

AHA FOUNDATION 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF LIFE-SAVING WORK AND REVEALING THE VISION FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS

10TH ANNIVERSARY
ahafoundation

George Zarubin, Executive Director of the AHA Foundation



INTRODUCING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To realize Ayaan's vision, in 2016 the Foundation embarked on a search for the right leader to grow the organization. After an extensive search, George Zarubin was chosen to lead the Foundation as our new Executive Director.

Zarubin is an attorney and a seasoned, international, senior executive with 20 years of philanthropic and nonprofit experience in Washington, DC, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. He has a proven track record of elevating the organizational capacity of foundations and nonprofits and by overseeing their transformation, sustainability, and ensuring targeted and measurable impacts.

With an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and law degrees from Tulane University Law School and McGeorge School of Law at the University of the Pacific, Zarubin practiced law for 10 years in California and Russia before transitioning to work with nonprofits and international development. As the former Executive Director of the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan, Vice President of the Eurasia Foundation, and President of Eurasia Partnership Foundation, he worked as a change agent and implemented new programs to promote liberal Western values, supporting civil society organizations to engage in policy dialogues with national and local governments.

"One of my favorite quotes is 'never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has,' by Margaret Mead. I truly believe that the AHA Foundation is making this quote a reality and I am so thrilled to be a part of our team."

-George Zarubin, Executive Director

Dear Friends, I want to start this message by thanking Ayaan for launching this organization and to express my gratitude to everyone who has worked for the AHA Foundation for the past 10 years. This foundation has a unique vision, a vibrant voice, and a heart for the girls and women it serves and protects.

My first year with the Foundation focused on our expanding programs, **aligning** our goals with Ayaan's ideas, and shoring up our resources to increase impact. As you can see from this report, we continue to engage legislators actively and effectively to outlaw female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. We also provided consultations and support to protect over 50 girls from various forms of honor violence.

In 2017, our team piloted our new campus program – *the Critical Thinking Unit* – to promote Ayaan's and similar unheard women's, ex-Muslims', and Muslim reformers' voices on U.S. university campuses. Several speakers **alerted** students to the horrors women and girls face here in the U.S. from honor violence, FGM, and forced marriages. Other speakers focused on the need to support free speech and use critical thinking to counter Islamic extremism. We also began an important dialogue between ex-Muslims and Muslim reformers to plan a new program.

Simultaneously, we hired more staff - a Campus Program Coordinator and several interns – because we needed the support to continue our work and **activate** these new initiatives. This growth meant we had to fundraise to increase our financial resources. I'm proud to report that 2017 was the best year on record for the AHA Foundation. My sincere thanks go out to everyone who pledged their support in 2017. Please join me in actively supporting the AHA Foundation for the next 10 years: by pledging your fiscal resource, by providing your vocal support to end honor violence, child marriage and FGM, and by joining Ayaan's courageous voice supporting Enlightenment values to counter extremism.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George Zarubin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

George Zarubin, Executive Director

Ten years ago, Ayaan Hirsi Ali founded the AHA Foundation to protect women and girls from honor violence that shames, hurts, and kills thousands of women and girls in the U.S. each year and puts millions more at risk. Her passion, courage, and leadership have led the AHA Foundation to become the preeminent organization working to end honor violence, while empowering survivors of these crimes to thrive.

With momentum and great success in these areas, which the Foundation will continue, we have also expanded our mission to address the ideology used to justify many of the issues we deal with: Islamism (radical, political Islam), an extremism that threatens Western civilization. While the focus on women will remain critical for the AHA Foundation, we are broadening our mission from a focus on women alone, to the advancement of fundamental freedoms for all people.

Our mission now states that “the AHA Foundation believes in liberty for all.” That means liberty from FGM, honor violence, and forced marriage. And it means liberty to challenge the ideology of Islamism with rational, Enlightenment thought, and finding new strategies to fight the battle of ideas. This expanded mission drives our new campus program and upcoming research projects, as well as our work supporting Muslim reformers and ex-Muslims to combat political Islam.

We are excited to not only work directly with women and girls, but also to address the root causes used to justify many of the horrific cultural practices that the women and girls who come to us for help deal with, while protecting even more girls along the way.

Moving forward, the Foundation is now better positioned to put Ayaan’s ideas into practice and to achieve that, we rely on three strategic pillars: Align, Alert, and Activate. Fortunately, Ayaan is not the only one who is speaking out about dangerous cultural practices and the need for combatting political Islam. We work to **align** with these other voices – activists, intellectuals, and Islamic religious scholars – to amplify theirs and Ayaan’s message to accomplish a similar vision. We continue to **alert** students and youth, legislators, law enforcement, professionals, the media, and opinion leaders about dangerous traditional practices and their root causes. We also work to **activate** those groups to take action as we continue to ourselves.



