

Muslim Council Honors Dr. Farid Ilyas Muhammad for His Role in Carrying Forth the Legacy of Brother Malcolm X

American Islamic College hosted the annual Malcolm X Day event on May 19th. To honor African-American contributions toward advancing human dignity and social justice in a manner consistent with the Prophetic Mission, the “Malcolm X *El Hajj Malik El Shabazz* Courage Award” has been established by the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago. The inaugural award was presented this year to Dr. Farid Ilyas Muhammad, co-founder and CEO of International Human Rights Association of American Minorities IHRAAM – a Non-Governmental Organization in Consultative Status with the Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) at the United Nations. By taking the case for human rights of African-Americans before the UN, Dr. Farid Muhammad has fulfilled Brother Malcolm Shabazz’s quest to do that.

The program, “Honoring the Life and Lasting Legacy of Malcolm X *El Hajj Malik El Shabazz*” opened with remarks by AIC President, Dr. Timothy Gianotti. He focused on the role human beings have in serving The Creator as stewards and caretakers of the creation. He mentioned that the college “uphold[s] the Quranic teachings that we must stand for justice even when we ourselves are implicated.” He acknowledged “that [the AIC] campus sits on land originally entrusted to Indigenous Peoples whose sovereignty, culture and very lives were violated by colonial policy – the same colonial policy that has enslaved, denigrated, oppressed and persecuted our African-American sisters and brothers for generations.”

Dr. Jaleel Abdul Adil, a Clinical Psychologist at the University of Illinois - Chicago, gave a presentation on “Righteous Resistance in the Pre-Malcolm Era”. Dr. Jaleel described how “Prophet Muhammad (s) is our best example in standing forth for justice”. And he explained that “when we embrace Brother Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X), we embrace the fact that he gave us a modern example of the application of the *sunnah* (way) of Prophet Muhammad (s).” Dr. Jaleel also emphasized that “Muslims of African descent have a long and proud history of struggle and sacrifice for Islam [justice]”.

Imam Charles Muhammad talked about Brother Malcolm’s origin story. He described the Lost-Found Nation of Islam as a Black Liberation theology which borrowed from Islam to address the degradation, oppression and persecution of Blackamericans. Imam Charles said, “The [NOI] presented a narrative that centered Blackamericans as god – the original man. This served as a sort of placeholder - a mythic substitute to wean Blackamericans away from false narratives being imposed upon them by others that rendered them spiritually and psychologically subjugated to others. But the goal was always Al-Islam.”

Khair Sadrud-Din talked about the Life and Lasting Legacy of Brother Malcolm Shabazz’s Impact. Khair recounted numerous examples of how Brother Malcolm’s life story and leadership has left an indelible impression upon every generation. Brother Khair explained that Malcolm X’s impact not only helped to shape history, it also influenced the culture, especially through literature and music.

In his acceptance of the Malcolm X *El Hajj Malik El Shabazz* Courage Award, Dr. Farid Muhammad stated that he was doing so “on behalf of Malcolm Shabazz, the late Dr. Yussuf Naim Kly - the first chair and co-founder of IHRAAM, and those who continue to struggle for human rights and social justice for all.” He went on to say, “The socio-cultural impact of Malcolm’s life upon those of my generation is incalculable. The scope and depth of Brother Malcolm’s contributions to the mission of Islam in the United States and particularly its impact among people of African descent everywhere cannot be overstated.” Dr. Farid also pointed out how just prior to his untimely death, Malcolm along with John Henrik Clarke (and Dr. Yussuf N. Kly as advisor) wrote the basic unity program for the Organization of Afro American Unity. He said that it is from this historical and political context that IHRAAM has its roots.



(L-R Abdullah Mitchell, Dr. Jaleel Abdul Adil, Imam Charles Muhammad, Dr. Farid Ilyas Muhammad, Irshad Khan, Khair Sadrud-Din, Dr. Timothy Gianotti, Randal Muhammad)

View entire program here:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=421729249786416

(Note: sound starts after the first few minutes)



THE COUNCIL
OF ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS
OF GREATER CHICAGO

Dr. Farid I. Muhammad

El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz

Malcolm X

Courage Award

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