

2025

MID-YEAR REPORT



Dear Supporters,

As we reach the halfway mark of 2025, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for walking alongside us on this journey. Your belief in Amaanah's mission has not only fueled our momentum but also allowed us to continue transforming lives with purpose and compassion.

This mid-year report is more than a collection of data and milestones — it is a reflection of our shared commitment to building a future where refugees and their families move from surviving to thriving.



OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, WE'VE SEEN INCREDIBLE GROWTH ACROSS OUR THREE PILLARS:



EDUCATION

With the expansion of **Teach360** and new academic partnerships, including **Houston Community College, Prairie View A&M University, University of Texas, and Lone Star College**, ensuring more students have access to quality support and pathways to success



✓ EMPOWERMENT

Through workforce development, entrepreneurship programs, civic engagement, and transportation empowerment — including our partnership with **Freewheels Houston**, which has helped us **distribute bikes** to families in need, and the donation of **two cars** to clients to support their journey toward self-sufficiency.

✓ ATHLETICS

Highlighted by our new partnership with the **Houston Dynamo** and **Dash**, which is providing youth with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to be part of the professional soccer experience, and our continued efforts to secure a permanent field for our **Lions program**



Behind every number is a story — of a young girl learning English for the first time, a single mother launching her own business, or a teenager scoring their first goal on the soccer field. These moments remind us why this work matters.

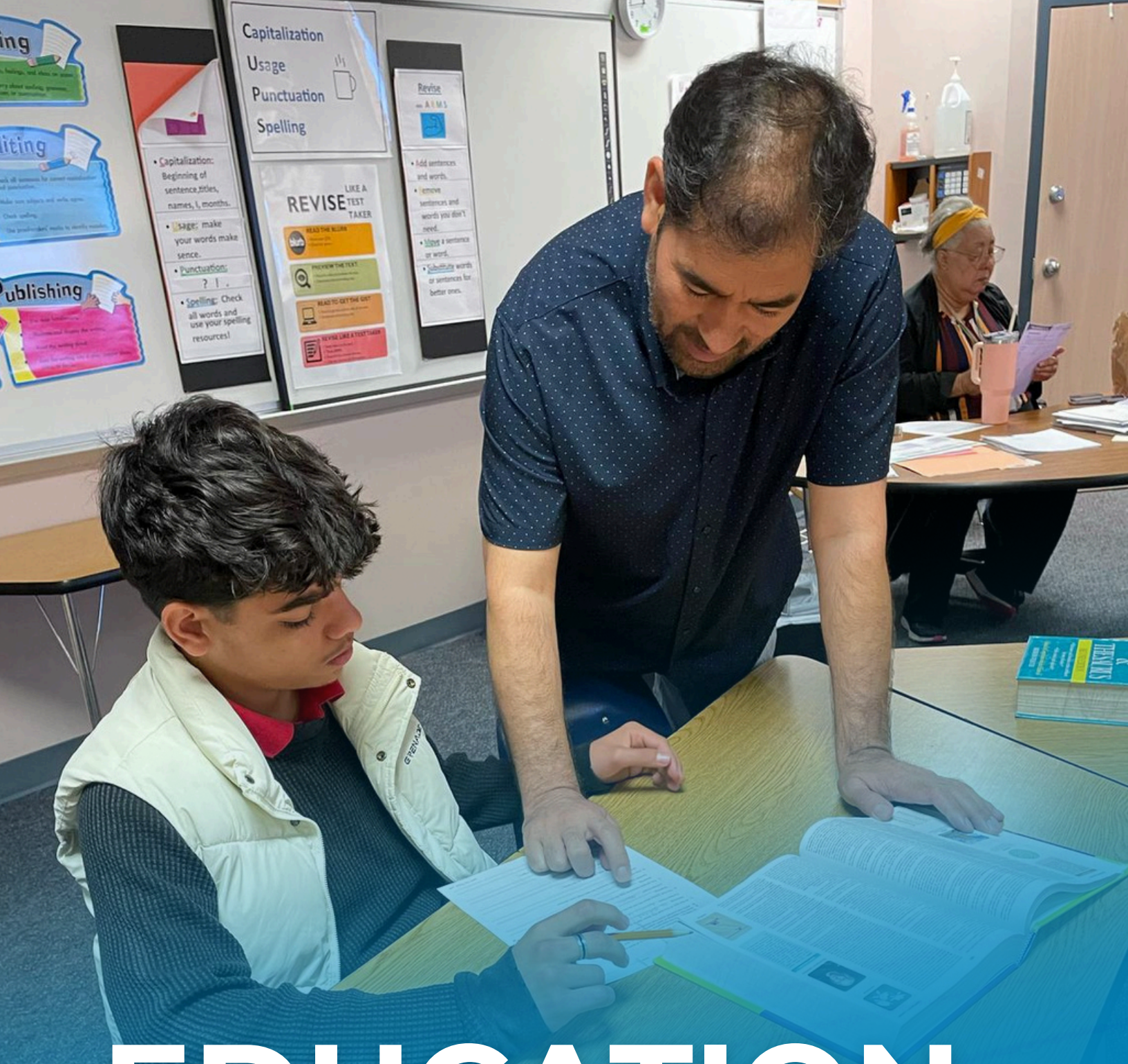


We are proud to share this progress report with you. It highlights the impact you've helped make possible and offers a glimpse into what lies ahead for Amaanah. With your continued support, we will build on this momentum and reach even greater heights in the months to come.

Thank you for believing in this mission. We are honored to have you as part of the Amaanah journey of making our clients go from surviving to thriving.



