

# IMAM ZAID SHAKIR

## OFFICIAL BIO

Full Version (442 words)

Last updated:

May 1, 2020 / Ramadan 8, 1441h

Imam Zaid Shakir is a co-founder and senior faculty member of Zaytuna College, the first accredited Islamic liberal arts college located in Berkeley, CA. He has taught courses in Arabic, Islamic history, politics, spirituality, contemporary Muslim thought, and Shafi'i *fiqh*.

Over the years as a community activist, Imam Zaid co-founded the New Brunswick Islamic Center formerly Masjid al-Huda in NJ., Masjid Al-Islam in New Haven, CT. As Imam of Masjid Al-Islam from 1988 to 1994, he spear-headed a community renewal and grassroots anti-drug effort, the Tri-State Muslim Education Initiative, the Connecticut Muslim Coordinating Committee, and also taught political science and Arabic at Southern Connecticut State University. He served as an interfaith council Chaplain at Yale University and developed the Chaplaincy Sensitivity Training for physicians at Yale New Haven Hospital. In 2007, he co-founded the Lighthouse Mosque, in Oakland, CA.

Imam Zaid holds a B.A., (summa cum laude), International Relations, American University, Washington, DC, B.A., Islamic Law and Arabic Language, Abu Nour University, Damascus, M.A., Political Science, Rutgers University, New Jersey. Diplomas (*ijazahs*) from Shaykh Abdul Rahman al-Shaghuri (non-philosophy Tasawwuf texts), Shaykh Mustafa al-Turkmani (Islamic Sciences) and Shaykh Muhammad al-Ya'qubi (Islamic Sciences).

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Imam Zaid speaks and writes on a wide range of topics and has become a voice of conscience for American Muslims as well as people of other faiths. Trained in both the academic and religious intellectual traditions, he is uniquely qualified as a commentator on the substantial issues of our time. As a compelling force for the improvement of race relations in America, and amongst the most respected global Islamic scholars, The New York Times describes him as a *“leading intellectual light”*. He has served as an advisor to many organizations and influential leaders.

A gifted author and lecturer, Imam Zaid was ranked as *“one of the western world’s most influential scholars”*; by The 500 Most Influential Muslims in 2020. He is a signatory along with religious and spiritual Leaders from around the world who presented the UN Secretary General with a declaration in support of the Paris Climate Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, marking the largest number of nations ever signing an international agreement. He is also one of the signatories of *“A Common Word Between Us and You,”* an open letter by Islamic scholars to Christian leaders that calls for peace and mutual understanding. Inspired to work with religious groups on sustainable living and climate change, he is a Green Faith partner in action for the earth. In 2018, CNN listed Imam Zaid among 25 influential American Muslims.