

2018 CAMBA Elections Notices of Intent

Candidate: Sarah Imam

1. Name:

Sarah Imam

2. Brief summary of your legal education, experience, and background:

I grew up in the Northern Virginia area and went to the University of Virginia for undergrad. I then came back up to the DMV area and attended George Mason University School of Law—I recently graduated in 2017. I worked in the immigration law field for a short period until I decided to shift my career and started working at the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

3. Why do you want to be on the CAMBA Board?

CAMBA is such an amazing resource for Muslim lawyers in the DC area and as a member who has benefited immensely from this organization, I want to give back and support it.

4. What skills/qualifications will you bring to the CAMBA Board?

As a young attorney, I will bring a different perspective to the Board. I know what it takes to host successful events, how to create a comfortable space for all, and the challenges law students and new attorneys face. With these qualifications and skill sets, I can help CAMBA be there for anyone in need of resources.

5. What are your goals for CAMBA?

My main goal is to make CAMBA even more resourceful than it already is. It is important for future lawyers to have CAMBA as a tool to help guide them. I also would like to have more events; so all members can network and learn about different areas of the law.

Candidate: Ahmed Mohamed

Please accept this letter as my notice of intent to stand for board elections for the 2018 Elections.

My name is Ahmed Mohamed. I'm a trial attorney in D.C. for the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). I have been with CAIR since August 2017. My work focuses on combating religious discrimination and profiling, including the government's surveillance practices that illegally target Muslims. My docket includes numerous lawsuits regarding the government's watchlisting system, prisoners' access to Ramadan meals & prayer accommodations, employment discrimination, Muslim Ban, religious questioning, school bullying, and police use of force. I also conduct Know Your Rights (KYR) workshops and represent Muslims targeted by the FBI across the country.

I earned my J.D./C.L., *magna cum laude* and Order of the Coif, from Louisiana State University Law Center in 2015. As a student, I was named the Admiralty Law Moot Court National Champion and was awarded the Maritime Law Association of the U.S. Award for Best Brief. Additionally, I represented an undocumented immigrant in deportation proceedings and gained legal status for the client as a student attorney. After law school, I joined Kean Miller, one of Louisiana's largest and premier law firms, as a litigation associate handling complex matters ranging from multi-million-dollar insurance recovery cases to securities fraud, bankruptcy, and estate litigation. After Trump's election, I left private practice for public interest work to defend my community and other minorities.

I want to be on the CAMBA Board because I am passionate about supporting diversity and inclusion. I want to support Muslim professionals gain visibility, attain leadership roles, and have opportunities to inspire our youth. Growing up in rural Louisiana and without a Muslim professional and Muslim network highlighted the importance of having a strong network of mentors, peers, and supporters.

As a CAMBA Board member, I will bring a network of community connections, experience planning and organizing events centered around legal issues, and a background of working with the Muslim community. As a CAIR attorney, I regularly conduct outreach with the Muslim community, including developing key relationships with many Muslim organizations and masjids. Additionally, I have organized and participated in numerous KYRs workshops, panels, and protests. I also bring a strong grassroots background of serving the Muslim community. I represent community members in discrimination matters. I believe CAMBA would benefit from having a Board member that is on the ground working on legal issues directly affecting the Muslim community and with experience of conducting outreach to the Muslim community.

I intend to help CAMBA expend on its mentorship program, educational and networking, professional development, and to diversify its pro bono offerings and activities. I am a CAMBA mentor this year, and I think it is an important program to increase the number of Muslims joining the profession and assist current law students or young attorneys in their careers. I'd like the mentorship program to have a component targeting high school students to increase youth interest in the law. Moreover, I will venture, with the Board's agreement, to develop a mock

trial or oral argument competition for Muslim youth in the area. I want to create more opportunities for its members to give back and educate our community on their rights. I will also work to continue to bring networking opportunities for CAMBA members. I will pay close attention to the needs of the membership and prioritize accordingly.