Ahmad Alaswad
Executive Director



EDUCATION

- TEACH 360
- GUIDING STARS

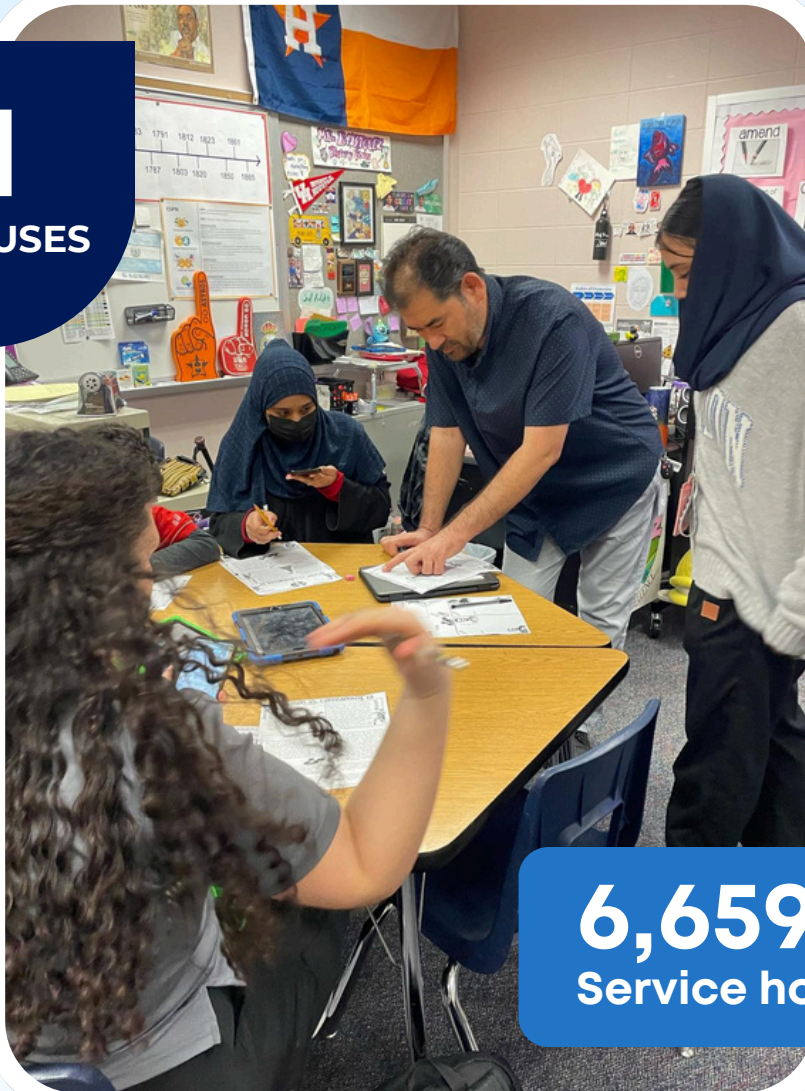
Education Services

At Amaanah, we believe that investing in young people today creates thriving, inclusive communities tomorrow. Our Education Services exist to ensure that immigrant and refugee youth are not only supported academically, but also encouraged to lead, dream, and reach their full potential.

11
CAMPUSES

200+
newcomers

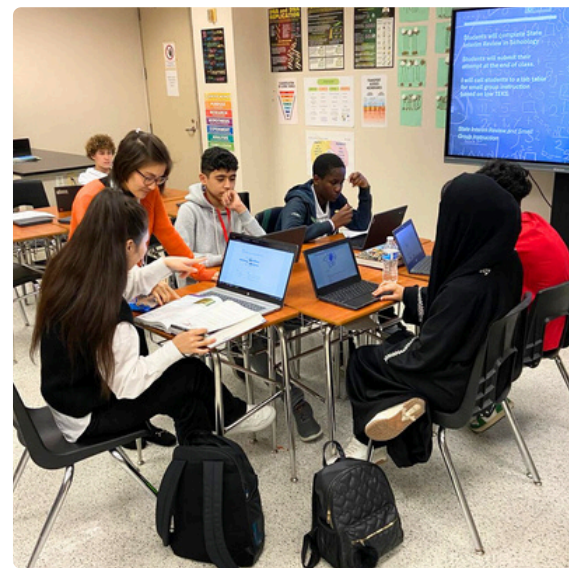
6,659
Service hours



Teach 360

SCHOOLS SERVED

"Behind every number is a story — of a young girl learning English for the first time, a single mother launching her own business, or a teenager scoring their first goal on the soccer field. These moments remind us why this work matters."



STUDENTS & DIVERSITY

200 + newcomers representing 23 countries / 11 languages

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

6,659 service hours delivered by 11 Language Acquisition Coaches (LACs)

QUALITY RATING

Participating campuses scored Teach 360 4.82 / 5 in end-of-year surveys

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Added a Summer LAC on-ramp program to build a talent pipeline and cover high-need months

● Teach 360

“

My student went from failing to passing with an A average.”

(Ms. Harris, Language Institute of New Commers)

“

LACs enable easier communication between students and staff.”

(Ms. Gonzalez, O'Donnell Middle School)

“The positive impact was and is made when they enter the classroom, sit with students during lessons, and endure that the students understand what is taught, explained and required. My student went from failing to passing with an A average.” **(Ms. Harris, Language Institute of New Commers)**

“LAC positively impacts campus by enabling easier communication between students and staff, providing students with comfort by having an adult to talk to. ” **(Ms. Fazili , O'Donnell Middle School)**

“We are so grateful for our Amaanah personnel! Truly a wonderful program with great people.” **(Ms. Segovia, Language Institute of New Commers)**

● Teach 360

"I am glad your program is available to us and appreciate the help that it offers to students, teachers, and administration." **(Mr. Eckland, Killough Middle School)**

"I do think it is a worthwhile program to integrate newcomers into the US system of education." **(Ms. Muoneki, Soar Program)**

"There isn't just one time.... Ms. Sadiqi makes a positive impact DAILY. The way she builds relationships with the kids, helps them close the gap, communicates with parents, provided a safe space for them to be able to be them... she is top tier **(Ms. Rojas, Chambers Elementary)**

"Ms. Farahi built excellent relationships with the students she served. She alternated classes with me and the students would frequently ask "Where's Ms. Farahi?" on the days she was with a different class. She was often called in to the office to help translate for meetings with students, parents, administration and counselors. She is a valuable asset to our campus and will be sad to lose her." **(Mr. Eckland, Killough Middle School))**

"One of the most impactful moments for me this year was witnessing a student gain confidence in their abilities. At the start of the year, they struggled with self-doubt, but through encouragement and support, they began to believe in themselves. Seeing their growth was a reminder of why this work is so important." **(Ms. Lopez, SOAR)**

● Guiding Stars Scholarships

20 scholars

Assisting 20 scholars with an average **GPA of 3.4**

100%

of scholarships disbursed in tuition & fees this cycle.

