



Killing of Muslim Students Points To Urgent Need for Dialogue on Conscious and Unconscious Bias



We regret and are saddened as we witness the unnecessary loss of life of the three Muslim students slain in North Carolina. The International Multicultural Institute (iMCI) and The FutureWork Institute (FWI) stand behind a mission that compels us to speak publicly about the importance of our commitment to social justice and equality, most especially when we see these principles violated.

We ask Diversity and Inclusion practitioners and organizational leaders to continue to foster open discussion about real and perceived biases, conscious and unconscious bias so we can recognize their role in choices made in deciding what to do and their role in behaviors in cross-cultural encounters. We must continue to take the lead in urging dialogue and asking others to examine the assumptions they hold that keep us apart and intolerant.

If we do not, we promote a climate for the George Zimmerman's and Craig Stephen Hicks of the world to empower themselves as self-anointed guardians protecting an exclusive not inclusive vision of the American life. These types are backed by the lethal power of gun laws used to threaten and kill. North Carolina has a "stand your ground" law similar to the Florida law.

Is a parking space a terminal offence? Toxic laws infused with racial bias or anti-religious sentiments are a too common death sentence. Dr. Abu-Salha, clinical psychiatrist and father of the two slain women questioned the attention the killings of his daughters and son-in-law received vs. attention given to crimes committed by Muslims in the US. We should not have to wait for incident like this to become an international issue where our partners in the Middle East (Jordan and Turkey) question Western bias and our reluctance to report this incident as a hate crime.

We must all step up individually, collectively and institutionally to broaden the demand for respect and peaceful coexistence for the multiple cultural and religious identities that shape our nation.

iMCI and FWI are committed to encouraging the dialogue process. We cannot be bystanders. We all need to recognize and interrupt conscious and unconscious bias whenever and wherever we see it.

The International MultiCultural Institute (iMCI) and The FutureWork Institute (FWI)