CELEBRATION SPEECH

FOR

MOSHIN IMTIAZ

Hello everyone and thank you for joining us as we celebrate Omar’s Ameen. We are thrilled that you are all here with us today and we are especially thankful to those of you that have travelled from out of town and even from out of the country, to take the time to be with us and share our joy. This accomplishment is part of a continuing and age-old legacy-a rite of passage for each one of us and as such, we want to acknowledge Omar and his dedication to this accomplishment, Although this may seem like it is a completion of sorts, (**Turn to Omar and say**), believe me Omar, this is just the beginning!!

(**Turn to Omar and say**) Omar, although in the eyes of many, you are a young boy, today you took the steps to solidify the foundation you will stand upon as you grow up and become a respected and respectful man. This is no small completion. It is a significant accomplishment and it distinguishes the point at which you begin to take your place in your family, your faith and your community. Finishing the Quran is a life-changing event. Although you have completed your lessons admirably and some may think you are too young to fully understand the significance of what you have achieved, learning these lessons at such a young age will insure that they will be with you for life.

Consider that your journey starts here. To live the principles of the Quran and of Islam is to go beyond the strength we get from believing in God, this is about committing your life to being a truly caring, concerned and compassionate human being-as a wonderful son, a great friend, and a concerned citizen. Accepting the lessons and wisdom of the Quran means you will always treat others with respect and show tolerance for all while knowing and standing for the courage of your convictions.

There are some guiding principles that I want you to always remember. Remember to avoid two things-Pride and Despair. Pride can destroy a person. To be proud creates an arrogance and it clouds our purpose while giving us a false sense of security. Despair can destroy a man as it takes hope away. Despair robs us of power and self-confidence.

Take what you have learned and find the balance in life. Learn to lead a productive and thoughtful existence. Learning this at a young age is a major key to true satisfaction in life. Remember that life is not a spectator sport. Be involved. To be interested is to be **interesting**. We are living in fascinating times and although you younger people make take many things for granted, stop a moment and consider the power we have, literally at our fingertips. With super computers in our pockets, we have the power to connect and share information like never before. As you grow up and get older, this connection will only get stronger. Think before you speak. Think before you type. Consider the impact you have and will have on the world around you, and while you think about that, think too about those in the world that are struggling. The divide between the “haves” and the “have-nots” is growing. It is now your mission in life to find the compassion for others and work to make the world a better place. Find what truly interests you and use your knowledge and faith to help those less fortunate.

Remember that life is kinetic. That means it is always moving, and so are we, and all of that movement creates energy and momentum. A wise Muslim philosopher once said, “We become by ceasing to be what we are.” In other words, work in the present to evolve into the future. Don’t just embrace the future-drive the change in you and the world around you. Make it happen, whatever IT may be. Remember that Steve Jobs said, “Stay hungry and stay young.” We won’t live forever, but we can always maintain a fresh outlook, always eager to learn the next lesson and to use what we’ve learned to have a positive impact on our surroundings.

Omar, you’re a wonderful, caring, smart and compassionate young man, and I’m not just saying that because you’re my son. I see the way you are, and I am inspired by your potential. I see it in the way you are with your sister, Saamia. I remember when you were a really young boy and you would cry at the doctor’s office-not when you were getting a shot, but when Saamia would get hers. (**If you want to make a joke, you can say, “And then I cried when I got the bill!”**) That showed us how truly special you are and we love you for it. We also love you for your sense of humor, your curiosity and of course, your gift of gab!!

Omar, I want to say again how much we congratulate you and how proud we are of you. You really make us look like great parents! (**Wait for the laugh**) I want to thank all of you again for being here and encouraging Omar (**if you want to make a joke, you can say “Like he needs it!!-Only kidding”**) and I especially want to thank my parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for inspiring me to be the parent I am, and to my wife, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for giving me such wonderful children. And to Saamia, who could ask for a better daughter?

Thank you all and congratulations, Omar!