



## **JIHAD SALEH WILLIAMS (A/K/A JIHAD F. SALEH)**



### ***Biography and Radical Affiliations***

- Jihad Saleh Williams is currently the Government Affairs Representative at the Hamas-tied charity, **Islamic Relief USA**, a position he has held since January 2011<sup>1</sup>:
  - Islamic Relief USA is an offshoot of the United Kingdom charity Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and was incorporated in 1993 in Burbank, California.<sup>2</sup> Although today Islamic Relief USA calls itself a “legally separate and independent member of a global family of collaborating relief organizations that share a common vision, mission, and family identity, and all of which use the term ‘Islamic Relief’ as part of their organizational name,” its website still lists IRW as an affiliate.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Biography of Jihad F. Saleh, American Muslim Civic Leadership University, <http://www.irusa.org/affiliates/> . See also <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jihad-saleh-williams/7/a35/b08>

<sup>2</sup> Articles of Incorporation, Islamic Relief, California Secretary of State, October 5, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> “Affiliates,” Islamic Relief USA, <http://www.irusa.org/affiliates/>

- The **IRW's branches in Gaza and Ramallah have been found to provide financial and other assistance to the terrorist group Hamas.**<sup>4</sup> In May 2006, Pakistan-born British national Iyaz Ali who worked with IRW's Gaza branch was arrested by Israeli authorities for helping "transfer funds and assistance to various Hamas institutions and organizations."<sup>5</sup>
- In April 2004, Ahmed Shama, the spokesman for Islamic Relief,<sup>6</sup> was slated to speak at an event sponsored by the University of Irvine Muslim Student Union to discuss "the martyrdom of Sheikh Ar-Rantisi."<sup>7</sup> Senior Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi was killed by Israeli security forces on April 18, 2004.<sup>8</sup> The event announcement stated that Rantisi was "the second of the leaders of Hamas to be martyred in under a month, so please come to educate yourselves about the situation."<sup>9</sup>
- In 2011, Islamic Relief USA agreed to pay \$267,500 to settle a lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union.<sup>10</sup> Islamic Relief helped run the Tarek Ibn Ziyad Academy in Minneapolis, a charter school which accepted state money and engaged in religious proselytizing.<sup>11</sup>
- Previously, Saleh served as the Program and Outreach Coordinator for the **Congressional Muslim Staffers Association (CMSA)** from Sept 2007-Sept 2010.<sup>12</sup> He also served on the Executive Board of CMSA.<sup>13</sup> CMSA was officially established in 2006 by Jameel Johnson, former Chief of Staff for Congressman Gregory Meeks (D-NY), "to increase diversity on the Hill and to encourage

<sup>4</sup> "British National Arrested for Assisting Hamas," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 29, 2006, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism+Obstacle+to+Peace/Terrorism+and+Islamic+Fundamentalism-/British+national+arrested+for+assisting+Hamas+29-May-2006.htm>

<sup>5</sup> "British National Arrested for Assisting Hamas," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 29, 2006, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism+Obstacle+to+Peace/Terrorism+and+Islamic+Fundamentalism-/British+national+arrested+for+assisting+Hamas+29-May-2006.htm>

<sup>6</sup> "Islamic Relief to Collect Funds for Tsunami Victims at Portland Mosque," *Islamic Relief Press Release*, January 13, 2005, <http://www.irusa.org/press-releases/islamic-relief-to-collect-funds-for-tsunami-victims-at-portland-mosque/>

<sup>7</sup> Email from Jazakum Allah Khair, MSU UCI Board, "The Martyrdom of Sheikh Ar-Rantisi," April 22, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Abdel Aziz Rantisi, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism+Obstacle+to+Peace/Terror+Groups/Abdel+Aziz+Rantisi.htm?DisplayMode=print>

