
- Reciting the Quran
- Mastering Tajweed
- Kids Quran

Tajweed Tutoring

Four completions of the Quran per year



Imam

Abdul-Malik Merchant

Khutbah
Living Islam
Matrimonial Services
Pastoral Care
Mental Health
Boston Children's Hospital
Multidisciplinary Team



Ustadha

Janan Delgado

Harvard PhD in Islamic Studies

Sisters Halaqa
Friday Nights at the Mosque



Umrah
with Shaykh Mokhtar Maghraoui
and Ustadh Moutasem Atiya

96
Community Members

Light at the Leading Edge

In striving to be a beacon of light the ISBCC is continually experimenting with new ways to better serve the community and be on the leading edge of what makes a model Muslim community in America.

“Re”defining Deen

At a time when secularism is eroding spiritual life, Shaykh Yasir launched a new khutbah series focusing on Hadith Jibreel. The series addresses the question of What is Islam? and the importance of religion in modern life. The goal is to “Re”define our Deen, so our community understands how Islam gives our lives meaning, nourishment and fulfillment.

Suhbah Circles

Modern day reality no longer affords us the familial and communal networks that were so critical to a flourishing community. Launched as a pilot program this year, the Suhbah Circles are designed to help build strong bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood among community members living in the same neighborhood and committing to a Prophetic lifestyle.

Waqf - Cafe & CLT Initiative

Waqfs were a core part of sustaining our masajid historically. Working in partnership with Br. Yusuf Yasin, an experienced restaurant owner, we re-designed and re-launched our cafe. We expect the cafe to generate significant revenue for the center.

Additionally, the ISBCC re-launched our Charitable Lead Trust Initiative. Our community members invested over \$1 million worth of CLTs during this past year. A CLT is an investment that grows a community member’s wealth, while at the same time contributing a small percentage of that investment to the ISBCC. To date, we anticipate nearly \$80,000 revenue per year reliably coming to the ISBCC from the CLTs for each of the next ten years.



Youth as Pillars of Light

Youth Programming

At the ISBCC youth are the anchoring lights of our community. Over the past year, ISBCC grew its investment in our youth. To build a stronger sense of Muslim identity, connection to the masjid, knowledge of our deen, and strong companionship, ISBCC's youth program - ARKAnum - expanded its offerings to include a Friday night program for ages 7-11, complementing its Saturday program for ages 12-16.

Growth

100

ARKAnum has more than doubled the amount of teens served growing from 45 teens to 100 since it's launch in 2015.

Mentorship

20

ARKAnum wouldn't be the success it is without it's mentors. 20% of the 20 member mentor team are graduates of ARKAnum.

International Trips

2016
Turkey & Spain

2017
Malaysia & Dubai

2018
Germany, Austria, Switzerland,
Italy & Slovenia

Retreats

Maine
New Hampshire
Vermont
Connecticut
New York

Activites

Monthly Qiyams
Castle Island
Bowling
Base Camp
Ice skating
Laser tag
Paint ball
Sky zone
Roller skating
Eid carnival
Summer internship (Business Entrepreneurial ship & Videography)

Summer Camps for Juniors (2016, 2017)
Community service with Kids 4 Peace Boston for Syrian Refugees
Quarterly Parent's meetings
Ramadan iftar potlucks
Mentor retreats
Fundraising bake sales
Family Brunches
Short movie competition

The Light of the Quran

Youth Quran Programming

In addition to launching ArkJr, Imam Muhammad started a new set of weekday Qur'an classes focused on ages 12 and under to build a stronger relationship with the Qu'ran.

ARKjr

This year ISBCC's ARKAnum program expanded to include 7 to 11 year olds.

50

Children participated in the first semester of ARKjr

ARKAnum Summer Program

ARKAnum projects continued expansion of its program to include a summer program in 2019

Kids Quran

with Imam Muhammad Nabeel

40

Children brought closer to the book of Allah

Weekend Quran Classes

Coming later this year Imam Muhammad Nabeel will be launching new Quran classes for the children of our community.

القرآن



Allying with the
Forces of Light

Partner Organizations

Grants from local foundations provided the center with \$176,000 in additional funding to sustain and launch new initiatives, particularly in the civic engagement space. Collaboration with a number of partners allowed us to expand the impact of our work. We are grateful to all of our grantees and partners.

