

SOUTH BRUNSWICK - Islamic Society holds school building fundraiser

DATE POSTED: Thursday, May 19, 2011 1:06 AM EDT

By Mary Brienza, Staff Writer



Staff photo by Mary Brienza Comedian Baba Ali performs at a fundraiser for the Noor-Ul-Iman School at the Islamic Society of Central Jersey on Route 1 in Monmouth junction on May 14.

Around 300 people attended a fundraiser to help pay for a separate school building for the Noor-ul-Iman School at the Islamic Society of Central Jersey on Route 1 in Monmouth Junction May 14.

The event raised about \$250,000-\$300,000 for the school, according to Society spokesman Arif Patel.

Councilman Joe Camorata spoke at the event and said the township was proud to host the Islamic Center.

He also praised the center for their generosity, commitment to children, and for protecting the integrity of their culture.

The event featured speakers, prayer, fellowship, and food.

Baba Ali, a Muslim comedian based in Los Angeles, California, performed at the event and covered various topics from a Islamic perspective.

The Pre-K-12 school has an enrollment of 527 students from around the region and the 17 seniors are expected to attend college following graduation, according to the school's website.

All of the students attending the school must complete 100 hours of community service before they may graduate, according to the website.

Some students who currently attend the Islamic school went to the fundraiser and spoke highly of their experiences there.

Princeton Walk resident Zainab Ali, 12, said she attends the school on weekends where she makes new friends, and learns more about Islam to explain her religion to others since there a lot of stereotypes.

Ms. Ali said Islam means peace.

"(Osama) Bin Laden is not a hero to us at all," Ms. Ali said.

Kendall Park resident Humzah Khan, 12, is a sixth grader and has attended the Noor-ul-Iman School since pre-Kindergarten.

The classes are small, the homework is not too bad, and the entire number of high school students graduate, he said.

"(The school) does a lot of things with the community," Mr. Khan said.

North Brunswick resident Marian Dar, 13, said she attends the school on weekends and that the teachers are good role models and students learn more about Islam.

"Being a Muslim in America can sometimes be challenging," she said.

Kendall Park resident Faez Rehman, 11, who attends Noor-ul-Iman School full time and is in fifth grade, said the school teaches tolerance.

"(There are) a lot less bullies (in this school)," he said.