1 new graduate

(B.S. Mechanical Engineering).

Recognized by **HCC** Foundation's Golden Eagle Society for **philanthropic giving**

Peer-to-peer mentoring circle launched so alumni can coach first-year scholars.

Scholar voice: "This support covered my last summer classes before graduation... I encourage others to apply." – **JD**



"Thanks to the scholarship, I was able to cover my remaining summer school classes before graduation! A huge shoutout to Amaanah Service for really helping me out a lot with my school finances they made a big difference. I also want to thank Christina, who's always here to help and answer my questions. This support has made a big impact, and I encourage others to apply for the scholarship, it can really help you stay on track."

General

Grow with Google collaboration

Grow with Google is a nationwide initiative designed to help individuals develop in-demand digital and job-readiness skills—all at no cost. Through self-paced online training, participants can earn industry-recognized certifications in high-growth fields, gain confidence in using digital tools, and improve their employability in today's workforce.

Educational consulting with legal organization on school relations

Why This Matters

Refugee and immigrant youth often face significant barriers in education—language acquisition, trauma, lack of representation, and economic instability.

Amaanah's Empowerment Services are designed to close those gaps and ensure every young person has the tools, support, and belief they need to thrive. From inside the classroom to college campuses, Amaanah is walking alongside the next generation of leaders, innovators, and change-makers.

Education Monthly Giving Circle

\$25

Knowledge Keeper

- Provides healthy snacks, pencils, or reading materials for a tutoring session.
- Ensures students show up ready to learn and stay engaged.
- Supports daily academic nourishment: both mind and Body.

\$50

Backpack Builder

- Covers school supplies or transportation assistance for one student
- Helps eliminate logistical barriers to consistent school attendance
- Gives children the tools they need to walk into class Prepared.

\$75

Bridge Builder

- Funds one week of after-school tutoring in language or math.
- Supports one-on-one and small group learning through Teach 360.
- Helps close learning gaps with tailored academic support.

\$100

First Step Friend

- Provides a month of mentorship and academic monitoring for one student.
- Connects students with tutors from their own community.
- Builds trust and consistency in their educational journey.

\$250

Guiding Star

- Provides partial scholarship support for a refugee or immigrant college student.
- Helps cover tuition, books, and essential college expenses.
- Lights the way toward a future once thought impossible.

SCAN TO DONATE



EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

—● BIG SISTER CIRCLE PROGRAM

—● BORDERLESS



EMPOWERMENT

What is Empowerment Program?

Launched as part of Amaanah's holistic wraparound services, our Empowerment Program focuses on three core areas:

BIG SISTER CIRCLE PROGRAM

SELF-SUFFICIENCY:

Through financial literacy workshops, employment readiness, and access to social services, we support women in gaining the tools they need to become financially independent.

COMMUNITY BUILDING:

The women participate in support circles, cultural outings, and community events, allowing them to build lasting friendships and local Networks.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Monthly curriculum-based workshops focus on themes like self-compassion, parenting in a new culture, leadership, mental health, and self-advocacy. Activities are always culturally responsive and often translated live into the participants' native languages.

Each woman in the program is also paired with a mentor through our Big Sister Circle (BSC), a specialized initiative that provides one-on-one guidance, goal setting, and ongoing emotional support.

BIG SISTER CIRCLE PROGRAM

✓ PARTICIPATION:

22 refugee women meeting **8 hrs/month** for culturally sensitive life-skills, parenting, and self-care sessions

✓ STAFFING:

Hired 2 part-time community members as **peer facilitators**

✓ CURRICULUM:

Designed a February–December empowerment curriculum (civic leadership, financial literacy, self compassion, career readiness, etc.)
– live-translated each month

✓ WORKSHOPS & PARTNERS:

- Resume-building clinic
- Multiple guest speakers from law, health, and financial sectors

✓ DIRECT AID:

- Rental assistance + monthly resource guides
- Provided each lady with laptops

SCAN TO DONATE



Big Sisters Circle Monthly Giving Circle

\$25

Team Supporter

- Contribution to the Women's Emergency Fund
- Covers urgent essentials like groceries, hygiene products, or transportation for a woman in crisis.
- Helps maintain stability while she progresses in the program

\$50

Essential Ally

- Contributes to daily essentials: food stipend and metro card.
- Supports immediate, tangible needs that help a woman navigate her day-to-day life with dignity and safety.

\$75

Opportunity Advocate

- Supports access to English language learning tools and internet/mobile data for one month.
- Helps a woman gain skills critical for communication, employment, and integration.

\$100

Sponsor of the Borderless

- Funds a refurbished laptop or contributes to rent assistance.
- Ensures a woman has the tools and security to study, work, and live with stability.

\$200

Empowerment Builder

- Supports multiple essentials: English classes, food stipend, and metro card for one month.
- Sustains a woman's ability to consistently participate in the empowerment journey.

\$425

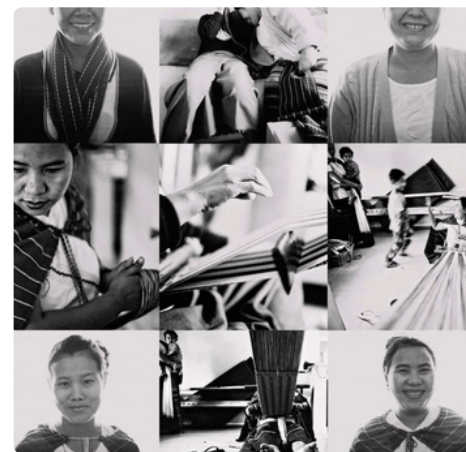
Home Refresh Hero

- Funds a complete Home Refresh package
- Transforms a woman's living environment to support mental wellbeing and dignity.
- Includes minor repairs, organization, basic furnishings, and decor enhancements.