Interfaith Teach-ins

- Temple Israel
- Temple Beth Zion
- Temple Isaiah
- First Church in Cambridge
- St. Paul's Cathedral Service



Financial Support

\$75,000	\$35,000	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$16,000
Barr Foundation	Hyams Foundation	Proteus Fund	Boston Foundation	Children's Hospital

Partnerships

<i>Civic Engagement</i>	<i>Combating Islamophobia</i>	<i>Serving the Needy</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Tours</i>
GBIO	CAIR MA	ICNA Relief Muslim Community Support Services	Malik Academy BIS Al Bashaer School MAS Quran	45z Schools 11 Interfaith groups



Our Forces of Light

Community Profiles



Justice Ismail Laher

Last Ramadan the ISBCC recognized Justice Ismail Laher for his life long commitment to helping others. Ismail Laher served as Justice in the South African Supreme Court, Nelson Mandela's lawyer, Advisory Board of Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, the Cambridge Council on Aging and the board of SCM Transportation. But on top of all of that we've come to learn of this individual that he is a man of service and giving. Everyone who knows this individual knows how kind and generous he is. He's always the first one to give what he has in his home. He embodies that beautiful Ibada of standing in prayer, loving Allah (SWT), following the Prophet (PBUH), and serving people.



Alif Muhammad

In March the ISBCC recognized community member Alif Muhammed of "Syracuse 8"; a group of African American members of the 1969-70 Syracuse University football team who petitioned for racial equality on their team. The student-athletes wanted better medical care for injured players and stronger academic support. The group also called for an equal opportunity to compete fairly for any position on the starting team and for racial integration of the football coaching staff. The students held firmly to their list of demands until it was met. Ultimately, the "Syracuse 8" were blackballed by the National Football League for their petition. Like Mohamed Ali, however, they sacrificed for what was right, and generations since them have benefited for their prophetic choices.



Yusufi Vali - Barr Fellowship

Our ED Yusufi Vali was chosen as one of 12 leaders in Greater Boston to receive the Barr Fellowship. The Barr Fellowship celebrates exceptional leaders, investing in them and their organizations, and cultivating a network of civic leaders committed to Greater Boston. Selected for their significant leadership and contributions at their organizations and across the Boston community, Barr Fellows participate in a two-year program, including a group learning journey, a three-month sabbatical, and facilitated retreats with their class of Fellows. As part of the Barr Fellowship, Yusufi traveled to Rwanda for a learning journey, will take a sabbatical from late June to late September, and the ISBCC has received a \$100,000 grant over two years to support leadership and organizational development. While he is away, Ms. Salma Kazmi will serve as Interim Executive Director, co-leading the ISBCC ship with Shaykh Yasir.

Religious Leadership

Senior Imam

Shaykh Yasir Fahmy

Associate Imam

Imam Abdul-Malik Merchant

Qari

Imam Muhammad Nabeel

Ustadha

Janan Delgado

Staff

Executive Director

Yusufi Vali

Interim Executive Director

Salma Kazmi

Part-time Operations Director

Khaoula Benghanem

Program Organizer

Hayfaa Ali

Fundraising Coordinator

Rasha Azoni-Hannigan

Marketing Director

Mustafa Hannigan

Youth Director

Abubakr Fakhry

MAS Youth Director

Samer Naseredden

Office Manager

Kehiria Maruf

Senior Accountant

Abdullahi Yusuf

Facilities Director

Helal Alwaz

Facilities Staff

Hajj Mohamed Hammou

Abdeljabbar Hamiddene

Ricardo Maestre

Advisory Team

Strategy

Amr El-Moselhy

Legal

Stephanie Marzouk

Youth & Family

Saida Abdi

Accounting & Finance

Zahid Siddiqui

Fundraising

Dr. Faisal Khan

Program Design & Evaluation

Craig Holbrook

Ahl al Masjid

Mohamed Nour, *Chair*

Hajja Ashaki Tijaniyya, *Vice Chair*

Elsir Sanousi

Abdullatif Karama

Hajji Ibrahim

Hajjah Kamara

Omar Jabereen

Naima Agalab

Thank You

May Allah reward all of those who have sacrificed so much to make the ISBCC what it is today and no longer serve His house in an official capacity.