<sup>9</sup> Email from Jazakum Allah Khair, MSU UCI Board, "The Martyrdom of Sheikh Ar-Rantisi," April 22, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Sarah Lemagie, "ACLU settles with State, school sponsor," *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, Feb. 7, 2011. [http://www.startribune.com/local/south/115533274.html?elr=KArksLckD8EQDUoaEyqyP4O:DW3ckUiD3aPc:Yyc:aUeDyic:E7PNDh\\_0aE3miUsZ&refer=y](http://www.startribune.com/local/south/115533274.html?elr=KArksLckD8EQDUoaEyqyP4O:DW3ckUiD3aPc:Yyc:aUeDyic:E7PNDh_0aE3miUsZ&refer=y).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jihad-saleh-williams/7/a35/bo8>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.congressionalmuslims.org/5.html> (Accessed April 12, 2010). The website is no longer active

Muslims to get involved in public policy work.”<sup>14</sup> Prior to his position with CMSA, Saleh served as Legislative Assistant, Office of Congressman Gregory W. Meeks (NY-D) (March 2007-September 2010)<sup>15</sup>

- **Radical American al-Qaida cleric, Anwar al-Awlaki, led Friday afternoon prayer services for CMSA** on Capitol Hill following the 9/11 attacks. Awlaki was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Yemen in September 2011.<sup>16</sup> A short video clip<sup>17</sup> from a 2002 PBS documentary titled, “Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet,”<sup>18</sup> shows that in addition to Awlaki, individuals present at the prayer service included Randall Royer<sup>19</sup>, who later pleaded guilty in a plot to train with the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Tayibba, and Nihad Awad,<sup>20</sup> executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a leading Muslim Brotherhood-linked group in the U.S. that was formed as part of a Hamas-support network in the U.S.<sup>21</sup>
- During his tenure at CMSA, the organization CMSA held a “D.C. Region MSA Day on Capitol Hill” that invited Muslim Student Association members from prominent universities in the area. The event on April 23, 2010 included “informative and networking activities” such as “briefing on internship & career opportunities” and “greetings from members of Congress.” The Muslim Students Association (MSA) is a national student group formed by members of the Muslim Brotherhood and has advocated radical Islamist activities on several U.S. university campuses.<sup>22</sup>
- Saleh has also been affiliated with the **radical campus newspaper, *al-Talib***, published by the Muslim Students’ Association at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA):

---

<sup>14</sup> Farkhunda Ali, “All Aboard, Say Muslim Congressional Staffers,” *Muslim Link*, Nov. 29, 2008, <http://www.muslimlinkpaper.com/index.php/community-news/community-news/1695-All%20Aboard.%20Say%20Muslim%20Congressional%20Staffers.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jihad-saleh-williams/7/a35/b08>

<sup>16</sup> “Breaking News: Awlaki, Samir Khan Reportedly Dead,” *IPT News*, Sept 30, 2011, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/3209/breaking-news-awlaki-samir-khan-reportedly-dead>

<sup>17</sup> <http://vimeo.com/30610050>

<sup>18</sup> “Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet,” *PBS*, <http://www.pbs.org/muhammad/film.shtml>

<sup>19</sup> *USA v. Royer, et al.*, 03-CR-296, “Plea Agreement,”

[http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case\\_docs/162.pdf](http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/162.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> IPT Profile on Nihad Awad, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/profile/113>

<sup>21</sup> IPT CAIR Profile, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/profile/172>

<sup>22</sup> IPT profile on the Muslim Students Association, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/84.pdf>

- Jihad Saleh is listed as the “**business manager**” of *al-Talib* in the Southern Campus 1996 yearbook.<sup>23</sup> The newspaper has a history of writing in support of terrorists and known radicals. For example, the July 1999 “The Spirit of Jihad” issue, which – almost a full year after al-Qaida's devastating attack on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania – **refers to Osama bin Laden as a “great Mujahid** (someone who struggles in Allah's cause),” instructs Muslim readers to “**defend our brother**” **Osama bin Laden**, and “refer to him as a **freedom fighter**, someone who has forsaken wealth and power to fight in Allah's cause and speak out against oppressors. We take these stances only to please Allah.”<sup>24</sup>