● Borderless

Introducing Borderless: Amaanah's Reimagined Initiative for Refugee Women

Amaanah is proud to announce the launch of Borderless, in collaboration with Imiloa Collective this dynamic new initiative under our Empowerment pillar, designed to uplift and invest in the potential of refugee women. Formerly known as the Community CLOTH program, Borderless represents a reimagined and expanded vision—focused on supporting women in building sustainable livelihoods from the comfort of their homes.



Borderless empowers participants through a holistic model that includes small business development, entrepreneurship training, health and wellness resources, and financial literacy. By creating and selling handmade crafts and wares, refugee women are not only generating income—they are also preserving and sharing their unique cultural heritage.

This initiative fosters independence, creativity, and connection, helping women turn skills into opportunity while honoring their identities. Through Borderless, Amaanah reaffirms its commitment to breaking down barriers and creating pathways for refugee women to thrive—economically, emotionally, and socially.

● Task Force

The Power of Community: Amaanah's New Empowerment Task Forces

In 2025, Amaanah launched a strategic initiative to deepen and expand the impact of our Empowerment Services through the creation of **two dedicated Task Forces**—one for Education and one for Empowerment.

These task forces were created in response to a growing need: while our programs have made significant strides in helping refugee and immigrant families stabilize and succeed, the scale of need and opportunity continues to grow. To meet it, we knew we needed more than services—we needed collective vision, collaboration, and accountability.

What Are the Task Forces?

Each task force is composed of community leaders, professionals, former program participants, and Amaanah staff, working together to shape the future of our empowerment efforts. These are not advisory boards in name only—they are active, hands-on contributors who support strategy, fundraising, partnership development, and community engagement.

● Task Force

Community-Led Innovation



Each task force is composed of community leaders, professionals, former program participants, and Amaanah staff, working together to shape the future of our empowerment efforts. These are not advisory boards in name only—they are active, hands-on contributors who support strategy, fundraising, partnership development, and community engagement.

Strengthened Sustainability



Empowerment takes time. These task forces are working to build long-term sustainability by securing funding through sponsorships, grants, and donor engagement. Their efforts are critical to ensuring our services are not only impactful—but consistent and dependable.

Deeper Outreach and Advocacy



Both women and youth in refugee communities often remain underrepresented in civic, educational, and workforce conversations. The task forces help amplify their voices by creating advocacy campaigns, community events, and partnerships with schools, clinics, local businesses, and city leaders.

Focused Growth Strategy



Each task force is helping to develop a strategic growth plan—expanding Teach360 to more schools, enhancing the Guiding Stars scholarship mentorship model, and scaling the Big Sister Circle program to include new leadership tracks and entrepreneurship training.

● Task Force

The Bigger Picture

These task forces represent a powerful truth: empowerment is a shared responsibility. When local leaders, educators, advocates, and survivors come together with a shared mission, we don't just provide support—we create systems of belonging, opportunity, and transformation.

With the Empowerment and Education Task Forces in place, Amaanah is not just meeting needs—we're building a movement of equity, dignity, and collective action.

Why This Matters

Refugee women face unique challenges in the resettlement journey: language barriers, isolation, trauma, and limited access to resources.

Amaanah's Empowerment Services address these challenges head-on by not only offering direct support, but also by amplifying the voices and agency of the women themselves.

Interested in Joining Our Task Force?

Interested in joining a task force! Reach out to our Senior Program Manager, Christina Degbo christina@amaanahservices.org to be included in all communication.

ATHLETICS

● LIONS



● LIONS

The Amaanah Lions kicked off 2025 with energy and momentum, building on a strong foundation from last year.

In Q1 and Q2, we welcomed new players, expanded training sessions, and deepened our focus on mentorship and academic support. The team not only competed with heart but also demonstrated growth off the field through community activity and college prep activities. Thanks to your continued support, we've reached more youth than ever, helping refugee and immigrant young people build confidence, skills, and community. The season so far reflects everything Amaanah stands for - resilience, opportunity, and the power of belonging through sport.



Soccer remains at the heart of how we connect, inspire, and uplift, bringing together boys from different backgrounds, languages, and journeys to play as one team. But the impact goes far beyond the pitch. This season, we've provided emergency support to families facing hardship, helped players access mental health resources, and secured two college soccer scholarships for standout athletes. From transportation assistance to tutoring and meals, your support has allowed us to meet real needs with compassion and consistency. Every practice and every match is part of something bigger: a community where these boys are seen, supported, and given a path forward.

● LIONS

Looking ahead, we aim to expand the program's reach, increase scholarship opportunities, and offer even more holistic support to our players and their families. With your continued partnership, we're building not just a team - but a lasting system of opportunity, belonging, and growth.



"They always supported me, even when I wasn't feeling good and I was feeling like I didn't deserve it. "

— Deen

"After high school, I didn't have anybody, I didn't have a team to call home or a family and that's when I joined Amaanah. It's been seven years."

— Ziyad



52

Enrolled Players

2

Athletic Scholarships

48

Coaching Session

2

Final Position

38

Matches

0

Safety Incidents

SCAN TO DONATE



Lions Monthly Giving Circle

\$10

Team Supporter

- Basic training gear (e.g., shirt, shorts, socks).
- Water bottle and hydration supplies.
- Healthy snacks for practice and game days.
- Support for one player's full participation in the program during the game.