Suzan El-Rayess, *Former Development Director*

Salah Khedznaji, *Former Assistant Facilities Director*

Ayesha Kazmi, *Former Ex. Assistant & Organizer*

Amir Memon, *Former Advisory Team*

Karriem Van Leesten, *Former Advisory Team*

Mariam Ismail, *Former Advisory Team*

Photography Team

Hajjah Kamara

Salma Kilaouy

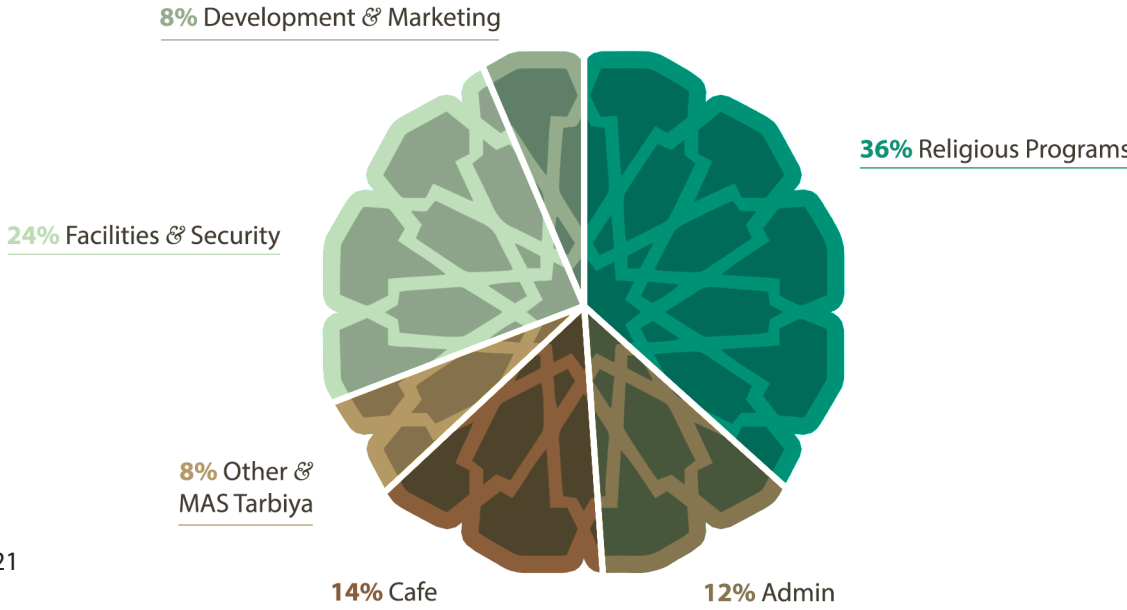
Faizal Westcott

Join the Light

Finances

We are committed to informing, you the community, how the amana you have given to the ISBCC is being used. Here at the ISBCC transparency is a core value. We invite you to take a look at your center’s income and expenses foizr the past year. We also invite you to meet with our Chief Financial Officer Zahid Siddiqui in the event of any questions. He is a volunteer community member who works for Price Waterhouse and independently reviews our finances. Please email him at **zahid@masboston.org**.

Expenses



Details

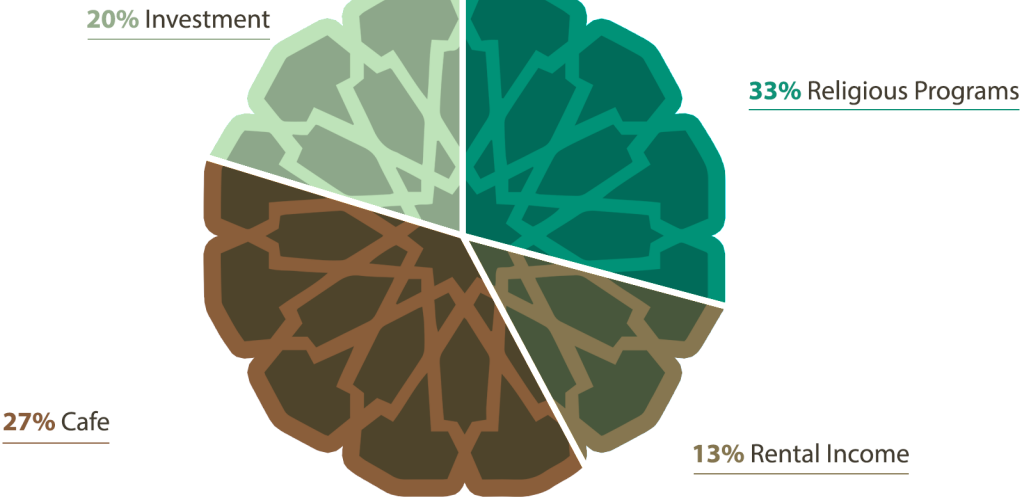
Admin	\$300,000
Cafe	\$360,000
Development & Marketing	\$210,000
Facility & Security	\$600,000
Other & MAS Tarbiya	\$140,000
Religious Programs	\$890,000
Total	\$2,510,000

