

# MCN

Muslim Community Network



# 2020-21 IMPACT REPORT

The Social Emotional Learning  
Achieved by the  
Muslim Community Network's  
**Civic Fellowship Program**



EVALUATION & REPORT BY SEED IMPACT

Founded in 2003, Muslim Community Network (MCN) is a New York City-based nonprofit that uses civic education and youth leadership development to expand and shape the public narrative about what it means to be Muslim in the United States of America.

While Muslims have been much in the public eye since 9/11, who we are and the reality of our lived experiences are often at odds with how we're seen.

At MCN, our vision is the emergence of a Muslim-American identity that transcends generational, ethnic, gender, racial, and class-based boundaries. Our work facilitates this emergence, and builds bridges with other communities of faith to forge peace, justice, and inclusivity.

MCN's three core areas of programming:

- 1) Youth Leadership Development**
- 2) Community Education**
- 3) Community Service & Advocacy**

To-date, MCN has graduated almost 200 young leaders. This report shows the 2020-21 academic year results for MCN's Civic Fellowship program.

“

**Prior to when I started this experience, I did not have much of a connection to my community or the people around me, and I lacked faith in myself. Over the course of this program, I was able to establish a self-identity for myself. I was able to find a sense of community belonging. I was able to be confident in myself. It made me realize that I can make things happen if I put the work in.”**

*-Muddsar, 11th grade,  
James Madison High School*

# FELLOWSHIP AIMS

The Civic Fellowship is a paid program offered to 10th and 11th grade, New York City high school students. Our intention is to activate civic engagement among Muslim youth, to help them claim their stake in our country. We employ an organizing model in which participants identify and brainstorm solutions to the challenges they see in their communities.

Engaging with program staff and guest instructors, participants complete a capstone project on an issue they are passionate about. After graduating, they are encouraged to deepen their leadership and involvement in other MCN programs as alumni.

## WE KNOW OUR PROGRAM IS WORKING WHEN PARTICIPANTS:

- Form a bond with fellowship peers
- Feel a sense of belonging
- Feel a sense of community responsibility
- Feel that faith informs civic participation
- Feel empowered to challenge social, economic and political barriers



COMMUNITY



- Understand American civic tradition and systems
- Understand the significance of historic movements
- Understand the importance of civic organizing
- Understand the root causes of injustice

KNOWLEDGE

- Can think critically about civic issues
- Can thoughtfully debate and discuss civic issues
- Can lead confidently
- Can organize people for a common cause
- Can write and implement a civic action plan

SKILL

# THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

Fifteen students participated in 2020-2021. Their Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies were assessed by staff at the start of the school year (baseline) and again five months later (post).

Extraordinary Results:

## 54 PERCENT GAIN IN SEL COMPETENCIES

Specific Student Gains:

- **“Noor** exemplifies MCN’s civic fellowship impact. She gained a community, confidence and leadership skills. Her sense of belonging and sense of civic duty are stronger now than ever before.”  
**SEL gain: 80 percent**
- **“Tamana** was driven and energized throughout the fellowship. She took in the lessons, read the materials, engaged in debate, sought opportunities, and made civic engagement a pillar of her youth.”  
**SEL gain: 80 percent**
- **“Toaha** was driven and energized throughout the following. He explored civic issues, began to feel a sense of duty and responsibility, and was successful at applying his natural drive to an advocacy issue.”  
**SEL gain: 54 percent**
- **“Humairah** gained critical thinking skills. She questioned issues in class discussions and gained a deeper understanding of our country’s most complex and difficult social issues.”  
**SEL gain: 40 percent**



## YOUTH WITH STRONGER SEL COMPETENCIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE:

- College Entrance & Graduation
- Career Success
- Positive Work & Family Relationships
- Better Mental & Physical Health
- Meaningful Contributions to Society

Research Evidence <sup>1</sup>

## HOW WE MEASURE SEL

SEED Impact provides tools to measure SEL across three domains:



### 1 Being (self-awareness)

Participants attract self-enriching experiences, and approach new possibilities with confidence and excitement of discovery.



### 2 Doing (self-efficacy)

Participants suggest and implement new practices to realize higher potential and skill levels, and serve as role models for others in the program.