\$25

Pitch Partner

- Field rental for practices and games
- Transportation to and from practice sessions
- Transportation to and from games and tournaments

\$50

Game Changer

- Resume writing workshops
- Interview preparation sessions
- One-on-one job search coaching and Mentorship

\$100

First Step Friend

- Financial literacy training sessions
- Access to budgeting tools and resources
- One-on-one mentorship with financial professionals

\$250

Champion of the Pride

- Full sponsorship of one player's athletic season
- Enrollment in a career development track
- Participation in leadership workshops
- Access to community service and volunteer opportunities

\$500

Champion of the Pride

- Contributes to the Lions Emergency Fund
- Provides urgent support for players facing an emergency.

ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHTS

- COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EMPOWERMENT SUPPORT
- COLLABORATIONS
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- CROSS-PROGRAM
- PROGRAM CONTINUATION
- ADVOCACY AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
- NEW INITIATIVES



Community Outreach & Empowerment Support



18 bicycles distributed for client mobility, 2 vehicle donated

Seasonal drives: back-to-school backpacks, food hampers, and clothing



US \$6,000+ in toys collected for the Eid Toy Drive.



90 pillows distributed to families



Distributed to 40 families with **grocery cards**

● Collaborations



Amaanah's Partnership with PV Extension

Thanks to our collaboration with PV Extension, Amaanah gained access to the Grow with Google, a special training and support pipeline made available to organizations serving underrepresented communities.

Through this partnership:

- Participants in Education programs now have access to Grow with Google training and certifications.
- PV Extension provides technical support and facilitation, ensuring women and youth feel confident navigating the online learning platform.
- Participants can receive guidance in selecting career-aligned learning tracks, whether their goal is to enter the workforce, start a small business, or advance in school.
- The partnership also connects Amaanah participants to additional PV resources such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship training, and wellness education.

Why This Matters

For refugee and immigrant families, access to career-aligned, skill-based education is life-changing. Many arrive in the U.S. with interrupted schooling, language barriers, or unfamiliarity with digital tools. Grow with Google, delivered through this meaningful partnership, gives Amaanah participants the chance to:

- Build marketable skills
- Access credentialed learning without cost
- Increase employment opportunities
- Regain confidence and independence

Together, Amaanah and PV Extension are creating a bridge to opportunity, ensuring that the women and youth we serve are not left behind in the digital economy.

● Collaborations



Amaanah Speaks at Rice University on Civic Engagement and Community Impact

Amaanah was honored to be invited by Rice University to engage with students on the importance of civic participation and social responsibility. Senior Program Manager Christina Degbo delivered an inspiring talk centered on the power of civic engagement—especially in today’s challenging political climate—and the many ways students can actively support and uplift their communities.

Christina encouraged students to seize opportunities to lead, volunteer, and advocate for change, emphasizing that education is not only a personal tool for growth but also a powerful platform for advancing collective progress. She highlighted Amaanah’s work and mission, demonstrating how grassroots action can drive meaningful impact for refugee and immigrant families across Houston.

We are grateful to Rice University for the opportunity to share our vision and connect with the next generation of changemakers. Amaanah looks forward to continued collaboration in building more inclusive, informed, and engaged communities.

● Collaborations

Empowering the Next Generation in Fort Bend ISD

Senior Program Manager Christina Degbo was honored to speak at a local elementary school in Fort Bend ISD, where she addressed students and families on the importance of community, service, and collective growth. Her inspiring talk focused on the power of volunteering and how small acts of support can lead to lasting change.

Christina also shared information about Amaanah's programs and encouraged parents to get involved in uplifting the communities they represent. The event provided a meaningful opportunity to connect with young students and their families while planting the seeds of leadership and compassion in the next generation.

On behalf of Amaanah, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the school staff, students, and families for welcoming us—and for joining us in building stronger, more inclusive communities.

● Collaborations

18th Annual Back-to-School Drive with Rupani Foundation

Amaanah is honored to partner with the Rupani Foundation to co-host the 18th Annual Back-to-School Drive, taking place on July 26, 2025, in Houston. This large-scale event aims to distribute 5,000 backpacks filled with school supplies to refugee children and immigrant families across the Greater Houston area.

Amaanah was invited to lead the volunteer coordination for this initiative, working closely with ExxonMobil lead engineer Brian Lee to recruit and mobilize over 60 volunteers. Surpassing expectations, Amaanah successfully registered 120 volunteers and secured 300 backpacks specifically for Amaanah's clients—ensuring that children from our most vulnerable communities are equipped for a strong start to the school year.

Beyond direct service, Amaanah is committed to inclusive outreach by connecting with smaller grassroots organizations to identify families in need. Through this continued effort, we are working to ensure that no child is left behind and that all students have the tools they need to thrive academically.

● Collaborations



Ibrahim Massoud of New Era TX Realty Pledges Portion of Commission to Amaanah



(713) 569-5082



admin@neweratxrealty.com



neweratxrealty.com

Longtime Amaanah supporter and dedicated community advocate Ibrahim Massoud of New Era TX Realty has made a powerful commitment to give back. Ibrahim has pledged to donate part of his commission from every real estate sale directly to Amaanah—turning each transaction into a meaningful investment in the future of refugee and immigrant communities across Greater Houston.

His generosity not only provides critical funding for Amaanah's programs but also sets an inspiring example of how professionals can use their platforms to make a lasting impact. Ibrahim continues to encourage others in the business community to get involved and support causes that strengthen our city.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Ibrahim and the entire team at New Era TX Realty for their continued belief in Amaanah's mission and for helping to create brighter futures—one home, and one act of generosity, at a time.

● Collaborations

Amaanah Partners with FreeWheels Houston to Provide Transportation Solutions



Program Coordinator Rezhamin Amin has successfully led a meaningful collaboration with FreeWheels Houston to address one of the most significant challenges faced by our clients—reliable transportation.

Through this partnership, FreeWheels Houston has generously provided more than 20 bicycles to Amaanah clients, as well as to partner organizations like the Syrian American Club. These bikes offer a critical lifeline, giving individuals and families greater access to work, school, and essential services—paving the way for increased independence and opportunity.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to FreeWheels Houston for their continued partnership and commitment to empowering Houston's refugee and immigrant communities. Together, we're removing barriers and building pathways to a more mobile and connected future.