Income Statement

Year over year

	2015	2016	2017
Income & Other Income	\$1,780,000	\$2,320,000	\$2,680,000
Cost Of Sales	(\$260,000)	(\$350,000)	(\$390,000)
Expense & Other Expense	\$1,516,648	(\$1,960,000)	(\$1,520,000)
Net Income	-	\$10,000	(\$160,000)

Earned Revenue*



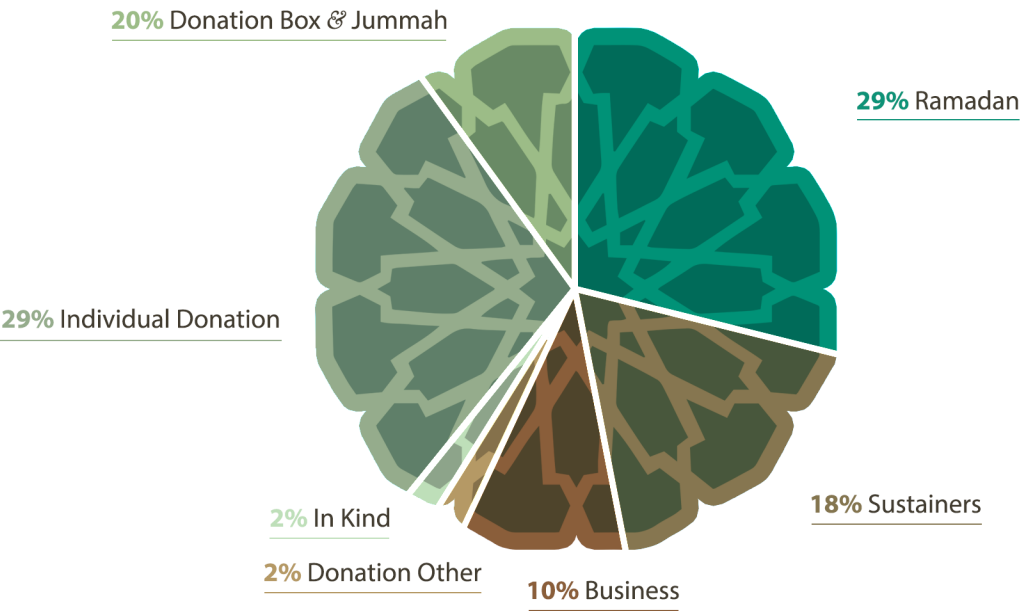
Details

Cafe	\$370,000
Investment	\$200,000
Other	(\$10,000)
Religious Programs	\$290,000
Rental Income	\$130,000
Business	\$180,000
Donation Other	\$40,000
In Kind	\$30,000
Individual Donation	\$490,000
Jummuah & Donation Boxes	\$170,000
Ramadan **	\$490,000
Sustainer	\$300,000
Total	\$2,680,000

* Earned Revenue is defined as revenue where ISBCC provides either a product or service in return for a payment or where ISBCC is earning an investment on its capital.

** This amount refers to actual monies collected during Ramadan. When included with pledges made in Ramadan, the total amount raised during Ramadan in 2017 was ~760k. This Ramadan our goal is to collect \$850k insha'Allah. Please give generously.

Donation Revenue



THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY of BOSTON CULTURAL CENTER
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A project of MAS Boston