ALIGN

The AHA Foundation seeks to align the work of Muslim reformers, ex-Muslims, Islamic religious scholars, and intellectuals so as to form a cascade of networks, all fighting Islamism. In 2017, we laid the groundwork for the launch of this initiative through several methods, with an eye towards significant growth in this programmatic area in 2018.

In the spring of 2017, the AHA Foundation hosted a luncheon with several stakeholders to begin developing this initiative by discussing the existing state of affairs, the key players involved, and the steps that will need to be taken.

The Foundation also launched its campus program, which gathered together Muslim reformers, ex-Muslims, and intellectuals as part of its summer training program. The campus program was named the Critical Thinking Unit and its training brought many renowned speakers and activists together.

Through the campus program, as well as upcoming events, the AHA Foundation is excited to put our Founder's work into action by addressing Islamism.



Ayaan Hirsi Ali and activist Asra Nomani at the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

The AHA Foundation was happy to support and attend founder Ayaan Hirsi Ali's testimony before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the United States Senate. At the hearing, titled **"Ideology and Terror: Understanding the Tools, Tactics, and Techniques of Violent Extremism,"** Ms. Hirsi Ali, along with political activist Asra Nomani, spoke to senators about the need for a Muslim reformation and the brutal treatment of women under Islamist rule. Ayaan provided her invaluable insight on *dawa* explaining that it "is the call to Islam and consists of communication or proselytization. In practice, *dawa* by Islamist groups constitutes a process of radical ideological indoctrination, often under the cover of humanitarian relief work that is connected to jihad." Throughout the hearing, Ayaan enforced the need to focus on the ideology of radical, political Islam and offered thoughtful recommendations for future action the United States could take to counter *dawa*.

Following their testimonies, Hirsi Ali and Nomani published an op-ed in *The New York Times* discussing their experiences at the hearing. Both women were not asked a single question from the Democratic senators, three of whom were women who have been outspoken about feminist issues. In the op-ed, Ms. Hirsi Ali and Ms. Nomani spoke about the deeply troubling trend among progressives who choose to ignore the war on women that is waged by Islamists.

ALERT

MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Media appearances are an integral part of the Foundation's strategy to alert the public to the fact that hard-won civil and human rights are at risk if action is not taken. Highlights of this work in 2017 include AHA Foundation Founder Ayaan Hirsi Ali testifying in front of a Senate committee, as well as being featured on the *Tucker Carlson Show*.

The AHA Foundation has also kept close tabs on the groundbreaking first U.S. federal prosecution of FGM. Up to 100 girls may have been victims of FGM in this case, where Dr. Jumana Nagarwala is charged with performing the FGM procedure in the Burhani Medical Clinic in Livonia, Michigan. The AHA Foundation was first to break the news of the trial's postponement until June 2018 to our supporters before the general media. The Foundation will continue tracking the progress of this important case, and lending our voice to the trial of public opinion, leading up to and throughout the criminal trial.

Hirsi Ali was also featured on *Tucker Carlson Tonight* to discuss the Michigan case and the prevalence of FGM in the United States. Instead of shying away from discussing the specifics of the practice of FGM, Ayaan told millions exactly what is being done to these girls, and how the AHA Foundation works to protect them.

Since the news broke in April of the case in Michigan, the AHA Foundation has been called upon to provide context to the crime and shed light on the prevalence of FGM in the United States. Senior Director Amanda Parker participated in the televised *Your Voice, Your Future* Roundtable discussion on WGME regarding FGM in the United States and the need for state legislation.



Senior Director Amanda Parker spoke in the televised *Your Voice, Your Future* Roundtable discussion on WGME

In October, an AHA Foundation team member was interviewed by Channel One News on the child marriage situation in the United States. This interview was geared towards educating middle and high school students about the dangers of child marriage and what should be done to stop it.



