

Profile

Aneelah Afzali is the founder and Executive Director of the American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN), a new initiative launched through the Muslim Association of Puget Sound (MAPS) to provide a strategic and visionary response to the challenges of our times. Aneelah is also the Director of Legal Clinic with the MAPS Muslim Community Resource Center; board member of Global Social Business Partners; board member of Bridge to M.O.R.E. (Medical Outreach, Research and Education); and Community Liaison for the Outdoor Leadership Program at IslandWood.

Aneelah is an attorney and graduate of Harvard Law School who worked at two law firms in Seattle (making partner at one), before becoming General Counsel leading the Legal Department of a local healthcare technology company. In addition to her legal practice, Aneelah co-founded the Middle Eastern Legal Association of Washington and served as inaugural president for two years. The Washington State Bar Association has honored Aneelah with its Excellence in Diversity award, and Washington Law and Politics has recognized her as a Rising Star multiple years.

After a spiritual awakening and witnessing the growing divisiveness in our country, Aneelah took a break from her legal career to pursue two things her faith emphasizes – knowledge and service. For the past three years, Aneelah has served as a community activist, interfaith leader, educator and presenter, guest preacher, events coordinator, strategic adviser to several non-profits, civil rights and social justice advocate, mentor and motivational speaker to youth and young professionals, community capacity-builder, seeker of knowledge, and volunteer attorney.

Her work with faith and non-faith communities has helped build bridges of alliance, increase understanding of Islam and Muslims, fight bigotry and discrimination, and combat Islamophobia with facts over fiction, faith over fear and love over hate. Events and programs she has helped coordinate include Standing Together (interfaith dialogue series), Daughters of Abraham (interfaith panel), YouthRising Conference, MAPS Annual Interfaith Iftar, and the WA Secretary of State and Superintendent of Public Instruction debates sponsored by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) – Washington chapter.

Aneelah has spoken at events hosted by Representative Pramila Jayapal, the Center for Biological Diversity, YMCA, Young Women Empowered, Seattle Neighborhood Action Coalition, Seattle International District Rotary Club, Dispute Resolution Center of King County, El Comité and the May 1st Action Coalition, Bishops' Committee, Edmonds Lutheran Church, First Congregational Church of Bellevue, Plymouth Church, Admiral Congregational Church, Nativity Lutheran Church, Overlake Christian Church, CAIR-WA, Muslim Association of Puget Sound, University of Washington, Pierce College Puyallap, Overlake High School, and University Prep, among others.

Aneelah graduated *summa cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in Psychology (and minors in Business and Spanish) from the University of Oregon Robert D. Clark Honors College, and was named a Chayes International Service Fellow at Harvard Law School. Aneelah enjoys traveling, snowboarding, and football, and is a proud Seahawks and Ducks fan!