

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

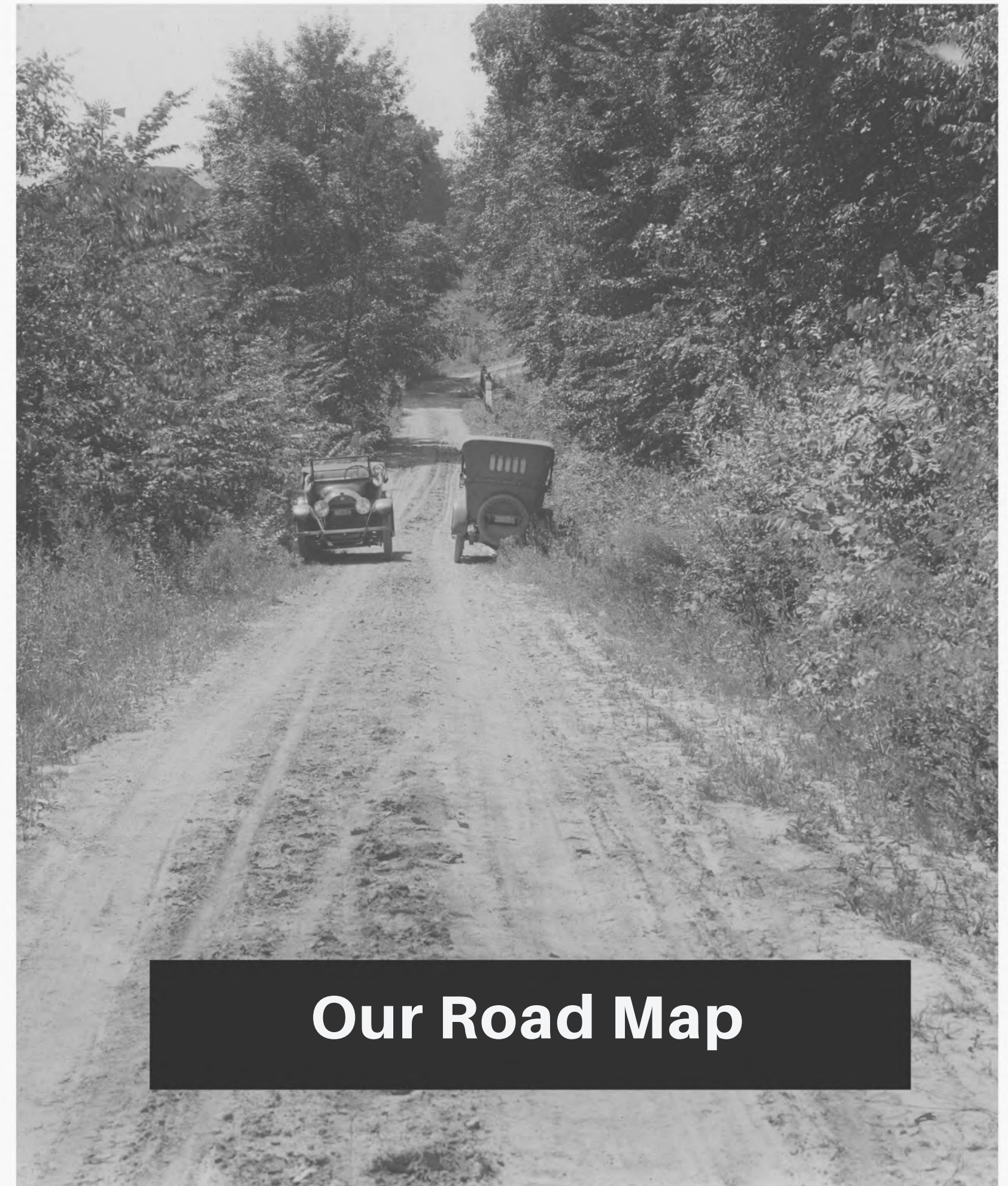
Beyond the Grant: Continuing Efforts to Preserve Northwest Ohio's Islamic History through Community Collaboration and Engagement



Society of Ohio Archivists, May 20, 2022

Overview

- Introduction
- Background on our 2019 NEH Grant
- Post-grant collaborations
 - Work done to date
 - Future directions
- Lessons learned / advice for others





**Who we are
and what we do**

Center for Archival Collections

- Established 1968
- University Archives, regional history archive, special collections
- Strengths: Civil War history, women, labor, agriculture, religion (Christian churches)
- Weaknesses: lack of diversity in our holdings
- Opportunities: almost entirely new staff (<5 years), new ideas and energies, eager to establish relationships with campus and community partners



Islamic Center of Greater Toledo (ICGT)

**Our partner and
and what they do**

- Established 1954
- Members represent 23 nationalities
- Operates full-time Islamic School
- Provides a variety of religious, educational and cultural programs for its members as well as the greater Toledo community
- First to build a mosque in Ohio (3rd in the nation), current location built in 1982
- Bridge of understanding between its members and the community at large



Cherrefe Kadri

Getting to know you

- Dinner with members of the ICGT
- Lunch, coffee, and other in-person meetings with Cherrefe Kadri, who became our primary contact and partner
- Attendance at community events
- Learned about needs and previous grant application