Ayaan Hirsi Ali, AHA Foundation Founder

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS THROUGH OP-EDS AND ARTICLES

This year, the AHA Foundation team and our Founder published an unprecedented number of media pieces, totaling over 50, in national and state publications dealing with myriad topics, ranging from discussing the challenges of Islamic radicalism in *The New York Times* and *The Sunday Times* to female genital mutilation in *Refinery 29*, *Mic*, and *Fox News*. We are excited that we are raising more awareness through this avenue and will continue to do so throughout 2018 and beyond. Here are a few key publications of 2017:

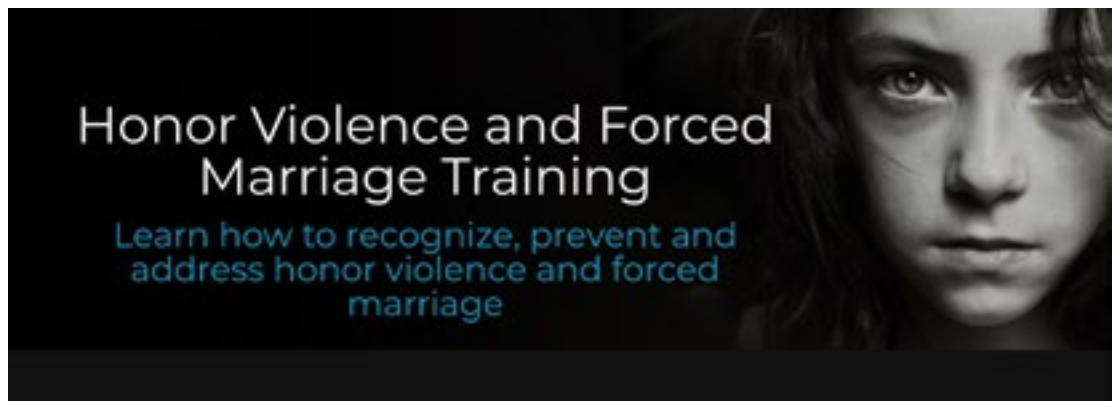
In April, Ayaan Hirsi Ali's piece in *Fox News* pointed out that FGM is deliberately covered up by those practicing it in the West. As an African, Ms. Hirsi Ali, who was subjected to FGM as a little girl and now lives in the West, decided to bridge the gap by explaining what we are really talking about when we say "genital cutting." This powerful piece explained the four types of FGM and reasons why we should not stand for this to happen to any girl.

Our Founder's most recent op-ed was featured in *The New York Times* magazine, *Turning Points*, which explores critical events of the current year and their impact on the world stage in the coming year. In her article, "The Plot Behind Saudi Arabia's Fight with Qatar," Ayaan explores the roots and possible staging of the recent turmoil in the Middle East that started when Saudi Arabia, along with two other Gulf States and Egypt, imposed a blockade on Qatar.

Another important op-ed that came out this year discussed child marriage in Florida where AHA Foundation's Senior Director, Amanda Parker, wrote a powerful piece for the *Sun-Sentinel*, the largest circulation newspaper in South Florida, to highlight the sexual abuse and exploitation of Florida girls that occurs on a regular basis.

TRAINING OFFICIALS AND EDUCATORS

Educating professionals likely to encounter victims on how to properly identify and address cases of honor violence remains a critical focus for the Foundation. Over the past ten years, through annual conferences, live training sessions, webinars, and the publication of a new training curriculum in 2017 (*The AHA Foundation Training Curriculum on Female Genital Mutilation*), the AHA Foundation has educated over 2,700 social service providers, educators, and law enforcement officials on honor violence, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.





Senior Director Amanda Parker speaking at the Women2Women International Leadership Conference in Boston

This year, the AHA Foundation was invited to lead a training for New York City guidance counselors as part of the United Federation of Teachers annual conference. Of the 20 guidance counselors who attended the session, which covered identifying and correctly handling cases of honor violence and forced marriage, the participants unanimously said that the information they learned during the training will change the way they do their jobs and they would recommend the training to other professionals working with at-risk individuals.

The Foundation's Senior Director, Amanda Parker, also led trainings in Boston, for young women leaders, and in San Diego, for social service providers. The Women2Women International Leadership Conference was held in Boston, Massachusetts at Harvard University. The purpose of the conference was to engage and train young female leaders on leadership development and cultural awareness. As a part of this conference, Ms. Parker led a session on

the most difficult issues facing girls and women globally, including honor violence, forced and child marriage, and FGM. Through this training, Ms. Parker stressed the importance of generating conversation around these difficult issues and the ability for youth to take leadership in ending these practices.

Ms. Parker also trained service professionals at the Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma's (IVAT's) International Summit: Building Peace by Linking Policy, Practice, Research & Advocacy to End Violence in San Diego, California. At this training, Ms. Parker taught attendees how to handle encounters with survivors of FGM, at-risk individuals, their families, and communities.

MEET THE NEEDS OF WOMEN & GIRLS IN CRISIS

The number of honor violence cases in the U.S. is rising at an alarming rate. It is typically understood to include physical or emotional abuse, sexual assault, rape, or kidnapping with the motive of regaining family honor – but also includes FGM, forced marriage, and child marriage. This year, the AHA Foundation has seen an increase in cases of honor violence coming through our email-based helpline.

