



2012 ANNUAL REPORT



ISPU is an independent, nonpartisan think tank and research organization committed to conducting objective, empirical research and offering expert policy analysis on some of the most pressing issues facing the United States. These issues include U.S. foreign policy, national security, the economy, and public health. Our mission is to provide expert analysis, insight and context to critical issues facing our nation, with an emphasis on those issues related to Muslim communities in the U.S. and abroad.



LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP

2012 WAS A HISTORIC YEAR for many reasons, not least of which was the re-election of President Barack Obama. No matter what your political stripes, we can all agree that the power and potential of the diverse electorate that came out to vote was probably the biggest news on Nov 7. As I drove into work that day, hearing the post-election analysis, all I could think about was the potential this new reality held for organizations like ISPU.

I joined ISPU almost 3 years ago for a lot of different reasons, but chief among them was the opportunity I saw for new voices in the policy debate. This understanding is now shared across the country and will shape political debates into the future. It is no longer just “nice” to include once marginalized groups, it is a necessity. This simple and powerful premise was why ISPU was founded and is now more important than ever. Our work to inform and support the development of the American Muslim community as it grows and finds its place locally and nationally is at the core of what we do every day.

As we celebrated the tenth anniversary of ISPU’s founding, we made ambitious plans to continue to deliver important research in the coming decades with a fine-tuned research agenda, a growing staff, and an efficient model for continuing to build an institution that will last.

On an institutional level, ISPU continued to grow with the addition of Farhan Latif as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Policy Impact. Farhan is helping to implement a refocused research plan aimed at maximizing the potential for measurable impact and leading an innovative development campaign emphasizing engagement with individual donors.

It is because of our growing and diverse partners around the country and the world and the dedication of our board, staff and scholars that ISPU’s continued success is possible.

With gratitude,
Shireen Zaman
Executive Director

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

A *brief* HISTORY of ISPU

In late 2001, after the events of 9/11 had devastated the country, five friends began preparing to do their part to make sure the United States lived up to its ideals. Concerned about the commentary surrounding the Muslim community, they conceived the idea of creating a research organization that would provide better information and analysis about Islam, American Muslims, foreign policy and Muslim communities around the world.

The founders consciously chose to not pursue advocacy, recognizing the work that was already being done on behalf of the community, and noting the gap in hard data and nuanced analysis that was needed to inform the media presenting Muslims to the public and policymakers who make decisions every day that affect the community. There were no other organizations with a similar mission: to cultivate genuine scholars and partner with them in producing research and analysis on issues that matter to American Muslims in order to create better-informed policies.

Through a combination of determination, wisdom, fate, and a supportive community, in 2002 the founders saw their dream become a reality with the launch of the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding. ISPU



started small, with a handful of scholars. The passion of the founders attracted a roster of scholars featuring some of the best and brightest thinkers in academic and policy circles. Today over 70 scholars work to provide insight, nuance and understanding about a topic that most know little about. The founders passed on their vision to a talented and devoted staff ensuring that ISPU scholars are expanding the policy debate beyond the simplistic, sound-bite driven analysis often heard in the news

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and among policy makers today. ISPU is committed to this work beyond political cycles and the current intrigue surrounding Muslims and Islam and believes that this work is critical to the positive development of the American Muslim community.

ISPU maintains offices in Michigan and Washington DC. Staff and scholars spread throughout the world are positioned to analyze and advise as issues arise in the United States and abroad. Advocacy, relief and political groups look to ISPU for data and analysis that reflects the complexities of the Muslim community. Staff and scholars are regularly called on to advise the White House, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, Congress, the State Department and other government agencies. Scholars and leadership brief congressional committees and staffs, hold private roundtable discussions with policymakers from across government, and present at conferences around the world. ISPU scholars are regularly featured in major mainstream media in interviews on television, from CNN to The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. They routinely write articles for major media outlets and explain key issues to international audiences.

As ISPU celebrated its ten year anniversary in 2012, the Board and Staff continued to conduct objective, empirical research on American Muslims and provide a fresh perspective and relevant policy analysis on the most critical issues facing the United States. Thanks to a committed community who has been supportive since the very beginning, ISPU is well positioned to carry out the vision of the founders into the next decade and beyond.





2012 marked the tenth anniversary of the founding of ISPU. A decade's worth of original research and analysis on issues of importance to American Muslims was produced with the belief that better informed policymakers, community leaders and fellow citizens could create a healthier country.

Individual donors, supporters, foundations and partner organizations believe in this idea and rely on ISPU as an organization with policy savvy, academic integrity and grassroots sensibility. ISPU's unique mission has enabled change in communities, made an impact on the national and international level, supported scholars, ideas and actions, and has enabled it to become one of the most respected and relied upon think tanks in the country.

10
YEARS
10 REASONS



...Changes The Conversation.

SINCE 2010, dozens of states have introduced legislation to ban Sharia law in an effort led by a group of anti-Islam activists. With little knowledge of the subject, many politicians and media followed suit and spread a fear of Sharia around the country.

