

# CELEBRATING

# 10 years!



TAYBA FOUNDATION  
*Freedom Through Education*



Shaykh Rami Nsour:  
REFLECTION ON  
THE PAST DECADE

2008 - 2018  
IN NUMBERS

Tayba's 3 Areas Of Focus:  
WHAT OUR  
STUDENTS SAY

## A LETTER FROM TAYBA'S DIRECTOR & CO-FOUNDER

### *Shaykh Rami Nsour*

When my dear friend and co-founder of Tayba, Nabil Afifi, congratulated me on Tayba's 10-year anniversary as an incorporated nonprofit, I couldn't believe how much time has passed. We have been doing this work since 2002 and incorporated Tayba as a nonprofit in October 2008. We started out with a cell phone, a P.O. Box and a dream. A dream to go from serving a few prisoners (at that time it was about 5) to be where we are now: thousands of students, in hundreds of prisons in over forty states. We could not have done this without you.

Many times when I tell people about our work, they ask if we get any government grants for our work. I say that while faith-based grants are available, we have been running on the donations of Muslims and Muslim organizations. We are currently pursuing a number of grants, but our backbone of support has been you, the Muslim community. And we are honored that you have entrusted us with your support.

I would like to share with you two dreams that I had about Tayba. The first was when we were in our previous location. I dreamed that I walked up to the office and saw that the office was filled with students. When I woke up, I thought that maybe one day we would have a lot of students studying with us in the office. But then I realized that the students were already there. We had hundreds of files of our students where we track their progress and individual plans. They were not there in person, but they were there in meaning. The second time, I dreamt that I saw a factory with Tayba books rolling off the assembly line. Now, years later, we are rolling off thousands of books from our printer that we are sending into the prison. Achieving both of these dreams has been through the continued support of you and others like you. Thank you for helping us get here!

I look forward to the day when we can greet you on Tayba's 20th anniversary, and then 30th and beyond. Just as these 10 years brought amazing developments that I could not have ever imagined, I look forward to seeing what lies for Tayba in the future and I thank you again for what you have done.

