

# Call for Nominations

## Saluting CEO Commitment and Innovation to Advance Interfaith Understanding & Peace

Nominations Deadline: 30 April 2016

To nominate a CEO, email completed form to:  
[nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org](mailto:nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org)

The Global Business & Interfaith Peace Awards recognize business leaders – current or past CEOs – who have demonstrated leadership in championing interfaith understanding and peace. The Awards are a partnership initiative of the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF), its Brazilian affiliate, the Associação pela Liberdade Religiosa e Negócios (ALRN), and the United Nations Global Compact Business for Peace (B4P) platform.



Nominations will be accepted in four categories:

- **Core business.** Championing interfaith understanding and peace through a company's core business operations, including internal procedures, human resources hiring practices, training, product/service development, sourcing policies, supply chains, as well as the development of products and services that promote interfaith understanding and peace.
- **Social investment and philanthropy.** Financial and in-kind contributions, and strategic social investment support for NGOs, UN and multilateral agencies or directly to affected communities and/or contribution of functional expertise through volunteering efforts.
- **Advocacy and public policy engagement.** Fostering social cohesion and inter-group dialogue and relationship-building in the workplace, marketplace and local community.
- **Partnership and collective action.** Joining forces with Governments, UN entities, civil society organizations and/or other businesses to act collectively to promote interfaith understanding and peace and forge long-term partnerships for local or regional economic and sustainable development.

Awards will be presented on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the day before the opening of the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, where *award recipients will have the opportunity to present their commitment* to interfaith understanding and peace, while contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.<sup>1</sup>

For more information, go to: <http://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/global-awards>

### The Value of Recognizing Business Champions

The recipients of the Global Business & Interfaith Peace Awards are recognized leaders on the cutting edge of business. The Awards salute concrete and innovative actions, acknowledging the impact of responsible business practices in advancing the values of interfaith understanding and peace. The winners will become part of an esteemed group of outstanding leaders whose actions will also be recognized by investors, employees, customers and other stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> SDG-16: Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

## NOMINATION FORM: Global Business & Interfaith Peace Awards

**Note:** Nominations are open to CEOs (present or past) of companies who have championed interfaith understanding and peace.

### Nominee Contact Information

1. Nominee Full Name: Tayyibah Taylor
2. Corporate Title: CEO, Founder, Azizah Magazine
3. Company Name: WOW Publishing, Inc.
4. Company Headquarters Location (Country): United States of America
5. Engagement with the UN Global Compact and/or the Religions Freedom & Business Foundation\*
  - Company is a signatory of the UN Global Compact
  - Company has joined Business for Peace
  - Company has signed the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's pledge to protect freedom of religion
  - Company intends to join one or more of the initiatives listed above in the next six months, please specify  
Azizah Magazine is open and interested in joining causes for peace in the world.

\* Nominees are invited to:

1. join the [UN Global Compact](#) and its [Business for Peace](#) platform and,
2. make the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's [corporate pledge to protect freedom of religion or belief](#) (FoRB)

### Nominator Contact Information

1. Nominator Full Name: Marlina 'Nina' Soerakoesoemah
2. Corporate Title: Co-founder, Creative Director
3. Company Name: Azizah Magazine, WOW Publishing, Inc.
4. Email Address: nina@azizahmagazine.com
5. Phone Number: 425-785-4614
6. Relationship to the Nominee: Business Partner

Please submit a Biography of the Nominee (max 200 words)

Tayyibah Taylor is the founding editor-in-chief and publisher of Azizah Magazine, an award-winning publication. Ms. Taylor has been named as one of the 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World by the Middle Eastern think tank The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies and was featured in Huffington Post as one of the Ten American Muslim

Women You Should Know. Through Azizah, Ms. Taylor realizes her vision to provide a vehicle for the voice of Muslim American women – a vehicle that portrays their perspectives and experiences, and shatters commonly held stereotypes. She has presented lectures on Islam and Muslim women at national and international conferences and has travelled to 40 countries, spanning six continents, some of which was sponsored by the US State Department. Ms. Taylor has worked on several interfaith initiatives and traveled to Turkey, Spain, Morocco, Jerusalem, Greece, Jordan and Canada with various groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