ISPU's research on the subject, including a report by Julie Macfarlane that was the first to ask North American Muslims what they actually thought about Sharia and how they use it in their everyday lives, helped change the way people were talking about Sharia in the U.S.

Before ISPU Reports:

- Sharia's Encroachment into American Courts
- The Case for Banning Sharia Law in America
- Michelle Bachman: Sharia "usurps Constitution"
- Rick Santorum: Sharia is Evil

After ISPU Reports:

- Correction: Study says U.S. Muslims don't want Shariah, either
- In interviews, American Muslims say they reject separate 'sharia' law system
- 11 Lies The Right Spreads About Muslims

...Impacts The Media Debate.

IN SEPTEMBER 2012, when protests erupted around the Muslim world after the release of the film "The Innocence of Muslims", an explosion of commentators and supposed experts appeared on TV. Unfortunately, many lacked an understanding of what was happening and why and jumped to the conclusion that anything offensive to Muslims would lead to violence.

ISPU was able to place one of our leading fellows- Haroon Moghul -in the middle of the debate. He appeared on CNN's Newsroom and offered nuanced analysis on the situation.



ISPU...



...Educates.

SINCE 9/11, the number of students enrolling in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies programs has risen dramatically. As the future leaders in this field seek knowledge, it is critical to empower them with accurate information and intelligent analysis.

Azzah Ahmed is currently one of those students. At her University, she was publicly refuted by one of her professors who claimed that Islamic law was in direct conflict with American civil law. Her grade was changed to an A when she shared ISPU's report *Understanding Sharia in an American Context* with her professor - "My professor could not argue with the facts."

...Supports Community Leaders.

COMMUNITY LEADERS need reliable data to address the community's most complex problems. From mental health issues, to resources for chaplains to the healthcare needs of American Muslims, ISPU has been on the cutting edge of community focused research.

Our 2012 study on divorce was lauded across the country as a critical resource detailing support and services counselors and community leaders can provide in times of marital crisis. In 2013, we will continue to build on this important work.



Shaykh Abdul Nasir Jangda, Director of the Qalam Institute said, "I was so relieved that everything that I was saying, thinking and lecturing about was being backed up by scientific data."

...Presents Facts, Not Agendas.

ISPU IS DOCUMENTING the reality of the American Muslim community in reports like The Detroit Mosque Study, Engaging American Muslims: Political Trends and Attitudes, and A Window Into American Muslim Physicians. These reports present facts, not agendas, and are shared with decision makers, the media, advocacy groups, community leaders and policymakers.

Wajahat Ali, author of Fear, Inc. recently said of our work, "They understand that we need to be pro-active, reach across the aisle, extend a hand in good faith and make alliances and partnerships with individuals and organizations that understand that the American dream should be a reality for all Americans and that hate-mongers are poisoning the communal wealth and fraying our shared values."

REASON
5



REASON
6

...Has Roots In The Community.

THERE ARE VIRTUALLY no national think tanks with influence in Washington, D.C. that started outside of the Beltway, and even fewer that enjoy grassroots support and credibility. ISPU was started by community leaders with grassroots funds. As it has grown, ISPU has matched the contributions of thousands of individual donors with grants from national foundations to ensure long term stability.

ISPU...



...Expands The Parameters Of The Debate.

HASSAN ABBAS'S story is just one example.

"In 2009, I authored an ISPU report on police reform in Pakistan which made the case for international support for Pakistan to enhance its law enforcement and counterinsurgency capacities. Until then, law enforcement models as a critical tool for counterterrorism received scant attention. But ISPU helped me argue that institutional support would lead to long term positive impact and have a major return on investment for the US.

My message reached the policy world and the highest levels of government including former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and The United States Institute of Peace. Many of the report's recommendations are under serious consideration by the government of Pakistan."

...Empowers Communities.

AT THE PEAK of the Park 51 controversy, when opposition to mosque building and expansion reached a fever pitch, a community in Canton, Michigan applied for a permit to build a mosque. When there was some opposition to the mosque, both the municipality and the mosque turned to ISPU's reports for guidance and the permit was granted without incident.

Mosques across the country have turned to this critical research for guidance when seeking a permit to build or expand. In this and so many other areas, ISPU's research has helped communities realize their dreams and the promise of America's most cherished value of religious freedom.

REASON
8



To help inform the debate and empower community and local leaders, ISPU published two major research reports guiding communities and municipalities through the process by Kathleen E. Foley.

...Brings Ideas To The Table.

POLICYMAKERS ARE increasingly dependent on think tanks for clear and impartial analysis and advice. Too often, though, these institutions are driven by politics and ideology rather than sound unbiased insight.

Without ISPU, the same think tanks that promote incomplete, inaccurate and misguided information about Muslims will continue to dominate and drive critical policy decisions. ISPU is devoted to bringing the top scholars to the table to ultimately change the narrative and the parameters of the debate on issues impacting Muslims here and abroad.