It would be an honor to serve the CAMBA community. Since moving to DC, I have been impressed by the vibrant community that CAMBA has been able to connect. I hope to help guide CAMBA and deepen its impact and strengthen the Muslim legal community. Thank you for your consideration.

Candidate: Zain Jinnah

My name is Zain Jinnah, and I would be honored to serve as a Director of CAMBA for 2019 and 2020.

Since 2016 I have been an associate at White & Case LLP, where I practice international arbitration and internationally oriented litigation, primarily on behalf of foreign sovereigns. My *pro bono* and other extracurricular activities also focus on public international law and foreign affairs, as these are the areas I'm most passionate about.

I feel that my strong international orientation would make me an excellent addition to CAMBA. Beyond my aforementioned practice and extracurricular involvement, I've also worked and studied in several countries – I received my JD from Harvard Law School in the U.S., my MPP from Oxford University in the U.K., and my BA from the University of Calgary in Canada. I would love to contribute my global experience and perspective to CAMBA's efforts.

Having been a CAMBA member for two years, I've thoroughly enjoyed the programming and community development, and would like to further these initiatives as well as contribute to new ones. Some of the areas I'd like to help advance are:

- *Mentorship*: While CAMBA has already pioneered some mentorship opportunities, such as for summer interns I don't think there can ever be too much of this! I would like to help develop a more institutionalized mentorship program that connects experienced attorneys with more junior ones, to foster growth at all career stages.
- *Relationship-building*: CAMBA already does a great job of uniting the DC Muslim bar. I feel these efforts can be taken further, through actively developing both professional and social relations with other affinity bar associations, as well as with Muslim affinity groups in DC representing different professions (let's be honest – we all get sick of talking to lawyers all the time!).
- *Alternative careers*: Lawyers often contemplate changing course in their careers down the line, whether to focus on different areas of the law or a different profession altogether. I feel that CAMBA can hold more events focusing on the varied career trajectories open to attorneys.

I would be humbled to have the opportunity to contribute to CAMBA's many initiatives.

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Candidate: Kiran Siddiqi

Salaam CAMBA Members: I currently work an Adjudications Officer with USCIS. I previously worked at the Office of the CIS Ombudsman, where I engaged in stakeholder outreach, assisted applicants with issues related to USCIS, and assisted in drafting policy recommendations to help improve immigration services by the agency. I also had the unique opportunity to serve as an Asylum Officer with USCIS. Prior to being employed with the federal government, I was managing attorney at a boutique immigration law firm in New York City, where I represented individuals from all walks of the world. I have also served as an active participant within the immigrant and American-Muslim advocacy communities in NYC, rallying around various issues such as voter rights; hate crimes backlash; community organizing skills; civil rights; and know-your-rights education tools.

I moved to D.C. from New York not too long ago, and each interaction with CAMBA Board representatives and members has been welcoming. I realized this organization is just as passionate as I am about having a positive impact in the legal community and creating a professional space for the growth of American Muslim lawyers. I am running for a position on the CAMBA Board to strengthen the efforts on solid mentorship of both young lawyers and mid-level associates. CAMBA has been keen on fostering diversity in the workplace and in its own membership base. I would like to continue to focus on inclusion and developing partnerships with sister bar associations to explore our common legal professional development needs and goals. Furthermore, how can CAMBA continue to serve people who need legal assistance, and what role does CAMBA have as a Muslim-identifying bar association? These are goals I would like to work on with my fellow CAMBA Board members, including issues and interests of the times as they may arise.

I am a former board member of the Muslim Bar Association of New York (MuBANY), where I served as Secretary and Committee member of the Board for over five years. Similar to the volunteer nature of this bar association with all hands on deck, MuBANY Board members brainstormed and hosted events that were relevant to the needs of our member-base and legal community at the time, such as: women's round tables; career growth in the various legal sectors; summer mentorship and bar exam review; bias faced by members of various faiths; and diversity & inclusion. We partnered with many minority bar associations, and at times I served as a liaison and representative of MuBANY. This was all in addition to our designated Board roles. If elected, I promise to bring the same fervor of serving my fellow bar members and learning from each other to CAMBA.

