



What are your thoughts on the Singapore Muslim Youth Debate 2013?

The Singapore Muslim Youth Debate 2013 was a very meaningful event in which the youths were able to engage each other on very real issues facing the Muslim community today. I would recommend that more Muslim brothers and sisters come and join us for such meaningful events in future.

How would you describe the progress of this debate series?

I first became involved in the debate series in 2012, when I was asked to give a short course on public speaking and advocacy to the participants. I am very encouraged by the increase in the number of institutions participating this year and the turnout of the supporters. *Insha'Allah*, the SMYD will gain even more traction in the years to come and will become a key event that all Singaporean Muslim youths look forward to every year.

What was the skill that the debaters in SMYD 2013 have developed?

I think that through the rounds, the debaters have been able to hone their research and analytical skills and of course, their oratorical skills.

From the training in 2013, what was a common weakness amongst youth debaters?

A common weakness I noticed was that the debaters didn't listen carefully to their opponent's arguments. To engage your opponent properly, you must be able to dissect their argument and attack the weakest point. The only way to be able to do that is to listen carefully.

As a Coach for the SMYD 2013, how would you like to see SMYD 2014?

Perhaps I would like to see a little more style and flare in the way the debaters present their arguments. I know that the competition is fierce, but there is no reason why the participants can't be seen to be having more fun. They could try to make use of wit and humour in their debates, rather than looking so serious and stressed all the time. ;p

To the newbies, why should they participate in debates?

First of all, it's a great way to make new friends through a shared experience. Secondly, being asked to defend your opinions sometimes helps you to understand yourself better as an individual. Why you feel the way you do, what are your views motivated by - these are just some of the questions you will be asking yourself as you formulate your arguments. Another reason to be involved in debates is to help you hone your oratorical skills and be a better speaker. Finally, of course, the attractive prizes!

The best thing about a debate is...

Learning that there is more than one way to look at a problem. 🗣️

Interview with SMYD Coach & Chief Adjudicator, Sim Khadijah

INTERVIEW BY AISHAH HUSSEIN