

Virginia Muslim College Graduation Reflects on America's Promise of Religious Freedom

IQOU Theological College Holds 2026 Graduation & Convocation

CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE, VA, UNITED STATES, May 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [IQOU Theological College](https://www.iqou.com) celebrated its 2026 Graduation & Convocation on May 24 at its campus in Charlotte Court House, Virginia, bringing together students, board members, faculty, and families for a ceremony centered on the enduring American promise of religious freedom.

Welcoming remarks from IQOU Theological College Vice President Hussein Adams greeted attendees with a message of gratitude and reflection. Vice President Adams emphasized that the college's mission is rooted in authentic Islamic scholarship and shaped by the belief that education should form the whole person. He connected that message to the American principle of religious freedom, describing faith-based education as part of the nation's broader story.

"Faith-based education has always been part of the American story. Across many traditions, Americans have understood that forming the character of a person is part of forming a productive citizen. The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States protects religious freedom because the country's founders understood, from direct experience, what happens when that protection is absent. This was not an afterthought, it was foundational."

Adams noted the significance of the current moment in American history, "So as this nation marks two hundred and fifty years of its founding promise, institutions like ours are evidence that the promise holds. Religious freedom, when protected and lived fully, returns something of value to every corner of American life."



IQOU Theological College Vice President Hussein Adams delivers remarks during the 2026 Graduation & Convocation in Charlotte Court House, Virginia.

The ceremony featured remarks from Alima Safiah Salaam, head of the Arabic Studies department of IQOU Theological College, who spoke about the enduring worth of Islamic learning and the college's role in reviving classical Islamic education in a contemporary Western setting. She described ilm, or beneficial knowledge, as precious and transformative, and praised the institution for reconnecting students to the classical sciences through living scholarly traditions.

"IQOU Theological College has successfully revived traditional Islamic education and the classical sciences within the context of modern contemporary Western society," Salaam said, pointing to the college's collection of ancient [manuscripts](#). Through a memorandum of understanding with the Mamma Haidara Library in Timbuktu, Mali, IQOU

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*Hussein Adams, Vice President
of IQOU Theological College*

students and faculty benefit from the study of ancient manuscripts from Timbuktu, a rare distinction for any American institution.

The graduating student speaker, Hajarah Taylor-Mapp, offered a personal reflection on her experience as a student balancing faith, study, and everyday responsibilities. Her remarks spoke to the realities many adult learners face, including work, family obligations, and the challenge of pursuing meaningful education without leaving home.

Taylor-Mapp noted that IQOU “made this religious knowledge accessible to people like me — mothers, workers, caregivers, community members, and people balancing real lives and real responsibilities while still longing to learn...”. She spoke of the spiritual and intellectual growth that came through her studies and highlighted the college's experiential learning model. Taylor-Mapp described her Arabic language immersion experience in Cairo, Egypt where classroom learning was deepened through direct engagement with native speakers in a historic center of Islamic scholarship and culture.

Following the graduation, remarks shared by President Sheikha Syeda Zainab Gillani emphasized the college's commitment to making Islamic education both rooted in authentic tradition and responsive to contemporary life. “IQOU College is a place where students find both technological



The 2026 graduates gather with faculty and college leadership for a commemorative group photo.

access and authenticity,” President Gillani said. “We are cultivating an academic community grounded in inclusiveness, tolerance, and the timeless beauty of the Sufi tradition that nurtures the mind, heart and soul. Here, students can pursue Islamic knowledge with confidence in the strength of the curriculum, the credibility of the faculty, and the relevance of what they are learning to the lives they are living.”

Dean of Academic Affairs Nafisah Salaam highlighted the breadth of the college’s fully virtual academic offerings, including programs in Islamic studies and Arabic at the certificate, diploma, and bachelor’s levels. She reflected on the Quranic reminder that “with hardship comes ease,” noting that the verse teaches that relief is already present even within difficulty. Addressing the graduates, she said, “You, as IQOU Theological College students, sought, struggled, and persevered, and at this very moment, though you are still pursuing your lifelong pursuit of knowledge, your Lord has fulfilled His promise by providing you with ease.”

One of the institution’s most significant recent milestones is its [articulation](#) agreement with Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. IQOU has described the partnership as a historic academic agreement that makes it the first U.S. institution to offer supervised Arabic diploma pathways leading to Al-Azhar-validated certificates and direct matriculation opportunities. Al-Azhar, founded in 972, is one of the world’s oldest and most renowned centers of Islamic learning.

This year’s Graduation & Convocation celebrated more than academic achievement; it reflected the college’s broader vision of education as a source of character, service, and community contribution. With its growing academic partnerships, degree offerings, and commitment to traditional Islamic scholarship, IQOU Theological College continues to open pathways for students seeking knowledge that can shape both life and society.

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Dean of Academic Affairs Nafisah Salaam speaks about IQOU Theological College’s academic offerings and the value of perseverance in learning.

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