



MUSLIM LEADERS  
OF TOMORROW

**Tahir Anwar, Imam of the South Bay Islamic Association (SBIA) in San Jose, California received Santa Clara County's *Unity in Diversity* Award on May 6, 2008 in San Jose, California.**

Imam Tahir, which is the name by which his congregation knows him, was raised in San Jose and left to his hometown in India to study at a traditional Madrassah. Upon his return in 2000, he was asked by his community to be its spiritual leader. In addition to serving as the Imam and Director of Religious Services at the SBIA, he has served as the Human Rights Commission for the City of San Jose for over 5 years. In addition, Imam Tahir is on the Community Advisory Panel for Northern California Public Broadcasting (the most-watched public television and most-heard public radio broadcast in the country) and serves on boards of multiple interfaith groups that deal with both theological and economic justice matters. He is also a teacher at the Granada Islamic School in Santa Clara, California, where he teaches Islamic Studies to middle-school students.

"Imam Tahir is one of the most beloved religious leaders of our youth. He can relate to them, since he grew up here and knows what it's like to be a Muslim youth growing up in America," said Irfan Rydhan, Board member of SBIA. "He treats everyone like a close friend, and that is why everyone likes and respects him. We need more Muslim leaders like Imam Tahir - not only in America, but across the world" added Rydhan.

Imam Tahir was invited by the U.S. State Department to speak in Germany about *Muslims as Citizens* in February of 2007. He has also been interviewed by CNN during the Hajj multiple times – and was part of the documentary produced by CNN, *Hajj: The Essential Journey*, where he was shadowed from the US to Hajj. Imam Tahir has been featured in several TV and documentary films, including, "*The Aftermath: American-Muslims After Sept. 11th*".

As a young, American-raised religious leader, Imam Tahir is passionate about incorporating the universal ideals of the Islamic faith, which are compatible with American culture and values, to make this country a better place to live for ourselves and future generations. Imam Tahir has proven himself not only an expert in matters of Islam, but as a community leader who has integrated well into the fabric of American society.