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## All Dulles Area Muslim Society Mosque

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Student perspectives on worship services from Instructor Jennifer Garvin-Sanchez's Religious Studies 108 Human Spirituality undergraduate course at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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# All Dulles Area Muslim Society Mosque

by Imran Syed

The All-Dulles Area Muslim Society, or more commonly known as “ADAMS Center”, is a non- denominational house of worship. This means that it accepts all sectors of Islam, such as Sunni and Shiite. Although it is a non- denominational mosque, majority of its demographic is Sunni. This is because Shiite Muslims tend to worship with each other than mix with Sunni Muslims, but ADAMS prefers both sectors as they both worship the same one God, Allah. ADAMS Center is located in 46903 Sugarland Road, in Sterling, Virginia. I attended their Friday prayer, which is called Jummah, on October 23, 2015, and attended the 12:45 P.M. session. The service, which is called a Khutbah in Islamic terms, was led by Dr. Altaf Hussain, one of the Imams and Islamic scholars in ADAMS. He is constantly to give talks about Islam in many Islamic events. One recent one was at a convention hosted by the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) where he had several slots for him to speak on various subject in an Islamic viewpoint.

As I pulled onto the property of ADAMS center, I was greeted by several patrol officers at the car entrance. Since there was an abundance of Muslims trying to get in, they had to have patrol officers guide the drivers to parking spots and such, that’s how hectic it was! It took me nearly 10 minutes to be guided and to park my car. The mosque had the cube-shaped building with a wooden tent-like structure next to it. The wooden building is used for the month of Ramadan, the Month when Muslims

fast during sunlight. During the Ramadan nights, the staff of ADAMS Center would host the meal when Muslim would break their fast and the tent was used to accommodate all the people that would come. On average, they had 300-500 Muslims and break their fast together. I was impressed by the community-like hospitality. When I went inside to the main building, there was a hall where several booths were present consisting of charities, local businesses, and boy scouts on stand-by, waiting for the prayer to conclude to interest people of their services. I like how the mosque allows small business and charities to branch out with them to help get the attention of the community.

Before I walked into the prayer hall, I took off my shoes before entering. This is because it would keep the carpets clean when multiple come and perform their prayers. I walked in and sat down on the male side on the carpet, since male and female pray in different sections. One thing I observed during my visit at the All-Dulles Area Muslim Society is that it had a very diverse set of people, ranging from Pakistanis, Indians, Afghanis, Iranians, Arabs, Africans, Bengalis, and even a few Caucasian individuals. It appeared to be very family orientated as well. I saw fathers gathering their sons and it seemed like they were explaining to them the concepts of prayer and the importance of listening to the Khutbah.

The Khutbah, led by Dr. Altaf Hussain, lasted

approximately twenty-five minutes. The topic of the Khutbah was about importance of raising children Islamic. He says how difficult it is raising a child in America, since majority of the adult were immigrants. He stressed how easily many children can go corrupt for going to the path of drugs or commit adultery. The Khutbah was very engaging, as he would sometimes ask someone near him on their experiences and thoughts on the matter. His language was very easy to grasp and using specific examples from the Quran to provide validity to everything he was preaching. His final thoughts concluded with parents should make sure they are raising their kids with Islamic intentions and ended the service a prayer to God, called a Dua'a, which was recited in Arabic. After the Dua'a, Dr. Altaf Hussain proceeded to lead the Jummah prayer. After the prayer, the President of the ADAMS Center brought a district office candidate to talk to everyone about what he was going to bring to the table to the district he is representing for. The President specifically stated that ADAMS Center do not represent any candidates or parties, but they let candidates come in the talk to help persuade voters to vote for them. This impressed that they allow candidates to come, because this influences the community the importance of voting and being involved in politics. The All- Dulles Area Muslim Society gave off a liberal atmosphere, with many charities and other organizations involved with the community to keep the people engaged, active, and informed of not just the mosque itself, but the world around them.

In conclusion, attending and observing the ADAMS Center was a very enriching experience. It gave me a nice perspective of how a mosque is run and how it engages with the Muslims apart of it. It gave off a

community-like environment that motivated me to come back again and again. •

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