### Information about the policy, programme or initiative

1. Please describe a policy, programme or initiative that the Nominee has launched or spearheaded to advance the company's efforts to champion interfaith understanding and peace (max 300 words)

Tayyibah Taylor launched Azizah Magazine in 2000, along with co-founder, Nina Soerakoesoemah. Azizah magazine is a quarterly lifestyle magazine celebrating the stories and accomplishments of Muslim women. In addition to providing engaging articles, Azizah is the magazine American Muslim women and their families read to learn about new trends, useful products and quality merchandise. As the only print magazine of its kind, targeted to women of this global market, and soon to be digital publication, Azizah is steadily growing in its reach and popularity. The magazine's reach not only spans to Muslim women, but also many women and men of other faiths who are able to get better understanding into the world of the life and accomplishments of Muslim women.

2. Which category or categories does the policy, programme or initiative fall into:

- Core business
- Social investment & philanthropy
- Advocacy and public policy engagement
- Partnership and collective action

3. Does the policy, programme or initiative address any of the following related to Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)<sup>2</sup>:

- Promote sustainable and innovative business through protecting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)
- Non-discrimination and/or non-harassment on the basis of religion or belief
- Religious accommodation and inclusion
- Protecting and promoting freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in the community
- Other (describe below, max. 25 words)

The magazine itself is a representation of the Muslim women's freedom in America and ability to share their stories, accomplishments, and challenges in their own words.

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<sup>2</sup> Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

4. Please describe the objective of the policy, programme or initiative and the need, goal or gap that it was designed to address. (max 200 words)

In the words of Tayyibah Taylor: “We strive to be thought provoking, not provocative. This defines our tone and direction because many other magazines focus on what’s going to sell and what is going to be the most provocative. We stay away from anything salacious, but we do want to provoke thought and conversation. When we address disability, child custody, or abuse in the Muslim community—issues that people might say are difficult— we adopt a very matter-of-fact and not a sensationalized perspective. This is real journalism. You can get to the meat of the issue without all of the fireworks. We’re writing Azizah for Muslim women who are in America. All of the articles are written by Muslim women, and so they’re written from our vantage point. Azizah is the place where you can go to hear the voice of Muslim women unfiltered. To us it’s important to have at least one place to do this. That’s our editorial vision really: to create and be a vehicle for the voice of Muslim women, to be able to celebrate their accomplishments and discuss their issues.”

5. How was the policy, programme or initiative implemented? What role did the Nominee play? (max 200 words)

Tayyibah Taylor was the creator and co-founder of Azizah Magazine. The idea to start an Islamic magazine for woman was conceived in the “early ’90s” at a Muslim women’s convention Tayyibah was attending. She saw women of different professions, ethnicities and schools of thought (madhab) gathered from across the country. Tayyibah said she was inspired by the setting to start the magazine because the energy and expertise in the room was very empowering and remarkable. From this she decided that she wanted to encapsulate this experience and put it on the pages of a magazine, so that everyone can see who Muslim women are.

6. What were/are the most persistent challenges in implementing the policy, programme or initiative? How were they/are they being overcome and what was the role of the Nominee? (max 200 words)

At the inception of Azizah the greatest challenges involved building the brand and changing perceptions about the value and importance of Muslim women having a media platform. Securing advertisers was a challenge. Most of the opposition interestingly was within the audience of the niche market, predominantly Muslim women and a few Muslim men. However the overwhelmingly majority of our audience was in favor of the Magazine and they were excited to have a media platform that validated their existence without compromising excellent content and quality. Ms. Taylor was effective in challenging our audience by focusing on positive images of Muslim women and by engaging them through face to face interaction. In the first years of Azizah magazine’s inception she spent many weeks on the road conducting receptions and giving speeches about the importance of Muslim media and Muslim women having a voice in the media.