Common Heritage Grant



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

- *Supported community digitization and outreach events, 2016-2021*
- *\$12,000 cap*
- *18-month period; extension due to COVID-19*

OUR COMMON HERITAGE PROJECT



Community Scan Day

- Digitized cultural heritage material
- Provided preservation supplies
- Planned for oral histories
- Equipment available to circulate



Digital Exhibit

- Provided access to select digital content to the community as well as new audiences



Lecture & Exhibit (x2)

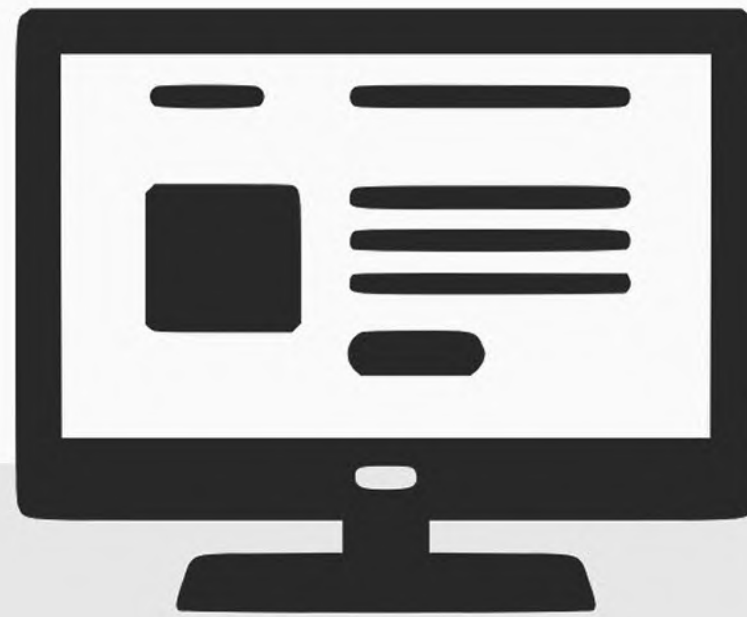
- Created exhibit featuring 25 images digitized by the project
- Hosted event featuring educational presentation
- Exhibit became traveling (free)

BEYOND THE GRANT



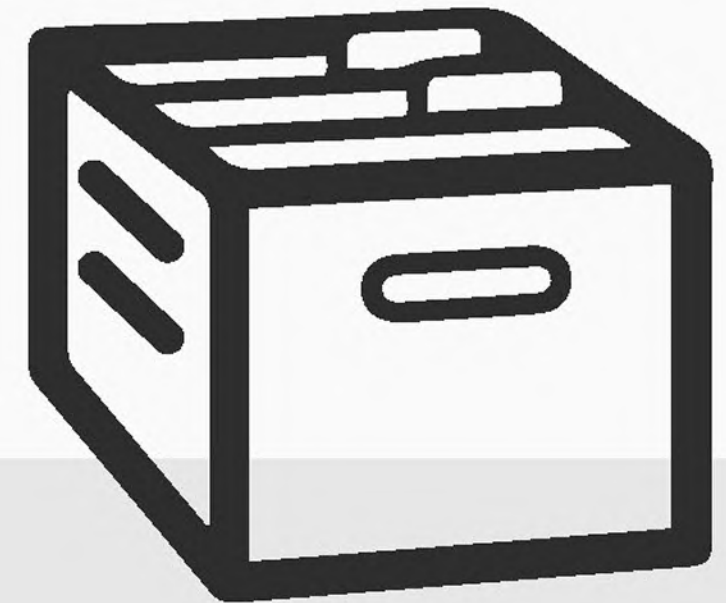
Oral History Project

- Recording the personal memories and perspectives of several ICGT community elders



Expanded Digital Collection

- Omeka-based collection building on the digital exhibit created for the grant



Collection Development

- Acquiring physical and digital archival collections from the ICGT community

Oral History Project, 2020-Present

- Benefited from Cherrefe Kadri's ICGT community knowledge to identify prospective interviewees
- Brought in additional collaborators at BGSU
- Conducted interviews both via Zoom and in person
- Published oral histories in Omeka-based digital collection



Cherrefe Kadri oral history interview (Zoom)

Digital Gallery

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Islamic Center of Greater Toledo oral histories

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This collection contains audio recordings of several oral history interviews with longtime members of the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo (ICGT).

The interviews were collected between 2020 and 2022 as part of a continuing collaboration between the ICGT and the BGSU Center for Archival Collections (CAC) to document the history of the ICGT and the broader Islamic history of Northwest Ohio, first begun in 2019 with a [Community Scan Day](#) event supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Oral histories included in this collection were conducted by CAC staff members Nick Pavlik and Michelle Sweetser, as well as Emily Edwards, a doctoral candidate in the BGSU American Culture Studies program.

Select [Browse Items](#) to access all oral histories currently in this digital collection, or enter specific terms in the collection search box to search for interviews with specific individuals or on particular subjects.



Grand opening and ribbon-cutting of Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, 1983. Interviewee Habib Khan is on the far right.