Many women and girls reach out to the Foundation fearing for their physical safety, and often are seeking assistance to escape a real and immediate threat. Each case of honor violence is unique and requires a tailored approach to ensure the individual's safety. The AHA Foundation works with survivors and individuals at risk of honor violence to determine an appropriate approach and to connect those in need with counseling and other necessary services.

To date, the AHA Foundation has helped over 260 women and girls find safety in situations of honor violence.

This year, there was an alarming increase seen in those seeking help both from the U.S. and abroad, with a particular uptick in requests from dissidents at risk. Given laws severely curtailing free speech and the rights of women in many of the countries of origin of those reaching out for help, the danger these dissidents face is both real and immediate. In many cases, the dissidents are at risk of honor violence or FGM.

We are always honored to be part of the journey of the women and girls we work with and will continue to act as a vital resource.

ADVOCACY & LEGISLATION

The AHA Foundation has a proven track record of leadership in advocating for legislation that makes the U.S. a safer place to be a woman or a girl. Since inception, the Foundation has successfully advocated for three federal bills passed into law, 20 state bills in seven states criminalizing and protecting girls from FGM, and helping protect individuals facing situations of domestic violence.

In 2017, the Foundation's legislative focus has been two-fold. Our first focus has been to educate lawmakers on the need to criminalize FGM in each state where it is not currently outlawed, as well as strengthen where necessary legislation in those states that have already banned FGM. Our second focus has been to support efforts nationwide to outlaw child marriage.

Female Genital Mutilation Legislation

Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 513,000 women and girls have undergone or are at risk of FGM in the U.S., currently only 26 states have specifically outlawed this harmful procedure, which has no health benefits but does have lifelong physical and psychological consequences. The AHA Foundation has worked hard on the national and state level this year to protect little girls from this practice. Here are a few highlights:

Federal Legislation

The AHA Foundation has been working directly with the office of Representative Dave Trott (R-MI) to pass HR 3317, or the Stopping Abusive Female Exploitation (SAFE) Act. This act would increase the penalty for FGM from five to 15 years, and would call for states to implement mandated reporting for FGM in their state amongst professionals who might be in contact with situations of FGM. This legislation is necessary to impose an appropriate punishment on those who violate the human rights of girls in this way and to act as a deterrent for those in the U.S. who would cut girls.



Senior Director Amanda Parker and Executive Director George Zarubin at the office of U.S. Representative Dave Trott (R-MI)

The AHA Foundation met with Representative Trott's office in September and provided resources, advice, and support for this important bill. We also met with key co-sponsors of the bill, such as Representative Paul Mitchell (R-MI), to provide resources and information about FGM and offer our continued support.

The bill rapidly advanced in the House of Representatives, beginning with its passage by the House Committee on the Judiciary. Prior to the hearing, the AHA Foundation contacted each member on the committee to provide support for the bill and the Committee voted unanimously to advance it. Then, the SAFE Act went to the entire House floor for a vote, which again resulted in a unanimous vote (409-0) to pass the bill. The bill is now in the Senate and the AHA Foundation is hard at work to identify Senate champions of the bill.

The Foundation will continue to keep our supporters updated on the latest news on the SAFE Act, as well as work to advocate and support the legislation. We are excited to be able to provide our supporters with model letters to send to their representatives, as well as interviews with important legislators, such as our interview with Representative Trott.

State Legislation

On the state level, the AHA Foundation has been constantly monitoring and supporting FGM legislation.

This year, we expanded our resource library so as to help legislators learn from each other about the challenges they faced and their tips on passing FGM legislation, namely through a webinar. The AHA Foundation hosted a bipartisan webinar where two legislators, Representative Stephanie Chang from Michigan and Representative Heather Sirocki from Maine, discussed their experiences with working on FGM legislation on the state level. The webinar was extremely successful, with a record number of attendees, as well as informative discussion amongst the panelists.

As in years past, this year we worked directly with state legislators to provide resources, information, and testimony in support of FGM legislation. Here are a few highlights:

MICHIGAN

The AHA Foundation was active in helping a comprehensive set of FGM legislation pass both Houses in the state of Michigan. Ms. Parker worked closely with Michigan legislators, such as Representative Stephanie Chang, by providing resources and advising on aspects of the legislation. She testified in front of the Michigan House Committee on Law and Justice on May 30th, 2017, urging legislators to pass the FGM bills, especially following the recent federal FGM prosecution in the state. This successful legislation was signed into law by Governor Rick Snyder on July 11, 2017. With the passage of this Michigan legislation, the AHA Foundation played a pivotal role in getting the strongest state FGM legislation in the country passed.

