

Historic Graduation & Convocation at IQOU Theological College Marks a New Era for Islamic Education in America

CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA,
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/EINPresswire.com/ -- IQOU Theological College, a pioneering institution of Islamic higher education in the United States of America, celebrated its annual Graduation & Convocation on May 26, 2024, in Charlotte Court House, Virginia. The event, held under the clear morning sky on the beautiful lawn of its future campus, marked a momentous occasion for graduates receiving Certificates and diplomas in Islamic Studies through dynamic, fully virtual programs.

IQOU Theological College President Sheikha Syeda Zainab Gillani, delivered a warm welcome address to an audience of international dignitaries, special guests, and the families of graduates. President Gillani shed light on the tumultuous history of education for African Americans in the region and underscored the significance of the college's future campus which was built during segregation in 1952 as a school for African Americans. The historic building will soon serve as the new home for IQOU Theological College, which is open to students of diverse backgrounds from around the world who are eager to explore the rich Islamic culture and sciences.

The stark juxtaposition of the establishment of IQOU Theological College to the memory of those who paved the way was not lost on the audience as President Gillani said, "for 350 years many and most of our ancestors were stolen from the shores of West Africa, shipped away on horrible ships and sold into a life of the most inhumane bondage, slavery, and oppression ever to be



Keynote speaker Dr. Abdel Kader Haidara, founder of the Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library in Mali, addresses the IQOU Theological College class of 2024 at this year's Graduation & Convocation.

recorded in human history.” This year's landmark ceremony announced the college's groundbreaking role in bringing a lost history of Islamic learning, scholarship, and research to the area through new collaborations with international dignitaries from Mali, West Africa. The keynote speaker, Dr. Abdel Kader Haidara, founder of the Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library of Timbuktu, Mali, spoke to the audience in Arabic with Hafiz Hassan Ali Qadri, IQOU faculty member, providing the English translation.



Administration, Faculty, Staff and 2024 Graduates of IQOU Theological College pose with honored guests Dr. Abdel Kader Haidara of Mali, Bassala Haidara representing Cheik Alpha Doha Kounta and Syed Mansoor Gillani Shah.

Dr. Haidara expressed the need to open the doors of opportunity in order to learn from one another and spread unity and cultural understanding. Dr. Haidara is world renowned for dedicating his life to preserving hundreds of thousands of ancient manuscripts from the West African city of Timbuktu, Mali, a thriving hub of intellectual activity during the 13th to 17th centuries. In the tumultuous year of 2012, violence loomed in the region threatening to destroy the irreplaceable manuscripts of philosophy, economics, medicine, mathematics, agriculture, and astronomy. Dr. Haidara launched a courageous rescue of the ancient Timbuktu manuscripts now located at the Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library. Dr. Haidara safeguards the legacy of generations past by preserving humanity's collective heritage for generations to come.

President Gillani spoke on the importance of the ancient manuscripts and announced a special collaboration to come, “We are honored to have Dr. Haidara travel here from Mali and we are happy to announce a wonderful collaboration between the MammaHaidara Commemorative Library and IQOU Theological College where our students and faculty can benefit from the world of knowledge gained through the study of ancient manuscripts. ”The audience also enjoyed hearing from guest speaker Attorney Tahirah Amatul-Wadud, Executive Director of the Massachusetts chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), who connected with both graduates and guests with words of encouragement.

Following the graduation ceremony, the new IQOU Theological College Research & Development department, under the leadership of Dr. Safwa Abdul-Aziz, launched its first educational research project to explore educational trends and experiences in a primarily African-American Muslim community. The first of its kind, the research team hopes its findings will provide insight, improve understanding, and ultimately lead to positive social change. According to recent data, the Muslim population in the United States is rapidly rising, yet the number of institutions dedicated to Islamic higher education remains limited.

IQOU Theological College is dedicated to the advancement of Islamic knowledge and culture

through comprehensive degree offerings that include courses in Arabic language, Hadith Sciences, Quranic Sciences, Islamic History, Islamic Art & Calligraphy, and Hifz. As one of few Islamic higher education institutions in America, IQOU Theological College aims to serve as a beacon of light in learning and is honored to fulfill a crucial need in the preservation and promotion of beneficial knowledge.

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About IQOU Theological College

IQOU Theological College is an Islamic Studies college located in Charlotte Court House, Virginia whose vision is to center students in gaining beneficial knowledge of faith and spirituality that results in living dynamic and healthy lives. IQOU Theological College currently confers degrees under a religious exemption through the State Council of Higher Education and has long-term plans to achieve full accreditation as well as the addition of secular courses.

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