

Halal Extremism: The Mysterious Finances of One of America's Wealthiest Islamic Groups

by J.M Phelps and Sam Westrop



An investigation by the Middle East Forum has found [“Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America \(IFANCA\) is](#) among the wealthiest Islamic nonprofit organizations in America, based on the total assets and recent revenue reported [in its recent 990s.](#)

Although IFANCA is [a](#) U.S.-based [11,000](#) food, beverage, pharmaceutical, and personal care products, and also works to [promote](#) “awareness” of an Islamic lifestyle.

Such services are apparently lucrative. In 2019, according to its most recent publicly-available IRS Form 990, IFANCA [reported](#) over \$25 million of income, and almost \$70 million of assets – a curious level of wealth for a purported “non-profit” organization. Where does this money come from? And on what is it spent?

The second question is the easiest to answer. Tax returns [filed](#) by IFANCA from 2012 to 2019 show a steady payment of monies to radical organizations and charities across the country.

The Furqaan Academy, for instance, is a division of the Al

Furqaan Foundation. IFANCA [provided](#) \$360,000 to the Furqaan Academy between 2015 and 2018, according to its Form 990s from those years. One radical cleric closely connected with Furqaan is Sheikh Omar Baloch, who overtly spews [YouTube](#). For example, Baloch claims Zionists were responsible for the 9/11 attacks, the Christchurch mosque shootings in New Zealand, and the Sri Lanka Easter bombings. Today, Al Furqaan denies any connection with Baloch, although, interestingly, Baloch continues to fundraise for the [Furqaan Project](#), and, on his own website [published in 2020](#), he [referred to himself](#) as the current “Scholar in Residence for Al-Furqaan Foundation.”

[financier](#) of terror groups such as Hamas. Between 2016 and 2019, IFANCA [gave](#) \$112,000 to GainPeace and \$31,250 to ICNA Relief, ICNA’s charitable arm, according to Form 990s from those years.

IFANCA gave \$10,000 in 2019 to the Khalil Center, a [project of](#) the Zakat Foundation of America (ZFA), which DeSales University academic Ahmet S. Yayla [reports](#) is proxy of the Turkish regime in America. In addition, ZFA founder Halil Demir was a [former official](#) of the Benevolence International Foundation, which the U.S. Treasury [designated](#) in 2002 as “financiers of terrorism” because of its close links to Al Qaeda.

ZFA has also [close ties](#) to senior Hamas leaders, [as well as](#) the Islamic Charitable Society in Hebron, which German intelligence services once [described](#) as the “most important Hamas association in the West Bank.”

Between 2016 and [2018](#), prominent Islamist organization the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), which was [designated](#) in 2014 by the United Arab Emirates as a terrorist organization, received \$40,000 from IFANCA.

Also financially supported by IFANCA is the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC), an umbrella

organization for a [variety](#) of radical members, including the Hamas-linked [Islamic Relief](#), [Zakat Foundation of America](#). Between 2015 and [2018](#), CIOGC received \$41,200 from IFANCA.

From 2015 to 2019, however, IFANCA's grants to all these radical groups and others [totaled](#) under \$22 million, less than its annual revenue in just 2019. What else does IFANCA spend money on?

According to all of its publicly-available [tax returns](#), IFANCA's other most significant yearly expenditures include several million annually on salaries for approximately 40 employees,, along with millions spent each year on unexplained "consultant and foreign office" expenses.

Certainly, this nonprofit has provided lucrative employment for IFANCA's senior officials. IFANCA president-director Muhammad Munir Chaudry's base salary has [averaged](#) nearly \$358,000 from 2015 to 2019.

More interestingly, IFANCA has also funneled over \$3 million to Chaudry's personal charity, the MM Chaudry Family Foundation: \$1.5 million in [2017](#) and [2018](#), and another \$250,000 in [2019](#). Thus far, according to all the [tax returns](#) available at the time of writing, filed for tax years 2017 and 2018, the *entirety* of the MM Chaudry Foundation's revenue comes from IFANCA, and not a single dime has yet been spent by the charity on charitable purpose; with the only expenditure recorded being just over \$8000 of "investment" and "bank" fees.

Meanwhile, millions of seemingly-untaxed income is otherwise added to IFANCA's already-substantial coffers. In [2019](#), IFANCA raised \$14 million more than it spent. It is hardly surprising that IFANCA's total assets in 2019 was over \$70 million, of which – [according](#) to its 2019 990 – an [astonishing](#) \$60 million was invested in securities, along with almost \$10 million of owned land and buildings.

The precise origins of IFANCA's actual revenue remain unclear. IFANCA's 2019 tax returns [shows](#) that only \$2.7 million of its \$25 million income actually derives from "certification," with the rest otherwise generated from unexplained "consulting fees," "supervision fees," "plan approval fees," "conferences," and investments.

Certainly, IFANCA's finances do not compare with other major halal certification bodies around the world in countries with similarly-sized Muslim populations. Take, for example, the UK's [Halal Food Authority](#) reports similar numbers.

In other words, the financial power of other halal organizations is dwarfed by