

Profiles

3 Muslim Women in STEM You Should Know About

They're making a difference.

BY **MONA KHALIFEH**

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around the country and around the world. Muslim women are dominant in the world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and are making important discoveries that are making our world a better place, every day. From doctors and engineers to technologists at NASA, Muslim women in STEM are breaking down barriers and cracking open that ever-illusory glass ceiling.

Below, learn more about three amazing Muslim women who are blazing trails *and* making a difference.

Dr. Hina Chaudhry, Director of Cardiovascular Regenerative Medicine at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York

PHOTO COURTESY OF HINA CHAUDHRY

Dr. Chaudhry is a cardiologist and associate professor of medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, making her mark in gene therapy research. She has one major piece of advice for women in STEM: keep going. “The glass ceiling is real — women physicians still earn less than their male peers, women scientists obtain less research grant money, and women entrepreneurs have a harder time raising venture capital,” she tells *Teen Vogue*. I'm trying to do all three, and believe that I can succeed at all three. When you pursue important scientific projects that solve critical clinical

questions with the potential to cure diseases, you are able to eventually disrupt all of these areas.”

Tahani Amer, Senior Technologist at NASA in Washington, D.C.

NASA

Amer first started working at NASA in 1992, and has been instrumental in the agency’s aeronautic research efforts. She holds a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering, a master’s in aerospace engineering, and a doctoral of engineering. But it’s not just on the job where she’s making a difference: She’s also the **2014 recipient of NASA’s Public Service award**, for her contributions in encouraging students, minorities, and women to pursue STEM careers.

Amer has an “equation for success” that she likes to share, she tells *Teen Vogue*. “It goes like this: $P^2 + N \times T$. Passion by Perseverance, plus Network multiplied by Time,” she says. And when it comes to her work in STEM and in life, Amer is guided by three principles, which she shares on **her profile page on the NASA website**: “Please God and you will please all. Education is the key to opportunity. Serve others with compassion and kindness.”

Mona Diab, Associate Professor of Computer Science at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

GWU

Diab is a computer science researcher who specializes in natural language processing, automatic text analytics, applied machine learning, data science, and artificial intelligence. She works to make computers “seem” smarter, and in the process uses scientific inquiry to give people wider access to information. One of Diab’s research areas is identifying emotions in data and finding out what makes people happy or sad. One way she does that is by studying empathy, an attribute she says she sees often in her women colleagues.

When it comes to being a Muslim woman in STEM, Diab says she uses her faith as a tool to promote constant learning. “Being Muslim by definition in the Arabic language means being active in worship, in faith, and, yes, in work. As Muslims, we consider seeking knowledge to be integral to our faith,” she tells *Teen Vogue*. “So as mandated by my religion, I aspire to be in a constant active state of learning and proactive engagement.”

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