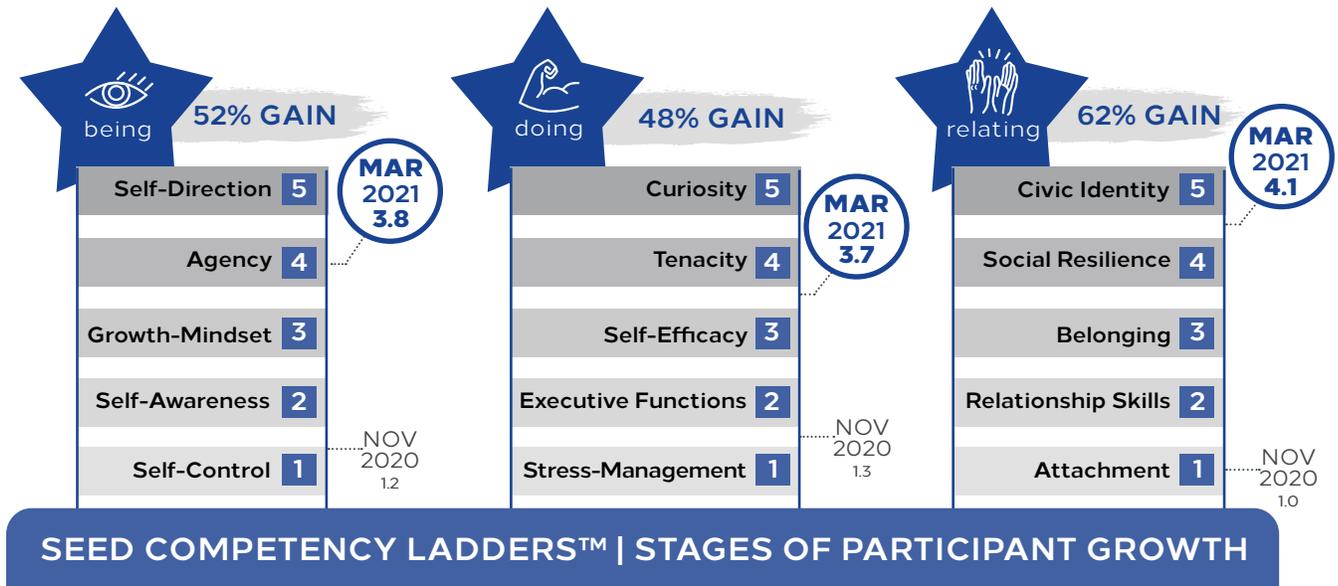
### 3 Relating (interaction with others)

Participants fully embrace our program values and bring them to life through inclusive actions and ongoing relationships.

<sup>1</sup>Council of Distinguished Scientists National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, The Aspen Institute. September 2017

# SEL GAINS BY DOMAIN

Students achieved significant gains in all three domains. Most dramatic was a 62 percent gain in Relating.



## How one student developed her sense of BEING:

“Marjona began as a shy student. Through the program, she found her voice. She chose to lead a townhall with the Brooklyn Borough President and invited her entire school community to attend. She grew as a public speaker and organizer.”

## How one student gained skills for DOING:

“At the start of the program, Ummatun identified civic issues that matter to her but was unsure of how to go about making change. By the end, she has been partaking in advocacy work outside of her project and is consistently voicing her opinion on various civics issues.”

## How one student increased capacity for RELATING:

“Noor moved to NYC from Florida a month prior to the start of the fellowship. She was new to the city, her school and community. When she started the program, she kept to herself. She quickly grew more comfortable with the other fellows, befriended almost everyone in the fellowship, spoke with MCN staff regularly, and spoke openly about how much the fellowship has meant to her sense of belonging. Noor will be working with MCN to recruit students for next years' cohort.”

“

I feel more confident and I'm willing to get out of my comfort zone in order to bring change to the community that I live in. I feel that I'm also able to influence more of my friends and family members to be educated about civic education and why it matters.”

-Khawng, 11th grade,  
James Madison High School

# PARTICIPANT SELF-ASSESSMENTS

In strong correlation with how students were observed and assessed by staff, student self-ratings were consistently high.

## HIGHEST CONFIDENCE

- I tell others about MCN and what it means to me
- I can identify my values and explain why they are important to me
- I try to lift others up and bring out the best in them.

## LOWEST CONFIDENCE

- I can identify an issue I care about and plan a project to address it
- I understand why there is injustice and how I can contribute to change

