

METRO

Parents file suit alleging local links to terrorists

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WASHINGTON—The parents of an American teenager slain on the West Bank have filed suit in a federal court in Chicago against Islamic groups, charities and individuals, some with connections in Chicago suburbs.

The suit says the defendants raised money in the United States for Hamas, a radical Islamic group that has carried out dozens of suicide bombings against Israelis.

In a move that appears unprecedented, Stanley and Joyce Boim, former New Yorkers who now live in Jerusalem, invoked the federal anti-terrorism law of 1990 against what their suit described as Hamas front organizations and individuals who collected funds in the United States for relief and development on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Among the groups named as defendants were Quranic Literacy Institute, with offices in Oak Lawn; Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, a California corporation with a branch office in Illinois, and Islamic Association for Palestine.

"In general, the allegations that have been brought against us in this case and the preceding case that's still in court are utterly

false," said Ahmer Haleem, secretary of the Quranic Literacy Institute. "In my judgment, they are persecutorial in nature."

Also among the defendants is Mohammed Abdul Hamid Khalil Salah of suburban Bridgeview, described as the leader of Hamas' military branch.

Efforts to reach Salah for comment at a listing in Bridgeview were unsuccessful. In recent years, Salah, a naturalized U.S. citizen and a former used car broker, has denied having any links to terrorist activity.

The Boims ask for \$600 million in damages in what could be the first effort by individuals to use federal terrorism laws against what the suit called "a network of front organizations" in the United States that raise money for Islamic causes.

Actually, the suit contends, the money was channeled to terrorists and some of it was used to pay for the vehicle, machineguns and ammunition used to kill the Boims' son David, a 17-year-old yeshiva student who was gunned down in 1996 waiting with other students at a bus stop in Beit El, on the West Bank.

Efforts to reach the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development branch in Palos Hills on Sunday were unsuccessful.



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