TEXAS

Additionally, the Foundation was active in passing new FGM legislation in Texas, which strengthens previous legislation, creating a penalty for parents and guardians who have their child undergo the procedure, outlawing “vacation cutting,” and eliminating the use of culture as a defense for the practice. Senator Jane Nelson proposed strengthening the Texas legislation after seeing Ayaan’s appearance on *Tucker Carlson*. The Foundation supported Senator Nelson’s legislation by providing a letter of support and Ayaan applauded the Senator’s action via Twitter. The bill swiftly passed in the state and the legislation went into effect on September 1, 2017, strengthening protection for the estimated 33,087 girls at-risk of FGM in Texas, according to the Population Reference Bureau.

“Amanda at the AHA Foundation was a tremendous partner in our bipartisan legislative effort in Michigan to address female genital mutilation. We worked hand in hand with her to develop our multi-bill package and refine the bills to be as effective as possible. Also, she gave expert testimony via videochat for our committee hearing about female genital mutilation.”

– Stephanie Chang, State Representative in Michigan’s House of Representatives

MASSACHUSETTS

In Massachusetts, the Foundation has consulted over the course of three years with members of the Massachusetts Women’s Bar Association, which started a task force to ban FGM in their state. The AHA Foundation provided the group with Massachusetts-specific materials, along with our model legislation, and research on FGM legislation passed in other states.

The Foundation reviewed their draft FGM bill and provided feedback, and encouraged our network of supporters via email and social media to reach out to their legislators to urge them to pass this legislation. This bill was then referred to the Judiciary Committees in both the Massachusetts House and Senate and AHA Foundation has provided written testimony in support of both bills.

The Foundation is now working with the Massachusetts Women’s Bar Association to get the Massachusetts FGM bill put on the legislative floor for a vote. We will continue to push the serious need for this legislation and work to convince leadership that FGM legislation needs to have its chance on the floor.

“When I heard Ayaan Hirsi Ali talking to Tucker Carlson on Fox News about the case in Michigan, I was so horrified that I immediately reviewed our existing state laws to determine whether this could happen in Texas.

While we had laws against the practice of FGM, we did not have anything in law to punish those who help facilitate the FGM practice by transporting girls to undergo this gruesome act. I introduced legislation. Every woman in the Texas Senate signed on as a joint author, and we overwhelmingly approved a new law making it a felony to transport girls for FGM procedures.”

– Senator Jane Nelson, Texas

MAINE

The AHA Foundation embarked on an extensive support and outreach campaign with representatives in Maine to pass LD 745, an Act to Prohibit Female Genital Mutilation. The AHA Foundation provided model legislation, advice on language and provisions, and important resources to Representative Heather Sirocki, the bill's author. The AHA Foundation also reached out to members of the Maine Legislature to support the passage of LD 745 and to answer questions on FGM.

While the bill died between Houses after a long back-and-forth battle, a new bipartisan bill is being put forward for the 2018 legislative session. The AHA Foundation looks forward to continuing to work alongside legislators towards passing FGM legislation in Maine and we are hopeful that the new bill will result in success.

MINNESOTA

In the state of Minnesota, the AHA Foundation worked with Representative Mary Franson, who authored new bills for strengthening FGM legislation in the state. The Foundation sent both a letter of support and testimony on the bill, as well as Ms. Hirsu Ali tweeting her support. While the legislation successfully passed the Minnesota State House, the State Senate decided to delay voting on the bill. They are expected to take it up in 2018 and the AHA Foundation plans to support its passage.

OHIO

The Foundation has consulted with the offices of Ohio Senators Lou Terhar and Peggy Lerner to strengthen their FGM bill, SB 214. We also provided resources and materials on FGM that will help Ohio legislators overcome obstacles they may encounter, as well as serving as a sounding board for any FGM questions they face. We look forward to the 2018 legislative session when this bill will be put forth.

CHILD MARRIAGE STATE LEGISLATION

The AHA Foundation has been actively involved with child marriage legislation this year as well. We have worked directly in several states, as well as supporting our sister organization, Unchained at Last, with letters of support for legislation they are spearheading in Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York. Here are a few highlights of our direct work:

FLORIDA

The Foundation is part of a strong coalition in Florida that seeks to end child marriage. This group is comprised of members such as Unchained at Last, Human Rights Watch, a courageous local survivor, and local Florida organizations.