I earned my law degree at New York Law School where I was a member of the Justice Action Center for Public Service, and obtained my Bachelor's from Stony Brook University. I am also an alumna of the D.C.-based Muslim Public Service Network. I am admitted to the New York State bar. Thank you.

Candidate: Jesmin Saikh

My name is Jesmin Saikh. I currently serve as an attorney with the Board of Veterans Appeals, an agency within the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Prior to joining the Board of Veterans Appeals in 2015, I practiced immigration law with a nonprofit organization in Columbia, Maryland. I am currently a member of my agency's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and have trained attorneys that are new to my agency. I received my J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law in 2012, where I was a member of the Moot Court Honor Society and Immigrant Justice Clinic. I am licensed to practice law in the state of Maryland. Prior to law school, I attended the University of Maryland, College Park, where I completed separate degrees in cell biology and molecular genetics, and government and politics.

I want to join the CAMBA Board because I personally have benefited from being a part of the organization, and I would now like to assist the organization in furthering its objectives in the upcoming year. I began attending CAMBA programs and events in 2013, when I was a recent law graduate. CAMBA provided me with a platform to meet and interact with Muslim attorneys in diverse fields. Through these interactions, I was able to receive valuable guidance from more established practitioners regarding my career. I was also able to establish my own network of relationships with other entry-level attorneys, and to this day, we continue to provide support and assistance to one another in our respective careers. Thus, because I have benefited immensely from CAMBA, I want to assist the organization in continuing to provide a meaningful platform for other Muslim attorneys in this area.

The most valuable qualification that I bring to the CAMBA Board is my prior experience working with CAMBA. Since 2017, I have been a part of CAMBA's mentorship committee, and have assisted in developing the current mentorship program. In addition to assisting with the creation of the program, I've specifically assisted in developing materials for the program, and assisted in locating and pairing prospective mentors with their mentees. I also assisted CAMBA by serving on a panel for its Mock Interview and Resume workshop this past April, and have provided logistical support during CAMBA's most recent Iftar Dinner. I also work well on a team, and would be able to smoothly integrate within the existing Board. Finally, one of my strongest skills is that I am goal-oriented, which will assist CAMBA in achieving the specific objectives it has set for the upcoming year.

I envision two specific goals for CAMBA this year. First, I would like to strengthen and expand CAMBA's existing mentorship program. At the moment, we have facilitated individual mentor-mentee relationships on a smaller scale. The mentorship committee has discussed organizing monthly meetings for larger groups based upon practice area, so that experienced practitioners can meet with newer attorneys looking for guidance in that specific practice area. As a Board member, my goal would be to ensure that we provide this type of mentorship platform. My other goal for CAMBA is to expand its membership base. There are many Muslim attorneys working in the area that are unaware that an organization like CAMBA exists. In the past two years, CAMBA has organized popular events, such as an event with the Washington State Solicitor General who challenged the travel ban, which have attracted a diverse group of attorneys. As a Board member, I would assist the existing Board in organizing programs such as these in order to engage other Muslim attorneys who are not yet involved with CAMBA.

I will conclude my application by expressing that I feel an immense amount of pride to be a part of CAMBA. When I was growing up, I did not come across many Muslim attorneys, especially female Muslim attorneys. Now, in my agency alone, I work with at least 10 other Muslim attorneys. Most of these individuals I met through CAMBA. Through CAMBA, I've had the opportunity to meet other attorneys who are at the forefront of their respective practice areas, and are poised to become leaders in their field. This has encouraged me to try and achieve more in my own career. Becoming a CAMBA Board member would provide me with the opportunity to play a greater role in an organization whose growth I am committed to.