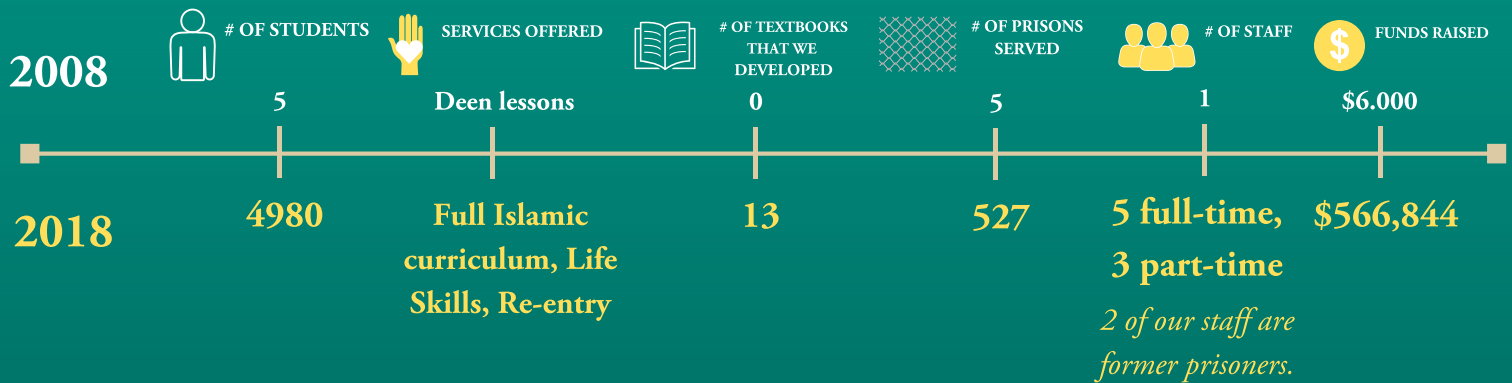


Rami Nsour

# 10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO PRISONERS

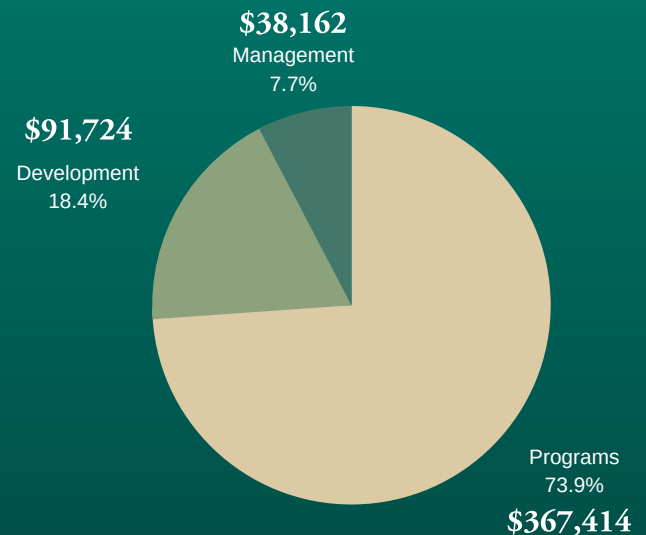
## *In Numbers*

### HIGHLIGHTS

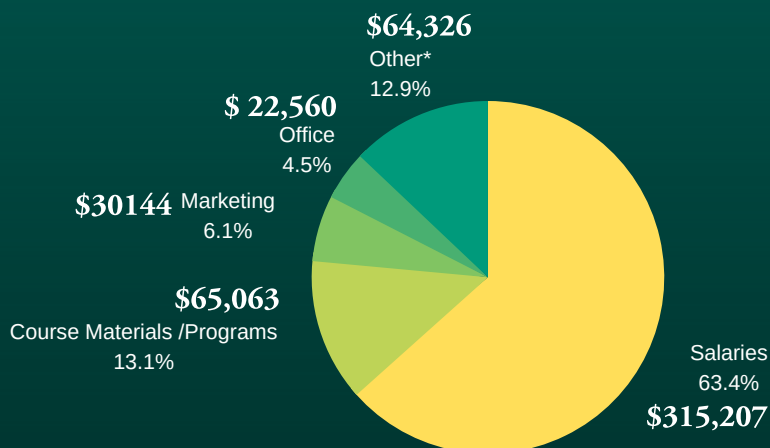


### 2018 EXPENSES BREAKDOWN BY AREA

Although we still spend the vast majority of our budget on programming, we had to increase our development (marketing & fundraising) expenditure this year in order to raise more money for our significantly expanded services.



**2018 TOTAL:**  
**\$497,300**



### 2018 EXPENSES BREAKDOWN BY TYPE

Salaries continue to be our largest expenditure due to the academic nature of our services. Preparing course materials for prisons (which often ban audio/visual materials) as well as answering students' questions and grading their exams and essays requires multiple teachers and grading teams. Since most prisons do not allow electronic communication, the bulk of our communication occurs by regular mail or phone. Given the 2000+ students we serve, this creates a large administrative load on our team as well.

\*Other expenses include platform fees, software, utilities, accounting

# WHAT TAYBA'S Islamic Curriculum Covers

## What each course contains



Course text with explanation: Most courses use a textbook produced by Tayba specifically for the prison context. These textbooks contain transcription of the course lessons, because audio/visual content is often prohibited in prisons



Course exam & assignment

### INTRO LEVEL



ISLAM99

*Introduction to Islam*



IMAN100

*Beliefs Of A Muslim*



FIQH100

*How to Approach Studying Fiqh*



ADAB100

*How to Study Islam*

### 100 LEVEL STAGE 1&2



ADAB101

*Rights Of Parents*



ADAB102

*Prohibitions Of the Tongue*



IMAN101

*Introduction to Islamic Theology*



IHSN101

*Introduction to Purification Of the Heart*

*\*FIQH classes are offered in the Maliki, Hanafi & Shafii schools of Islamic Law.*



USUL101

*Introduction To Usul*



SIRAI01

*Prophetic Biography*



FIQH101/111/121\*  
*Prayer & Purification*



FIQH102/112/122\*  
*Five Pillars*



QRAN101

*Introduction to Quranic Sciences*



HDTH101

*Introduction to Hadith Sciences*

### Additional Coursework

We are currently developing courses for the 200-level curriculum.

### Advanced Studies

Students who have completed 100-level curriculum are advanced enough to be able to do independent studies and are often sent material catered to their individual needs and interests.

### Special Projects

We engage advanced students to help with grading & course development, which helps them apply and hone their own knowledge.

### How each course is graded

- Multiple-choice exam (computer-graded)
- Written assignments (essays, open-ended questions, etc graded by staff)

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

### *Why Prisoners Need Tayba's Islamic Curriculum*

Our Prison Imam for 20 years taught that human beings are devils, that all the miracles mentioned in the Qur'an are metaphorical, and that Isa (alayhi salaam) did not ascend to heaven but rather lived after the crucifixion and went to Afghanistan to preach. Our new imam can't read Arabic so I ended up teaching the lessons. She is an activist though, and has fought for many rights and resources to be made available for us. (SA)

"There were a few short periods, during my time in prison, that I had access to a qualified Imam who provided talem. Though, most often, the state contracted untrained and sometimes inappropriate people. At those times I was forced to learn my deen purely from the unguided study of books." (KT)

*"The Muslim community has very little assistance from outside communities; thus, we are forced to learn and teach ourselves. I have never resided in a prison where there was a Muslim chaplain, and for years, because there was no volunteer, all our services were inmate led."* (DS)

The volunteer Islamic teacher at our prison regularly talks badly about Caucasians and uses profane language to the point that I started avoiding her lessons.

