



MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness in  
collaboration with Muslim Student Association and  
the Department of Multicultural Services presents:

## Islamic Contributions to Civilization

Wednesday, November 10, 2010  
6:00 p.m.  
Rudder Tower 601

# Islamic Contributions to Civilization

## Introductions

## Moderator Presentation

## Panelists Presentations

## Q&A Discussion

### **Dr. Gül A. Russell**

Professor, Department of Humanities in Medicine

Dr. Russell's research interests are in the history of visual neuroscience & optics, transmission of scientific ideas with specific emphasis on the Arabic sources of the Renaissance and on the scientific revolution in the seventeenth century. Teaching provides an historical perspective on the health sciences, clinical practice, and the rise of bioethics; and integrates cognitive neuroscience and the visual arts to help promote observational, critical, and perceptual skills of future physicians.

### **Dr. M. Basheer Ahmed**

President and Founder, Institute of Medieval and Post-Medieval Studies  
Chairman and Founder, Muslim Community Center for Human Services

Dr. Ahmed is the founder and chairman of Muslim Community Center for Human Services, which is a medical, and a social service organization, helping indigents residing in Dallas Fort Worth area. Dr. Ahmed received the Tarrant County Medical Society 2008 Physician Humanitarian Award in January 2008. He is the founder member and President of Institute of Medieval and Post-Medieval studies of North Texas. He has presented numerous papers nationally and internationally. He has also published numerous articles in various professional journals.

### **Dr. Kevin Krisciunas**

Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy

Dr. Krisciunas grew up as an amateur astronomer and studied astronomy and physics in college. He has been teaching introductory astronomy off and on since 1978. From 1977 to 1982, he worked for a NASA contractor and flew 160 flights aboard NASA's Kuiper Airborne Observatory. Since 1999, his research has primarily involved optical and infrared observations of Type Ia supernovae. He is a participant in the ESSENCE project, which discovered over 200 high-redshift supernovae using the 40meter telescope at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory. From 2004-2006 he was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Notre Dame.

### **Mr. Edward Thomas**

President-Elect, Institute of Medieval and Post-Medieval Studies

Mr. Thomas was born and raised in Westfield, New Jersey, about 20 miles west of New York City. He received his B.A. in Mathematics from Yale University. Mr. Thomas served 3 years in U.S. Navy and taught mathematics at a high school in Kabul, Afghanistan, for 2 years. After getting an M.A. in International Relations from Columbia University, he joined U.S. Foreign Service. After study of Persian, Mr. Thomas had several assignments in Iran, including as American Vice Consul in Tabriz and then Consul in Mashhad. Post-graduate Near East studies at Princeton University. Later he was the Peace Corps Director in Iran. After retiring from that position he moved to Dallas in 1995. Mr. Thomas has published a number of articles concerning the Muslim world and various of its countries. He is an active member of the Institute of Medieval and Post-Medieval Studies since its founding in 2005. Mr. Thomas has taught Continuing Education courses at SMU on "Great Thinkers of the Muslim World" and, earlier, "From Kabul to Baghdad: How a Turbulent Region Got That Way."

### **Dr. G. Donald Allen**

Director, Center for Technology-Mediated Learning in Mathematics  
Associate Head for Operations; Department of Mathematics

Dr. Allen has been a professor of mathematics at Texas A&M University for more than two decades. He is currently Associate head for Operations, Program Director for the Online Masters of Mathematics degree, and Director of the Center for Technology-Mediated Learning in the Department of Mathematics. His mathematical research has been in the areas of probability, functional analysis, numerical analysis, neutronics, and mathematical modeling. His education research is in technology in survey design and other subjects. Allen has co-developed an online calculus course and online texts in linear algebra and the history of mathematics. In addition, he has co-developed a fully online master's of science degree in mathematics, one of only two nationally, and the only one specifically designed for teachers.