

A Call to Join the Unity Experiment

The Unity Experiment is a group that affords an opportunity to unite Muslim youth from the inner-cities and the suburbs of southeastern Michigan. Empowered by the Quran and Sunnah, the Unity Experiment is an organization which seeks to transcend racial, ethnic, and class divisions through education, service, and social activities carried out by Muslim youth. Its focus is on college students and in simple terms, it just wants to provide a chance for all the Muslim youth from around southeastern Michigan to get together, meet each other, and become faithful friends.

The following is an encouragement letter sent to the group by their mentor, Br. Dawud Walid (Executive Director of CAIR-MI).

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله و صلى الله على نبيه محمد وآله الطاهرين و صحبه المقربين و اما بعد

All praises and thanks belong to ALLAH and may the prayers of ALLAH be upon the seal of prophets, Muhammad, his purified family, just companions, and whomsoever follows them.

Firstly, I would like to salute all of you for taking proactive steps to revive the Sunnah of bringing about cooperation and love amongst the indigenous Muslims and the children of Muslim immigrants. This can be compared to the brotherhood that was established between the Muhajireen and Ansaar.

However, unlike the Muhajireen and Ansaar, our communities do not live in one concentrated area like Al-Madinah. Considerable distances separate us. Furthermore, our communities are socially practicing ethnocentric Islam. There are African-American only masajid, Syrian only communities, Egyptian only communities, Pakistani only masjid, Bosnian only, etc. Sadly, we have also done this within our schools of thought, primarily between Sunnis and Shi'as.

In my opinion, the Unity Experiment should be renamed the Unity Movement. Your efforts will not be fruitful overnight. This is a mission which you and I will have to spread among our peers, discuss periodically in our halaqahs, and instill in our children. You are the ones that may end up going as far against the grain as to marry someone who is a pious Muslim, but who may be from outside of your parents' villages or ethnic groups.

قال علي رضي الله عنه: الناس اعداء ما جهلوا

Imam Ali said, "People are enemies of what they do not know."

In conclusion, the saying of Imam Ali explains the primary reason why Muslims are so nationalist these days. Some Muslims carry animosity towards certain groups of Muslims due to their lack of interaction and understanding of the other groups' norms. It is because they do not have a deep understanding of Islam. Although you'll never find a Muslim who will say that he/she is an enemy to Islam, his/her ignorance of Islam makes him/her an enemy to Islamic ethics.

May ALLAH (SWT) grant you patience in this endeavor to bring dignity to the Muslim community in America. Ameen!

Wassalaam,

Dawud Walid

For more information, email: unityexperiment@umich.edu

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