In October, the coalition descended upon Tallahassee and met with 40 legislators to support legislation that would remove dangerous loopholes that allow child marriage in the state. This legislation would establish a bright line of 18 as the minimum age for marriage in the state, which would make Florida the first state in the nation to do so. The AHA Foundation was able to play a leading role in this coalition's meeting in Florida, organizing meetings and determining which legislators to target during the trip. The Foundation's Senior Director also supported the legislation in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Foundation continues to provide information and model letters for our supporters to write into their representatives.



Senior Director Amanda Parker with Fraidy Reiss, Founder and Executive Director of Unchained At Last

NEW JERSEY

The AHA Foundation was involved in a “chain-in” protest in New Jersey where we supported our sister organization, Unchained At Last, in advocating against child marriage. Members of our team wore wedding dresses and protested with other advocates and supporters. Unfortunately, the child marriage bill that the group was working to pass was conditionally vetoed by Governor Chris Christie. The bill, which had easily passed through both houses, would have outlawed the marriage of a minor; however, the Governor prefers to instead implement more restrictions on child marriage in the current law, but not wholly outlaw it. The AHA Foundation will continue to push for child marriage to be outlawed in not only the state of New Jersey, but also in every U.S. state.

The AHA Foundation also continued its advocacy work with regard to child marriage legislation in Massachusetts. Senior Director, Amanda Parker, spoke at a “chain-in” protest in Boston, held by Unchained at Last. The event aimed to bring greater awareness to the citizens of Massachusetts on child marriage and to urge legislators to pass Massachusetts Bills S785 and H2310 to eliminate all marriage before the age of 18 in the state, which currently allows for marriage of a minor with no minimum age, provided they are awarded a court order. The AHA Foundation recognizes the dangers in allowing for marriage under 18, regardless of judicial consent.

NEW YORK

The AHA Foundation worked with the New York governor’s office to provide support and advice on legislation to end child marriage, and are proud to say that Governor Cuomo signed in legislation that makes child marriage more difficult in the state of New York. This legislation increases the age of consent from 14 to 18 and places more restrictions on exceptions to the legislation, which are allowed only for 17-year-olds. This is a great step forward to protect minors in the state of New York, but the AHA Foundation continues to advocate for a hard minimum age of 18 for marriage, with no exceptions.

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS COLLABORATION PROGRAM

In spring of 2017, the AHA Foundation launched the Critical Thinking Unit Fellowship Program (CTU), the AHA Foundation’s Campus Program, in partnership with Ideas Beyond Borders.



Activist Faisal Al Mutar (left) and Portland State Philosophy Professor Peter Boghossian discuss the question “Are Western Values Worth Defending?”

The goal of the new CTU Fellowship is to alert and activate students on university and college campuses to issues of human rights and free speech, specifically as they relate to Islamic extremism. To do this, we have identified college students, both undergraduate and graduate, to host impartial events such as debates, talks, and art exhibitions, designed to engage their

fellow students in open-minded enquiry about cultural, religious, and policy issues. Ultimately, we hope to bring more attention to the Islamic reform movement that embraces human rights, women's equality, and the LGBTQ+ community. Our program partners with diverse campus clubs and students from all backgrounds (Muslim and non-Muslim, conservative and liberal, etc.) for events that range between 15-300 students, depending on the venue and speakers.

The AHA Foundation identified eight fellows across the U.S. to participate in our inaugural class. These fellows are from across the country, at Harvard University, Pepperdine University, University of California, Berkeley, University of Maryland, Portland State University, Vassar College, Stanford University, and Princeton University. Six of our fellows were brought together in July for an incredible training opportunity to learn the mechanisms for bringing extraordinary and provocative speakers to their university and college campuses, and for starting a dialogue among fellow students. Since the training, we have expanded from six to eight campuses and continue to grow.

We began hosting events for our program in October of 2017 and within only a month, we completed four events on three campuses. With each event, we aim to promote Enlightenment values and spark conversations on campuses across the U.S., activating students to create change. These events engaged in a wide variety of topics, ranging from a lecture from Swedish photojournalist Elisabeth Ubbe on FGM and child marriage, to a discussion of the question, "Are Western Values Worth Defending?" by activist Faisal Al Mutar and Philosophy Professor Peter Boghossian.

"AHA has impacted me by expanding my knowledge concerning various human rights abuses and giving me the tools to combat them."

– Grace Roebuck,
AHA Foundation Campus Program Fellow

With all four of our events this semester, we have been able to share Enlightenment values, such as respect for human rights, free speech, and liberty for all, with over 16,000 people.