7. What are the key lessons learned from launching the policy, programme or initiative? (max 200 words)

1. Azizah Magazine has helped Muslim women realize their potential as spiritual and social agents who contribute to the community, the country and the world. The Magazine has encouraged young Muslim women to see the possibility of a bright future as Azizah Magazine provides strong Muslim role models. The media is a powerful opinion shaper and Azizah Magazine informs and inspires the minds of readers around

the world by creating a strong voice in the public discourse about Islam, Muslim men and Muslim women in America in a powerful and effective way. We can allow others to tell our story or we can tell it ourselves.

### **Impact and Reporting on Progress**

1. How do you monitor and evaluate progress on the policy, programme or initiative? If relevant, what indicators and metrics are used? (max 200 words)  
Azizah magazine meets regularly amongst its staff as well as collaborates with others to evaluate their current product and make improvements regularly and accordingly from collective feedback. We also survey our subscribers to see what we are doing well and what can be made better and commit to those factors that are important to our readership.
2. What outcomes or impact have been reached to date? Please be as specific as possible and supply available data. (max 200 words)  
Our reach is 150,000, including our print magazine readership of 40,000. Our current top 10 regional readership is Georgia, California, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Washington, Texas and Toronto, Canada. We project with the launch of our digital edition, that our reach and circulation will be 5 times the current rate by the end of the 4th quarter 2016.
3. Is the Nominee's company reporting on its practices, policies, programmes and/or initiatives to champion interfaith understanding and peace? If so, please provide relevant weblink(s) for posting on the Awards' website. If integrated into the company's corporate sustainability report, Global Compact COP or GRI Report, please indicate relevant pages and/or sections. (max 200 words)  
Azizah Magazine has a website of [www.azizahmagazine.com](http://www.azizahmagazine.com). This website shares portions of our articles and gives the viewer a glimpse into the pages of the magazine.

### **Additional Information:**

1. Are there additional actions the Nominee has taken on an individual level to support interfaith understanding and peace within the organization? If so, please specify. (max 200 words)  
Tayyibah has worked on several interfaith initiatives and traveled to Turkey, Spain, Morocco, Jerusalem, Greece and Jordan with various groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims. In Spring 2010, she was one of eight Muslims to meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama in an Islam-Buddhism Common Ground event and she was invited to the White House Iftar in August 2011 and dined with President Barack Obama. A recipient of many community awards, Tayyibah also travelled to Tajikistan and Afghanistan to speak about women's empowerment and entrepreneurship.
2. How has the Nominee taken action to support and promote the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles? If so, please specify. (max 200 words)

Tayyibah Taylor, in her life's work has addressed many of the 10 principles in the 4 different categories of UN Global Compact of Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. As a national speaker, she was front and center promoting human rights, especially the rights of women. She travelled to 6 of the 7 continents giving speeches and sharing her expertise on these subjects. Tayyibah, as the leader of Azizah magazine ensured that it holds fast to moral beliefs and practices and was never swayed by corrupt practices. The magazine has partnered with other organizations to sponsor essay writing contests for budding writers and is passionate about giving back to the community and environment through its AZIZAH CARES mission. AZIZAH CARES has worked on many projects in the community such as volunteer work at MedShare, that packages donated medical supplies to countries around the world. Other volunteer projects have included delivering flower arrangements to women in shelters and the elderly, painting a mural for a public bus shelter, and promoting health and wellness through creating a women's volleyball team and an annual mountain climb.

Please provide any additional information to be considered. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Nominations team [nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org](mailto:nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org)

Tayyibah Taylor passed away in September 2014. She truly dedicated her life's work to promoting peace and making this world a better place, one of understanding and communication. AZIZAH magazine continues her legacy and is a groundbreaking vehicle for the voice of Muslim women. Tayyibah served to build bridges amongst people of all kinds and promote understanding amongst nations and faiths. She believed that there was "no place for war and was certain that if we as human beings were able to program complex computers and find ways to fly to the moon, then surely the heads of states and nations can sit down amicably and find ways to promote a peaceful and kind world through collaboration and exchange." Thank you for your consideration of this amazing woman for this award.