● Collaborations



Partnership with Red Envelope Collective

Amaanah is proud to collaborate with the Red Envelope Collective, an Asian-led initiative that fosters community through multimedia education and storytelling.

With over 30 branches across 45 schools, the Collective plays a powerful role in amplifying voices and addressing community needs.

When several families supported by Amaanah were experiencing hardship, we reached out to the Red Envelope Collective for support. In response, the Collective quickly mobilized and gathered enough donated materials to assist all four families in need—demonstrating the strength of community solidarity.

Amaanah is excited to continue building this meaningful partnership and looks forward to further engaging the Southeast Asian diaspora in advancing the Collective's mission. Together, we aim to deepen our understanding of the communities we serve and strengthen our shared impact.

Learn more about their work at [**redenvelopecollective.com**](https://redenvelopecollective.com).

● Community Engagement

Étoile Cuisine et Bar Hosts Month-Long Fundraiser in Support of Borderless



In March, Étoile Cuisine et Bar generously partnered with Amaanah to host a month-long brunch and charity dinner in support of Borderless, our newest women's empowerment initiative. As part of their commitment to giving back, Étoile selected Amaanah as their charity of choice for the month and featured two special menus from which guests could dine—donating a portion of each meal directly to our organization.

This thoughtful collaboration not only raised vital funds but also helped raise awareness about Borderless, which supports refugee women in building sustainable livelihoods through craft, entrepreneurship, and cultural preservation. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go toward purchasing equipment and machinery that will help participating women gain the tools they need to achieve self-sufficiency.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Étoile Cuisine et Bar for their generosity and belief in our mission. Partnerships like this make it possible to transform lives and create lasting change.

● Community Engagement

Eid Fest with Bellaire Muslim Community Association



Amaarah proudly partnered with the Bellaire Muslim Community Association to participate in their annual Eid Fest celebration. During this vibrant community gathering, Amaarah had the opportunity to share information about its programs and services, connecting with families and individuals seeking support. The event served as a meaningful platform to engage with the community, celebrate Eid, and raise awareness about the resources Amaarah offers to empower refugee and immigrant families across the Greater Houston area.

Amaarah supports the ECI Coalition by participating in an interview discussing the organization's strategic vision for the future, hopes and aspirations to come. The federal funding freeze and how it impacted existing community members and the coalition's goals.

● Community Engagement

Sr. Program Manager Christina Degbo Collaborates with Connect Community on Newcomer Education Videos



<https://www.youtube.com/@NewcomersEssentialGuidetoS-n3e>

Senior Program Manager Christina Degbo partnered with Connect Community, a Houston-based organization, to support the development of educational video resources for newly arrived refugee and immigrant families. The project is designed to help families navigate the U.S. education system—covering essential topics such as school enrollment, homework support, and academic expectations.

Christina played a key role in the production process, contributing to script development and ensuring cultural relevance and clarity in the messaging. With the support of AI narration technology, the videos were made more accessible to families across diverse language backgrounds in Greater Houston and surrounding areas.

This collaboration reflects Amaanah's continued commitment to equipping refugee families with the knowledge and tools they need to thrive in their new communities.

● Community Engagement



Haraz Telfair Launches “Amaanah Tuesdays” to Support Refugee Families

Haraz Telfair has brewed up a generous new way to give back—by dedicating every Tuesday as Amaanah Day. On these special days, a portion of all sales is donated directly to Amaanah, helping fund our programs that support refugee and immigrant families across Houston.

We are incredibly grateful to the entire team at Haraz Telfair for their commitment to creating meaningful impact through community collaboration. Their support helps us continue delivering essential services and opportunities to those who need them most.

Next time you're craving your favorite coffee or tea, stop by Haraz on a Tuesday—because every cup you buy helps build a brighter future. Thank you for supporting Amaanah, one sip at a time!

● Cross-Program

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Grow with Google: Expanding Digital Access Through Strategic Partnership In our ongoing commitment to provide refugee and immigrant communities with tools for long-term success, Amaanah Refugee Services has partnered with the Prairie View A&M University Extension Program (PV Extension) to bring Grow with Google training directly to our Women's and Youth Empowerment participants.

What is Grow with Google?

Grow with Google is a nationwide initiative designed to help individuals develop in-demand digital and job-readiness skills—all at no cost. Through self-paced online training, participants can earn industry-recognized certifications in high-growth fields, gain confidence in using digital tools, and improve their employability in today's Workforce.

Participants can choose from pathways such as:

- ***IT Support***
- ***Data Analytics***
- ***Project Management***
- ***Digital Marketing & E-Commerce***
- ***UX Design***

The program also includes support for building resumes, preparing for interviews, and learning essential tools like Google Docs, Sheets, and Gmail.

● Cross-Program

RESUME BUILDING CLASS WITH PETROPLAN



Empowering Refugee & Immigrant Communities for Workforce Readiness

As part of our ongoing commitment to preparing our participants for meaningful employment, Amaanah Refugee Services partnered with Petroplan, a global talent acquisition and workforce solutions company specializing in the energy sector, to host a hands-on Resume Building Workshop for women and youth in our empowerment programs.

About the Workshop

The class was designed to provide practical, personalized guidance to participants who are preparing to enter or re-enter the job market in the United States. For many of the attendees—refugee and immigrant women and first-generation college students—this was their first time creating a U.S.-style resume.

The session covered:

- *How to format a professional resume*
- *Identifying transferrable skills from previous work or life experiences*
- *Writing strong bullet points using action verbs*
- *How to highlight volunteer work, certifications, and language fluency*
- *Tips for tailoring resumes to specific industries or jobs*

● Cross-Program



Petroplan's Impact

Petroplan not only provided expert facilitators from their recruiting team, but also brought a culturally sensitive and empowering approach to the training. They offered:

- *One-on-one resume reviews*
- *Real-time feedback*
- *Examples of resumes across various industries*
- *Insight into how hiring managers screen resumes and what stands out*

Participants walked away with:

- *A completed or revised resume they can use immediately*
- *Increased confidence in presenting themselves professionally*
- *Knowledge of how to navigate job applications and employer expectations*

Why It Matters

For the women and youth Amaanah serves, job readiness is not just about employment—it's about dignity, independence, and stability. Many of our participants have strong educational or professional backgrounds in their home countries but lack guidance in navigating the U.S. job market.