CONFERENCES AND CONSULTATIONS

This year, the AHA Foundation was active in attending conferences with organizations working towards similar goals, as well as presenting our work and information on FGM domestically and internationally. Below are a few highlights:



Ayaan's Team, Alex Still and Amanda Parker, at the National Consultation on Forced Marriage in Washington, D.C.

It was an honor for our Senior Director, Amanda Parker, to be invited to speak about the relationship between religious freedom and human rights in regard to FGM at a UNICEF-led conference in Brussels. In the video conference, Ms. Parker focused on the first and ongoing federal FGM prosecution for a doctor and several others who are accused of cutting little girls in a clinic outside Detroit. Ms. Parker emphasized the AHA Foundation's stance that human rights trump religious liberties and that legislation is an important part of creating structural change.

The AHA Foundation also participated in the National Consultation on Forced Marriage in the United States for its second year. This consultation brings together the leading organizations and individuals working to end forced marriage in the U.S. This year, several survivors held a moving panel about their experiences before the consultation broke out into different working groups, lectures, and panels. The Foundation continues to be a leader in calling for criminalization of forced marriage and worked to press the need for action in this area during the consultation.

OUR FOUNDER was awarded the Oxi Day Courage Award from the Washington Oxi Day Foundation. This award honors leaders who have taken courageous action to preserve freedom and democracy. The award ceremony took place on October 26, 2017.



Ayaan Hirsi Ali accepts the Oxi Day Courage Award, October 26, 2017.

Previous recipients of this award include Vice President Joe Biden, American Journalist James Foley who was murdered by ISIS, and Khalil al-Dakhi, an Iraqi who rescued women and children from ISIS forces.

In her acceptance speech, Ayaan described the three things she says “Oxi,” or “no,” to. “I say no to the set of principles that legitimize violence and oppression. I say no to the use of a prophet as a moral guide. And thirdly I say no to uncritical obedience to a clergy who coerces believers into submission.”

LOOKING AHEAD

Over the past 10 years, the AHA Foundation has been breaking the silence, protecting liberty, and celebrating dignity. With ten years of the AHA Foundation, we are looking back at our work to date, with an eye also towards our important work to come. We look forward to celebrating our 10th Anniversary throughout the year and are excited for the next decade of life-saving work with our expanded mission.

FGM LEGISLATION

This upcoming year, the AHA Foundation will target five states to criminalize FGM. We have determined these states through a comprehensive analysis, looking at both quantitative and qualitative factors, and have already begun setting the foundation for passing legislation in these states. We will also be looking at strengthening FGM legislation in two states, also selected as a result of a state grading system that we developed this year.

CHILD MARRIAGE LEGISLATION

The AHA Foundation has been working to support child marriage legislation and will continue to do so in 2018. Ending child marriage is an important way to protect girls from forced marriages, as well as prevent girls from suffering the many dangers associated with marrying before the age of 18. We will continue our work with the Florida Coalition to End Child Marriage to pass a bill setting 18 as the bright line minimum age of marriage in the state, as well as looking at other states like Massachusetts to implement child marriage legislation.

EXPAND CAMPUS PROGRAM

The AHA Foundation is currently accepting applications for new fellows across the U.S. and hopes to expand the campus program to 20 campuses total by the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year. In order to affect the most change on the issues of free expression, liberty for all, and challenging extremism, we are striving to create a national network of university students to spread Enlightenment values. We will be hosting our



Ayaan's Team at the AHA Foundation's 10th Anniversary Celebration

second annual training for returning and new fellows in the summer of 2018, which will serve both as an opportunity to evaluate the pilot year of this program and allow fellows to network and share ideas, while also training our new fellows.

EFFORTS TO ALIGN MUSLIM REFORMERS, EX-MUSLIMS, AND STAKEHOLDERS

Inspired by our Founder's newest publication, *The Challenge of Dawa*, the AHA Foundation plans to launch multiple efforts in 2018 that will begin to address the issues put forward in the piece. Ms. Hirsi Ali examines the titular theme of her new piece by explaining dawa as the indoctrination, recruitment, financing, and mobilization of those Muslims who follow a radical form of Islam. This ideological strategy they implement derives from a literal interpretation of Islamic theology, principles, and concepts. As the organizational infrastructure that supports the vast Islamic radicalism seen worldwide today, dawa requires immediate attention, but there has not yet been a cohesive and comprehensive attempt to bring together those who could best answer the big questions of how to counter Islamism.

"In the two months since I have joined the AHA Foundation, our Campus Program has expanded from six to eight campuses and we have reached over 16,000 people with our events. I am excited for the growth of the program over the next year and to see how we can affect change on campuses across the U.S."