REASON
9



REASON
10

...Is Unique.

WHEN QUESTIONS arise about the Muslim community, ISPU is a reliable and strong resource. Today, ISPU research is regularly featured in major media outlets and our leadership and scholars are called on to advise at all levels of government, in the US and beyond.

Many organizations have a few years of success but then slowly burn out as the founders' fatigue sets in. That never happened at ISPU because the founders had a vision that they were willing to pass on to others. Now ISPU is run by a new group of leaders that have taken the organization even further. This stability and innovation has allowed ISPU to thrive and will lead our work into the future.

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A HEALTHY FUNDING MIX,

including significant support from thousands of individual donors. Currently, ISPU has donors hailing from:

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Illinois
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Michigan
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New Jersey
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ISPU HAS RECEIVED GRANT SUPPORT FROM:

- The Good Planet Foundation
- The Henry Luce Foundation
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- The Security & Rights Collaborative, a project of the Proteus Fund
- The Tides Foundation
- The Pillars Fund
- Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America
- Islamic Medical Association of North America

ISPU HAS RECEIVED SIGNIFICANT IN KIND SUPPORT FROM:

- Labayk
- Google, Inc.

ISPU WOULD LIKE TO THANK

all of our generous supporters, especially those who sponsored our 2012 events:

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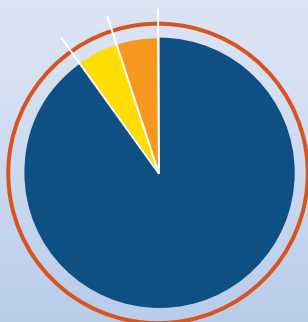
Radwan Ziadeh
Fellow, Washington, DC

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Years Ended December 31, 2012 and 2011

ASSETS	2012	2011
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$122,872	\$295,209
Contributions receivable, less allowance for uncollectible contributions of \$25,090	\$32,932	\$29,922
Grants Receivable	\$-	\$15,990
Prepaid Expenses	\$5,646	\$13,319
Total Current Assets	\$161,450	\$354,440
Equipment:		
Computer Equipment	\$4,266	\$3,145
Furniture & Fixtures	\$1,880	\$1,880
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	\$(3,236)	\$(2,414)
Total Equipment	\$2,910	\$2,611
TOTAL ASSETS	\$164,360	\$357,051
LIABILITIES	2012	2011
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	\$30,952	\$18,924
Accrued Expenses	\$7,159	\$3,329
Total Current Liabilities	\$38,111	\$22,253
NET ASSETS	2012	2012
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$47,743	\$84,520
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	\$78,506	\$250,278
Total Net Assets	\$126,249	\$334,798
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$164,360	\$357,051

OPERATING REVENUES



- Gifts & Events – 90%
- Donated Professional Services – 5%
- Foundation & Grants – 5%

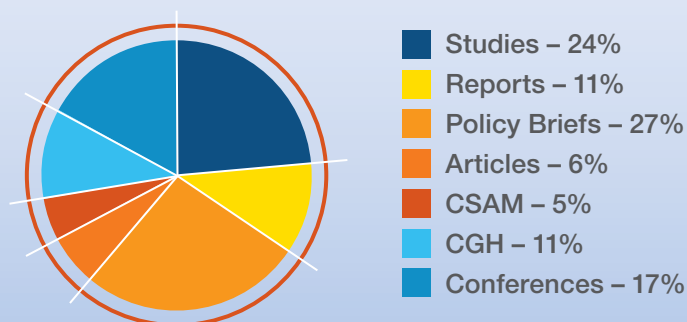
A copy of the institution's audited financial statements is available by request.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Years Ended December 31, 2012 and 2011

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	2012 TOTAL	2011 TOTAL
Public Support & Revenue:				
Contribution Income	\$337,204	\$30,000	\$367,204	\$243,622
Grant Income	\$20,235	\$115,000	\$135,235	\$300,989
Event Income, Net of Expenses	\$(1,170)		\$(1,170)	\$20,469
In-kind Contributions	\$19,687		\$19,687	\$45,058
	\$375,956	\$145,000	\$520,956	\$610,138
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$316,772	\$(316,772)		\$-
Total Public Support & Revenue	\$692,728	\$(171,772)	\$520,956	\$610,138
Functional Expenses:				
Program Expenses	\$498,319		\$498,319	\$376,280
Management & General Expenses	\$123,951		\$123,951	\$131,874
Fundraising Expenses	\$107,235		\$107,235	\$108,737
	\$729,505		\$729,505	\$616,891
Change in Net Assets	\$(36,777)	\$(171,772)	\$(208,549)	\$(6,753)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$84,520	\$250,278	\$334,798	\$341,551
Net Assets at End of Year	\$47,743	\$78,506	\$126,249	\$334,798

PROGRAM EXPENSES







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6 Parklane Blvd, Suite 510, Dearborn, MI 48126 • 1889 F. St, 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20006 • 1.800.920.ISPU (4778)