(MD)

We had a brother who stopped coming to prayers, so the imam declared him a kafir for not praying and told everyone to avoid him. The brother left Islam after being ostracized. Later, I found out that the brother wasn't praying because he was taking antidepressants and thought that he couldn't pray while "intoxicated" by them. From my Tayba lessons, I knew this wasn't true, so I told him this. He was very happy, re-took his shahada, and began praying again. But because I went against the imam by talking to the brother, we're now both ostracized from the Muslim community. (DB)

"We have nobody who is willing to come in and teach us so deviant ideas and views run rampant through our community."

(RA)

\*Statements surrounded by quotation marks (" ") are taken directly from the students' words. Statements without them indicate they were edited for better flow and/or context.

# LIFE SKILLS

## *Addressing Needs Beyond the Spiritual*

Many of Tayba's students ended up in prison because of problems related to anger, domestic violence, substance abuse and related issues. Our Islamic curriculum is not always enough to help them resolve these problems, which puts released inmates at a high risk of ending up in prison again.

We offer clients a constellation of life-skills courses developed by dedicated teams of professionals and thriving former prisoners whose courses have a track record of making a positive impact, to deliver life skills training to our students.

Just some of the courses we are now offering:

- Substance abuse
- Anger management
- Contentious relationship
- Parenting Cognitive awareness
- Employment
- Sex offender

**Check out what Tayba students have said when we asked them if this program was a good idea:**

"Some prisoners may be dealing with and/or suffering from untreated harms stemming out of broken households, child abuse, negligence of parents, poverty, illiteracy, alcoholism, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress, obsessive compulsive disorder, etc. These very same prisoners will one day return to our communities and if left untreated, they might not know how to harmoniously function in our communities. Affording the Life Skills Program to those who need them is the equivalent of making an investment into our communities, our society, and our country.

Based on the amount of dedication and hard work [Tayba] staff puts into our studies and services, I can confidently say that the Life Skills Program has the potential to transform any prisoner..."

-Br. Amin

"I am now at a minimum security prison and believe that I may be released in the next 3 to 5 years. At this point I have spent over 60% of my life in prison and have lived my life in a violent and restrictive place void of most of life's normal activities. I have been able to study, to pray, and to fast. But I have not been able to be a father, husband, good son or brother, or member of the local masjid or community at large. All I know experientially is how to be a Muslim in prison. Life skills are important for getting us prepared for eventual re-entry and integration into society. I do not want to see another Muslim come back to prison or be the one myself to come back in due to lack of basic life skills."

- Br. Juan

*"The people out in society easily forget... that most of us will be getting out [of prison]. The question that needs to be asked is this: 'Do you want us the same way as we came in or do you want us to be better when we rejoin you out in society?' We are a very diverse group of people... but the one thing we have in common is poor life skills... [and] we are lacking in something that could help us overcome them."*

- Br. Jabbar

## RE-ENTRY

### *Ensuring Student Success Post-Release*

77% of released prisoners return to prison within 5 years. Much of this is due to a broken re-entry system that places extreme challenges on released inmates (restricted mobility, limited work opportunities, restricted access to government support, obligatory parole officer meetings, etc).

Since 2011, Tayba has been helping released students to re-integrate into free society. Our help ranges from simple financial & housing assistance (some prisoners are released with no money and no place to stay the night) to help with the job search, entrepreneurial projects, and education.

Here's what some of our re-entry clients say about the program:

"The Tayba Foundation through the dedication of Shaykh Rami has directly assisted me with each of these areas by directly providing me with employment as an instructor, cash assistance to help me pay for rent upon my move to California and to help relieve the pressure of underemployment at times when I was in need. They have also assisted with helping me to further my study of Arabic and my memorization of the Qur'an with classes at Studio Arabiya, offered advice and counselling through difficult periods with my family after my release. They also gave me the opportunity to attend the 2016 ISNA convention in Chicago where I was connected with numerous Religious and Thought leaders from the American Muslim community. The assistance that Tayba provided and is still providing me with allows me to be relieved from excessive worry and undue stress over these essential matters as I continue to work on re-establishing myself." - E.P.

"I converted to Islam in prison, got out, [but] wasn't really able to situate myself back into society. I had some issues and resorted to what I knew best, which was using drugs and alcohol. And that's how Tayba Foundation embraced me: there was no judgement, it was 'Brother, let's just help you get on your feet, there's a better way of life. You've got some problems, dust yourself off; let's move forward. We believe that you can become a better man.' And that's how Tayba really impacted my life." - Y.N.A.

*"Tayba picked me up at the gate on the date of my release June 2011 to this very day November 2017. Tayba has and continues to assist me in my everyday successful re-entry. I have received help from many other organizations over the years of my re-entry but none come close to the services I've been blessed to receive from Tayba."*  
- M.P.

*Take part*

in the new decade of service to our  
brothers & sisters behind bars



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Freedom Through Education



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QUESTIONS

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**GIVE TODAY**