This resume workshop with Petroplan is part of a larger effort to bridge that gap and equip our community with the tools they need to advocate for themselves in a competitive job market.

By working with a global leader like Petroplan, Amaanah is ensuring our participants are exposed to real-world industry standards, helping them move forward with clarity, purpose, and professionalism.

● Cross-Program

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Provided educational-equity consulting to a legal-advocacy organization on school district relations.



Leadership Development

Amaanah Team Attends National Immigrant Inclusion Conference (NIIC)
Senior Operations Manager Michelle Shattuck and Senior Program Manager Christina Degbo were honored to receive scholarships to attend the National Immigrant Inclusion Conference (NIIC), the nation's largest convening of organizations and leaders advocating for immigrants and refugees. Hosted by the Houston Endowment and a coalition of national partners, the conference is the annual flagship event of the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA).

NIIC serves as a powerful platform to celebrate and advance a shared vision of an inclusive democracy—one that welcomes, uplifts, and integrates all communities. The conference brings together a diverse network of experts, advocates, and changemakers committed to equity, innovation, and the full inclusion of immigrants and refugees across the country.

For Amaanah, participating in NIIC was both inspiring and strategic—offering an opportunity to deepen knowledge, build partnerships, and align with a national movement dedicated to justice and belonging for all.

● Cross-Program

FUNDRAISING READINESS

Stood-up a Education Task Force focused on new school contracts & philanthropic dollars

STORYTELLING

Commissioned professional photography at service events and began a library of client-approved visuals for marketing & grants

● Advocacy and Strategic Alignment

ECI COALITION INTERVIEW PARTICIPATION

Amaanah proudly supports the ECI Coalition and recently participated in a collaborative interview highlighting the organization's strategic vision for the future. During the discussion, Amaanah shared its long-term goals, aspirations, and the broader impact of its work within the refugee and immigrant communities. The conversation also addressed the challenges posed by the federal funding freeze, shedding light on how it has affected local families and shaped the coalition's collective priorities moving forward. This engagement reflects Amaanah's ongoing commitment to advocacy, partnership, and building a more resilient support system for underserved populations.

TEXAS NONPROFIT SUMMIT SCHOLARSHIP & LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Michelle Shattuck, Amaanah's Senior Operations Manager, was awarded a scholarship to attend the Texas Nonprofit Summit. While in the state capital, she met with key state representatives to advocate for continued investment in refugee communities across Houston. Michelle highlighted Amaanah's impact-driven programs and emphasized the critical role community-based organizations play in advancing equity and opportunity. She also voiced deep concerns over recent federal funding cuts, underscoring how these reductions are causing significant harm to vulnerable populations. Her participation reinforced Amaanah's role as both a service provider and an active voice in policy conversations that shape the future of refugee support in Texas.

● Advocacy and Strategic Alignment

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AHMAD ALASWAD VISITS STATE CAPITOL



Executive Director Ahmad Alaswad was invited—twice—to the Texas State Capitol to advocate on behalf of Houston’s refugee communities in response to the ongoing federal funding cuts. Drawing from deep experience in legislative spaces, Ahmad approached each visit with clarity, compassion, and purpose.

In meetings with state representatives, he powerfully conveyed the real and growing impact of funding freezes—not only on the thousands of refugees newly resettled in Texas, but also on the community-based organizations that serve them. Ahmad highlighted the stark reality: over 5,200 individuals were resettled in the Houston area in the past year, arriving with hope for a better future but now facing significant hardship due to shrinking support systems.

Ahmad's long-term vision includes bringing the Amaanah team to the Capitol to share stories firsthand—ensuring that the voices of refugees and the communities that uplift them are not just heard, but recognized, respected, and remembered in policymaking decisions.

● Advocacy and Strategic Alignment

AMAANAH PARTICIPATES IN QUARTERLY REFUGEE CONSORTIUM MEETINGS

Amaanah remains an active participant in the Quarterly Refugee Consortium Meetings—an essential gathering of Houston-based organizations serving refugee communities. These meetings provide a vital space for collaboration, information sharing, and addressing the pressing challenges faced by service providers and the communities they support.

In light of recent federal funding cuts, the landscape has shifted dramatically. Many long-standing organizations have been forced to downsize or close, and we've had to say farewell to valued colleagues whose work once shaped the local refugee support ecosystem. Despite these setbacks, Amaanah remains committed to showing up, speaking out, and advocating for the needs of refugee families across the region.

By continuing to engage in these consortium meetings, Amaanah helps ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable are not forgotten—and that together, we build a stronger, more resilient network of care.

● Program Continuation

AMAANAH AWARDED \$20,000 GRANT TO ADVANCE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN HOUSTON SCHOOLS

Amaanah is proud to be awarded a \$20,000 grant to further its language acquisition initiatives in Houston-area schools, thanks to its continued partnership with Emgage and the Houston Endowment. This funding directly supports Teach360, Amaanah's flagship education program, which has empowered over 10,000 students since its launch in 2021.

Operating across more than 50 campuses throughout the Greater Houston area, Teach360 has not only provided critical language support to refugee and immigrant students but has also created employment opportunities for 50+ community mentors and advanced educational access for many participants.

This grant recognizes Amaanah's commitment to championing the voiceless—ensuring that language is never a barrier to success for refugee children. Looking ahead, Amaanah is focused on expanding Teach360 to reach every refugee student in Houston and its surrounding communities, building a future where every child has the tools to thrive.