### ***Islamist Advocacy***

- Saleh has engaged in Islamist advocacy work on Capitol Hill and partnered with Islamist organizations to augment political representation of American Muslims:
  - In February 2009, Saleh **mobilized efforts against the screening of *Fitna*** at the Capitol by Republican Sen. John Kyl of Arizona. The 2008 film by Dutch parliamentarian Geert Wilders showed Islamist militants' use of Islam and the Quran to justify terrorist violence. The film juxtaposed quotes from the Quran with scenes of jihadist atrocities, including 9/11 and other terrorist attacks, the beheading of American businessman Nick Berg by extremists, and honor killings.<sup>25</sup> Saleh requested leaders of prominent Islamist groups in the U.S. to send a message to Senator Kyl on behalf of their organizations expressing their “concern and disappointment in his endorsement of the film.” The same day, Senator John Kerry, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was holding a hearing titled “Engaging with Muslim Communities Around the World.” **Saleh asked the Islamist leaders “to publicly endorse Senator Kerry's hearing on *Engaging the Muslim World* instead of hosting the *Fitna* viewing.”**<sup>26</sup>
  - In March 2008, Jihad Saleh led a private workshop sponsored by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) “on how to ‘jump-start’ a

---

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.e-yearbook.com/yearbooks/UCLA\\_Bruin\\_Life\\_Yearbook/1996/Page\\_348.html](http://www.e-yearbook.com/yearbooks/UCLA_Bruin_Life_Yearbook/1996/Page_348.html)

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.investigativeproject.org/redirect/1999-07\\_Al-Talib.pdf](http://www.investigativeproject.org/redirect/1999-07_Al-Talib.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Jeff Jacoby, “Facing the Truth About Jihadist Violence,” The Boston Globe, April 2, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/638/facing-the-truth-about-jihadist-violence>

<sup>26</sup> E-mail from Jihad Saleh dated February 24, 2009 and titled “Fwd: Urgent Action: Engaging with Muslims vs. *Fitna* on Capitol Hill!”

career on the Hill.”<sup>27</sup> In July this year, Saleh shared a panel with representatives of leading Muslim Brotherhood groups in the U.S., including CAIR, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). The panelists sought to “advocate for American Muslims” and enhance “the representation of Muslims everywhere, especially in America.”<sup>28</sup>

- Saleh helped assemble a book of 45 Muslim Americans seeking positions in the Obama administration in early 2009.<sup>29</sup> The effort “was mostly under the radar,” Saleh said.<sup>30</sup> “This past election was a watershed for the Muslim community,” he told *Al-Arabiya*. “The Muslim community needs to be very proactive -- as any other community would be -- but not from the standpoint there needs to be X number of Muslims in an administration.”<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Paul Sperry, “A GOP ‘Moderate Musli’ or Not,” *New York Post*, January 9, 2011, [http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/gop\\_moderate\\_muslim\\_or\\_not\\_6KV9VBkSqzkHBqaOxRzMUK](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/gop_moderate_muslim_or_not_6KV9VBkSqzkHBqaOxRzMUK)

<sup>28</sup> Muslim Public Service Network, “American Muslims: Let’s Advocate,” <http://www.muslimpublicservice.org/node/123>

<sup>29</sup> Courtney C. Radsch, “US Muslims seek jobs with Obama administration,” *Al-Arabiya*, March 30, 2009, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/03/30/69589.html>.

<sup>30</sup> “Obama gets list of top Muslim Americans,” *Denver Post*, March 27, 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Courtney C. Radsch, “US Muslims seek jobs with Obama administration,” *Al-Arabiya*, March 30, 2009, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/03/30/69589.html>.