Expanded Community Scan Day Digital Collection (2021 - Present)

- Collection within Omeka-based Digital Gallery platform
- Providing access to as many items from the 2019 Community Scan Day as possible
- Items grouped according to provenance and traced back to their Community Scan Day donors in the Dublin Core metadata
- Collection harvested in metadata aggregation platforms (DPLA, JSTOR Community Collections)



Photographs of construction site of Islamic Center of Greater Toledo



Eid celebration at Islamic Center of Greater Toledo site



Arab-American Citizens banquet photograph



O.B. Olive house photograph



Islamic Center of Toledo campaign poster



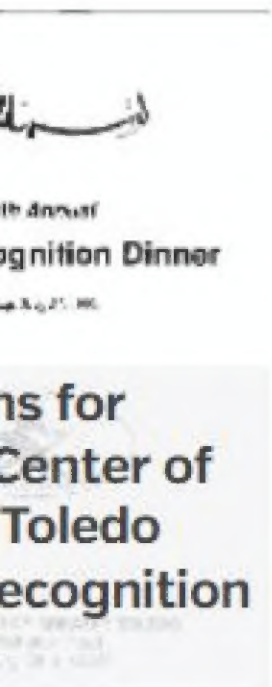
DEDICATION
Islamic Center of Greater Toledo dedication ceremony program



Photographs from Islamic Center of Greater Toledo dedication ceremony



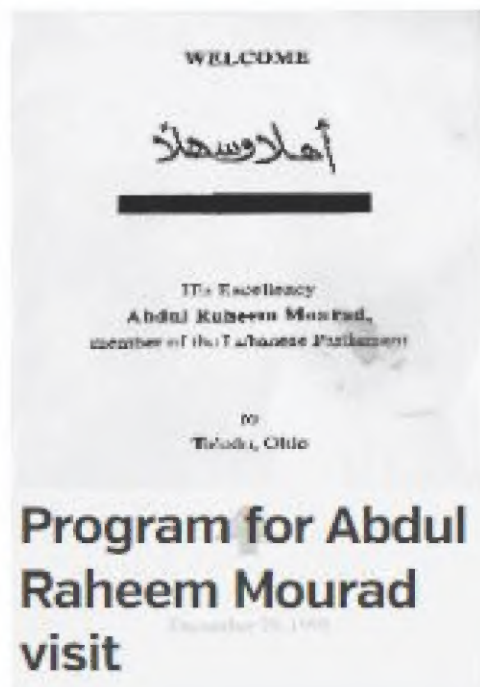
Photographs of Islamic Center of Greater Toledo under construction



Program for Abdul Raheem Mourad visit



Issues of The Muslim Star



Program for Abdul Raheem Mourad visit



Islamic Center of Toledo 1982 directory

Digital Gallery

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Islamic Center of Greater Toledo Community Scan Day collection

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This digital collection features select items digitized at the public Community Scan Day event held on May 5, 2019, at the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo (ICGT), hosted jointly by the Center for the Archival Collections and the ICGT. The Community Scan Day was made possible by a [Common Heritage grant](#) awarded to the CAC and ICGT by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Members of the greater Toledo community were invited to attend the event and bring any archival materials they may have in their personal possession - including documents, photographs, printed ephemera, audio recordings, etc. - that document the history of Northwest Ohio's Muslim community. Materials brought by participants were digitized onsite by CAC staff, and both the original and digital copies of the materials were then returned to their owners. With the owners' permission, the CAC also maintained digital copies of the materials for its own collections.

This digital collection contains only a selection of items that were digitized at the Community Scan Day event. Additional images are being posted on an ongoing basis. For information concerning additional scanned items that are not currently in this collection, please [contact the Center for Archival Collections](#).

Some images in this digital collection can also be viewed in our corresponding digital exhibit, "[The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo: Celebrating the History of Northwest Ohio's Muslim Community](#)."

This digital collection has been made possible in part by a Common Heritage grant from the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#). Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this digital exhibit do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

Featured





Group at dedication of first ICGT mosque, 1955

Future Directions: Collaborative Collection Development

- Building on the relationships we have built with the ICGT community to begin acquiring physical and digital archival collections from ICGT members
- Working with ICGT leadership on coordinated promotional and outreach campaigns (newsletters, social media, announcements at prayer services) to raise awareness within the ICGT membership
- Working with Community Scan Day donors and other ICGT elders to augment descriptions of items donated during the NEH grant period

LESSONS LEARNED / CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Difficulty scheduling oral history interviews

Lots of phone/email tag before finally scheduling interviews; hesitation among some prospective interviewees

Ongoing need to refine descriptive metadata

Growth of digital collection is contingent on quality of descriptive information obtained during the Scan Day event

Stay focused on the long view

While important, our project is not always top of mind for the ICGT; we understand and expect that significant project developments will take time

Finding the time

Tie projects to broader organizational objectives (e.g., DEIA), put the work on individual and/or unit strategic annual goals list

Funding

Lack of funding may limit or slow some portions of the project; acknowledge that and its impact on pace, look for other possibilities, etc.

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