

## **The ICSC Congratulates President Obama and Encourages the Community to Volunteer**

The community of the Islamic Center of Southern California joins the millions of Americans and people around the world in celebrating the inauguration of Barak Obama as the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. President Obama ran for the office on a platform of change, and we pray that he and Vice President Biden will be able to effect the great change that is needed to heal the results of the last eight years of American governance. We wish President Obama and his team great success and look forward as American Muslims to contributing more freely to the development of policies governing this wonderful country of ours.

Additionally, the day before the inauguration, we were very moved by President Obama's call to volunteerism in that it highlights a core value of the American Muslim community. We read in Surat-al-Baqara, verse 177, "True piety does not consist in turning your faces towards the east or the west - but truly pious is he who believes in God, and the Last Day; and the angels, and revelation, and the prophets; and spends his substance - however much he himself may cherish - it - upon his near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage.."

So we encourage everyone in our community to take on a volunteer project that is personally meaningful whatever it may be. For example, at the Islamic Center every Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m., we sponsor a Food Pantry for the homeless and needy in the Los Angeles area. Volunteers are always needed for this important work. To get involved, you can contact Matheen Siddiqui at [matheen.siddiqui@gmail.com](mailto:matheen.siddiqui@gmail.com).

On the Barak Obama website we read, "Don't underestimate the power of people who join together to accomplish amazing things," Obama added. Given the crisis America is currently in, "we can't allow any idle hands. Everybody's got to pitch in." Volunteering is one way we can help create the change that we are hoping for.