



Shaykh Omar Popal

Lecturer and Researcher in Islamic Studies

Place of Birth and Origin: Northern Virginia

Early Islamic Education and Qur'anic Training

Omar Popal was born and raised in Northern Virginia. He began his formal study of Islamic sciences at the age of sixteen, demonstrating an early commitment to Islamic learning. His initial focus was on the memorization of the Qur'an, which he pursued at Madrasah In'aamiyyah in Durban, South Africa. This foundational training in Qur'anic memorization and recitation provided him with a deep connection to the Islamic scripture and established the basis for his subsequent advanced studies.

Advanced Islamic Studies

His pursuit of comprehensive Islamic knowledge led him to study at several respected Islamic institutions including Madinatul Uloom in Virginia and Dar al-Qasim in Chicago. His formative advanced studies took place at Dar al-Mustafa institution for traditional Islamic learning in Tarim, Hadramaut, Yemen, where he engaged in comprehensive training in classical Islamic sciences. In a commitment to lifelong learning and scholarly development, he has continued his studies by spending time in Istanbul for intensive Islamic studies, demonstrating his dedication to continuous intellectual and spiritual growth.

Distinguished Teachers and Scholarly Formation

Throughout his educational journey, Ustadh Omar has studied under numerous qualified Islamic scholars and luminaries, including Habib Umar bin Hafiz, Habib Kadhim as-Saqqaf, Shaykh Umar al-Khatib, Shaykh Khalid Kharsa, Shaykh Nader Abu Umar, Shaykh Amin Kholwadia and others. These teachers provided him with comprehensive training in Islamic jurisprudence, Qur'anic sciences, hadith studies, Islamic theology, Arabic language, and Islamic methodology.

Teaching Experience and Educational Contributions

Shaykh Omar Popal has taught Arabic and Islamic studies at several mosques and Islamic institutes throughout Northern Virginia, serving diverse Muslim communities and students at various levels of Islamic knowledge. He currently teaches Arabic and Islamic studies at Al-Maqasid, an institution dedicated to advancing Islamic education and scholarship. In this role, he contributes to the comprehensive Islamic education of students pursuing knowledge in traditional Islamic disciplines.



Leadership and Institutional Development

Under the direct guidance and authorization of al-Habib Omar bin Hafidh, Shaykh Omar Popal leads Tanwir Institute, an educational and spiritual organization dedicated to serving the substantial Muslim population in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The institute's mission centers on addressing the educational and spiritual needs of the large Muslim population in the DC metropolitan area. Through Tanwir Institute, he works to make authentic Islamic knowledge and spiritual guidance accessible to diverse segments of the Muslim community in the DC region.

Areas of Expertise

His specialized knowledge encompasses Islamic jurisprudence, Qur'anic sciences and recitation, hadith studies, Islamic theology and creed, Arabic language and linguistics, Islamic education and pedagogy, and traditional Islamic methodology. He is particularly skilled in teaching Arabic and Islamic studies to diverse audiences, from beginners to advanced students, and in adapting classical Islamic knowledge to contemporary educational contexts.

Current Focus and Mission

Shaykh Omar Popal's present work focuses on advancing Islamic education and spiritual development in the Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas. Through his teaching at Al-Maqasid, his work with Tanwir Institute, and his community engagement, he endeavors to serve Muslim communities by providing access to authentic Islamic knowledge, fostering spiritual growth, and creating educational opportunities rooted in classical Islamic tradition. His mission centers on meeting the diverse educational and spiritual needs of contemporary Muslim communities whilst maintaining fidelity to traditional Islamic scholarship and methodology.