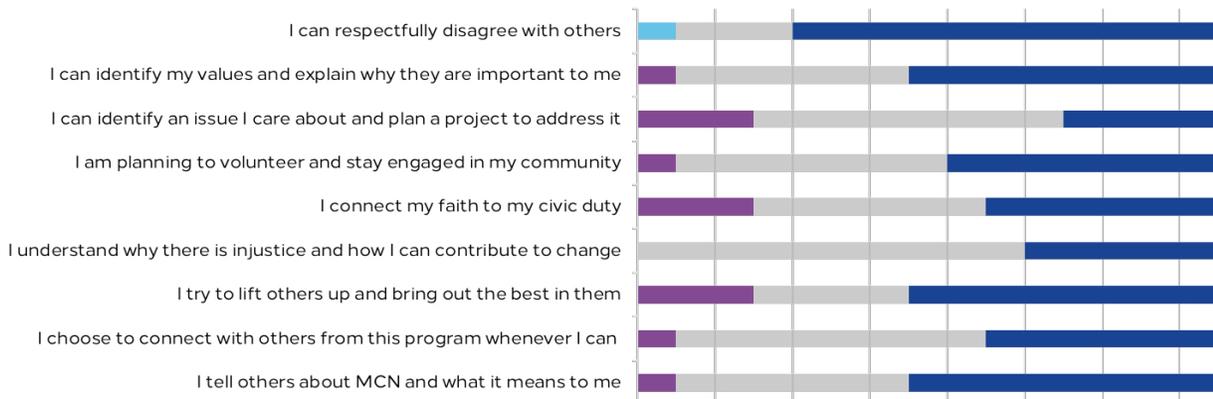


## HIGH RATINGS ON SEL PRACTICES



## CONFIDENCE BY SEL PRACTICE

■ I'M NOT THERE YET ■ SOMETIMES WITH HELP ■ I GOT THIS ■ I'M INFLUENCING OTHERS



**I feel like I've grown as a person and see a better side of myself. I think I've become a much more positive person. I also see the strength and courage I've gained to pursue the things I truly believe in."**

*-Angel, 11th grade, James Madison High School*

# STUDENT SELF-REFLECTIONS

## GROWTH IN BEING & RELATING

"How do you feel differently about yourself now than when you started this experience?"

**35%** Better ability to pursue what I believe in

**22%** More comfortable sharing my opinions

**22%** Becoming a stronger, more positive person

**13%** More comfortable working with people I have never met

**9%** Stronger sense of community belonging



## SKILLS FOR DOING

"What new skills did you gain with MCN?"

Communications/ Self-expression **25%**

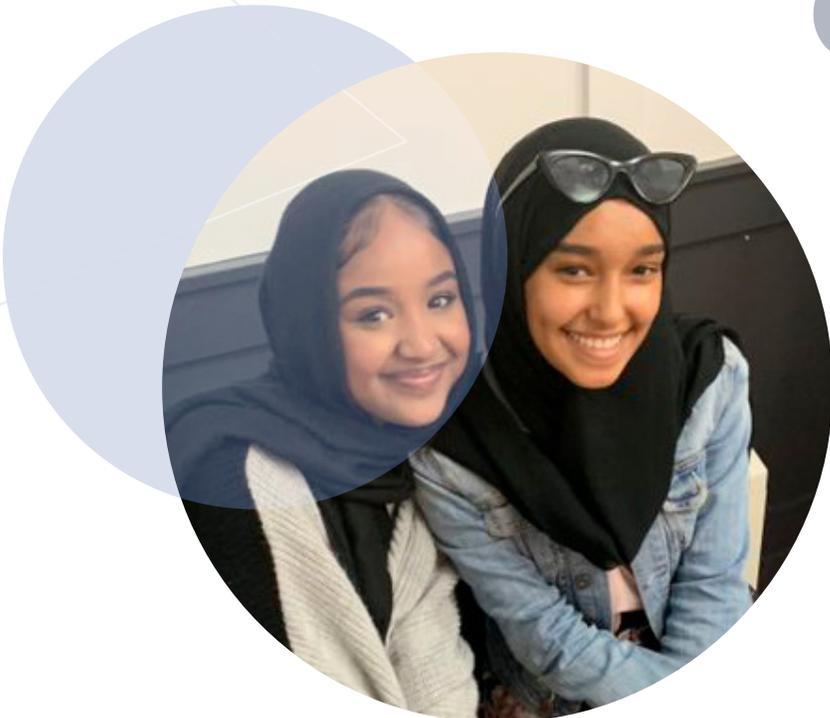
Advocacy/Social Justice **21%**

Confidence **14%**

Teamwork **14%**

Leadership **14%**

Community Surveys **11%**



# STUDENT GRATITUDE

“I really felt motivated and inspired by the program. It allowed me to connect to people of my faith. I really think MCN is a huge impact for my future, as I am more aware of how I, as a human being, have a civic duty every step of the way, no matter the obstacles that come through.”

“

I want to thank Mrs. Rana for everything she’s done for us. She has touched and impacted my life in a way I’ll eternally be grateful for.”

“I really enjoyed the MCN experience, and I will be forever grateful for the relationships and things that I’ve gained from this fellowship! :)”

“

I enjoyed every minute of it and would like to continue staying in touch with the program no matter where I am at in my life.”



“It was an honor to be a part of the Civic Fellowship Program, and Rana, the Program Coordinator, was the best! She did a phenomenal job teaching us about civic education and introducing us to all the courageous and inspiring guest speakers.”

“I loved the experience and I also felt better about myself as a person at the end. Thank you for all of your help and support throughout the way.”



**MCN**

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For more information go to [WWW.MCNNY.ORG](http://WWW.MCNNY.ORG)

EVALUATION & REPORT BY