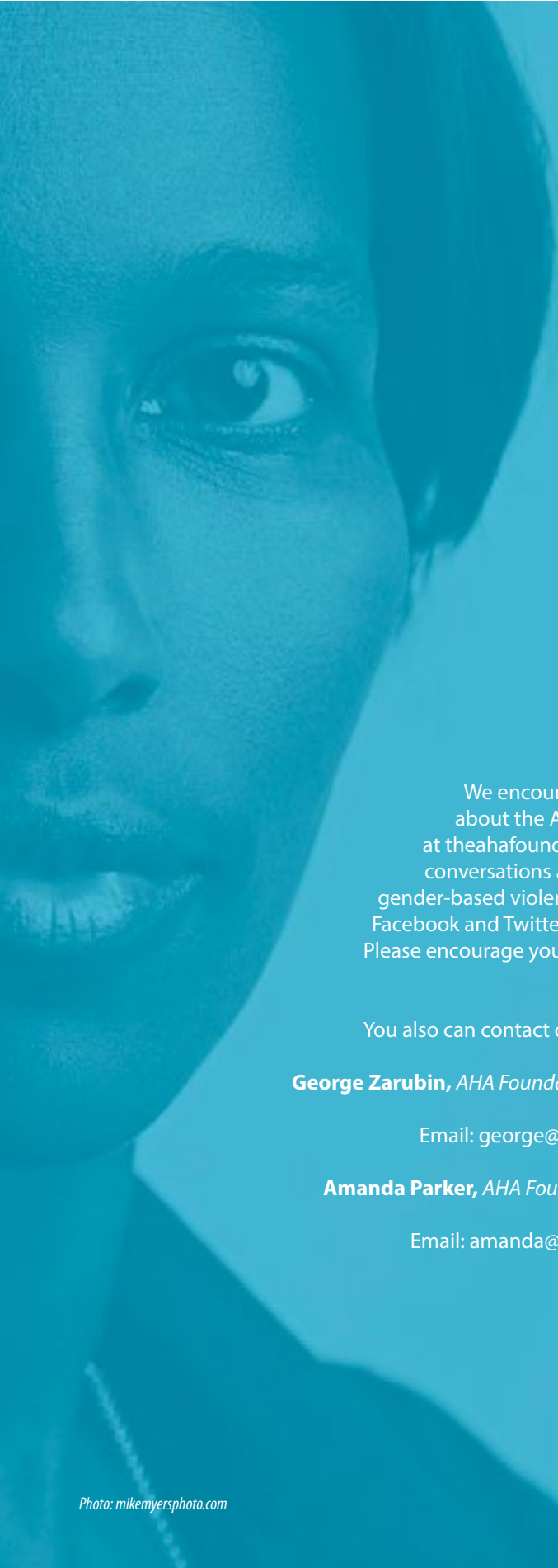
-Julia O'Donnell, AHA Foundation Campus Program Coordinator

The AHA Foundation will organize groups of Muslim reformers, Islamic religious scholars, ex-Muslims, and intellectuals to create networks that promote new strategies to combat Islamism (radical, political Islam). As a result, cohesive, fortified groups will emerge to counter Islamism through the application of critical thinking, with specific strategies for moving forward. These efforts will strengthen the individual voices and their reach and provide an opportunity for the creation of strategic organizational plans, such as formulated media strategies and outreach policies.

FGM TRIAL

The AHA Foundation is preparing for the first federal prosecution of a practitioner and associates accused of performing FGM to be held in January 2019.

This groundbreaking trial will be closely monitored by the AHA Foundation and up-to-date information will be provided to supporters as events unfold. We intend to use the momentum from this trial to increase awareness efforts about FGM in the U.S., as well as to implement state legislation in states that do not currently ban FGM.



We encourage you to learn more about the AHA Foundation's work at theahafoundation.org and join our conversations about issues related to gender-based violence and oppression on Facebook and Twitter at @AHAFoundation. Please encourage your friends and family to follow us as well.

You also can contact our staff to learn more:

George Zarubin, *AHA Foundation Executive Director*
Phone: 202-285-3520
Email: george@theahafoundation.org

Amanda Parker, *AHA Foundation Senior Director*
Phone: 305-791-5527
Email: amanda@theahafoundation.org

At the AHA Foundation, we work to put Ayaan's vision for the world into practice. It is because of our supporters that this is possible.

**SUPPORT OUR WORK.
GIVE A GIFT TODAY.**

Together, we can put an end to female genital mutilation, child and forced marriage, and other horrifying practices that are hurting women and girls behind closed doors in American communities.

TheAHAFoundation.org



The AHA Foundation

130 7th Avenue, Suite 236

New York, NY 10011