● Program Continuation



BIG TEX INJURY LAW FIRM SURPRISES AMAANAH LIONS WITH \$10,000 SPONSORSHIP



832-810-8832



info@bigtexinjurylawyers.com



bigtexinjurylawyers.com

At the final game of the season, the Amaanah Lions received an incredible surprise—Big Tex Injury Law Firm presented the team with a \$10,000 sponsorship check to support the upcoming season. This generous donation will fund the purchase of new jerseys and help ensure the continued growth of the program.

Big Tex Injury Law Firm, alongside our valued donors, plays a vital role in sustaining the Amaanah Lions program—a transformative initiative that gives refugee and immigrant youth a sense of belonging through the universal language of soccer. The program not only fosters athletic development but also builds confidence, community, and resilience in every player.

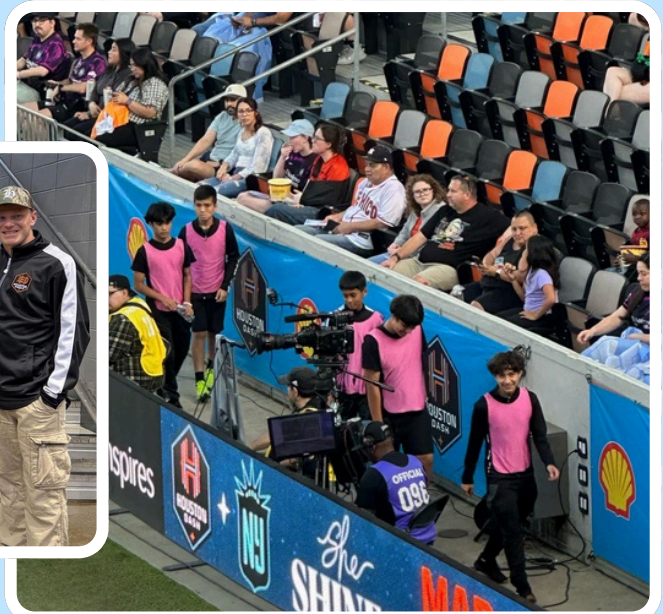
On behalf of the entire Amaanah team, we extend our deepest thanks to Big Tex Injury Law Firm for their generous support and commitment to empowering the next generation.

We look forward to continuing this journey with all those who champion our mission and believe in the power of sport to bring people together.



● New Initiatives

AMAANAH ATHLETICS BALL RETRIEVER PROGRAM



In 2025, Amaanah launched the Ball Retriever Program in partnership with the Houston Dynamo and Dash Charities. Spearheaded by Amaanah Head Coach Amine Amrouni, this unique initiative offers refugee youth the chance to participate in professional soccer matches held at Shell Energy Stadium.

The program is designed to immerse participants in the world of professional sports, providing hands-on exposure to game-day operations, sports management, and the broader soccer industry. More than just a game-day role, the Ball Retriever Program helps bridge opportunity gaps by giving children from marginalized communities access to experiences that build confidence, connection, and a deeper understanding of athletic careers.

This collaboration not only enriches the lives of the youth involved but also reinforces the shared commitment of Amaanah and the Houston Dynamo and Dash to equity, inclusion, and empowerment through sport.

If interested in becoming a ball retriever please email our Sr. Operations Manager, Michelle Shattuck at michelle@amaanahservices.org



Rays of *Change*

March 22, 2025

6:00 PM

THE CITADEL
12130 KIRBY DRIVE HOUSTON, TX 77045



KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Letitia Plummer
COUNCIL MEMBER

amaanahservices.org | info@amaanahservices.org

ANNUAL CELEBRATION

● Rays of Change 2025



AMAANAH UNVEILS BOLD VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Amaanah proudly hosted Rays of Change at The Citadel Houston, welcoming over 400 guests and children for an inspiring evening centered around community, impact, and the organization's forward-looking vision. The event served as a platform to unveil Amaanah's newest initiatives and its ambitious five-year strategic plan aimed at deepening support for refugee and immigrant communities across Greater Houston.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of donors and attendees, Amaanah not only met—but surpassed—its fundraising goals, reaffirming the community's unwavering investment in the mission.

The evening's keynote address was delivered by Houston City Council Member Letitia Plummer, whose powerful message on the importance of inclusive societies and immigrant contributions left a lasting impression and inspired a call to action. Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Lesley Briones also welcomed guests with a special video message, marking the significance of Amaanah's 17th annual celebration.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the event's success—and to the Houston Police Department for ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all.

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Amaanah is proud to welcome five outstanding members to our Board of Directors. These individuals bring diverse expertise, deep community commitment, and a passion for our mission of helping refugee families go from surviving to thriving.

Our board plays a critical role in guiding Amaanah's strategic direction, strengthening our governance, and ensuring we stay true to our mission across all three pillars: Education, Empowerment, and Athletics.

MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS:



NASIR N. PASHA (CHAIR)

Founder of Pasha Law – a strategic legal leader with expertise in corporate governance, compliance, and nonprofit development.



JOHN F. BURKE

Executive coach and workforce strategist with a deep focus on organizational development, leadership growth, and talent sustainability.



DR. LETITIA PLUMMER

Houston City Council Member, dentist, and equity champion — a leader in MWBE reform, health access, and community resiliency.



TARA TURK-ZAAFRAN

Educator, interfaith leader, and youth advocate, known for her work in curriculum development and civic engagement.



JACOB LOVE

Entrepreneur and nonprofit marketer whose passion for refugees is deeply personal and purpose-driven.

With Gratitude

As we welcome new voices to our leadership, we also want to express our deepest gratitude to two incredible individuals who have completed their board service: Ahsan Mukhtar and Dr. Naifa Busaidy.

Their dedication, wisdom, and unwavering belief in Amaanah's mission have helped lay the foundation for where we are today. We thank them for their leadership, their compassion, and for leaving an indelible mark on this organization.

We wish them the very best and know that they will always remain part of the Amaanah family.

-Ahmad Alaswad



AHSAN MUKHTAR

Former CHAIR



DR. NAIFA BUSAIDY

Former TREASURER



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