

NY-AMANI project CHANGES FEAR INTO AWARENESS

SERIES NUMBER 1 & 2

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NY-AMANI CHANGES FEAR INTO AWARENESS: SERIES Number ONE and TWO

The tragic events of 9-11 and the more recent Boston Bombing have raised a host of negative perceptions of Islam in American society. A general unfamiliarity with Muslims and fear tactics has been used to misrepresent Islam by the media and politicians. Exemplified by the so-called "Ground Zero Mosque" controversy, a wave of anti-Muslim rhetoric and activities around the country only seem to have worsened.

North America has always been a majority Protestant nation, and the integration of minority groups into the American mainstream has always been difficult. But the general mistrust of Muslims in the aftermath of 9-11 and the Boston Bombing have made integration of Muslims even that more difficult. Data from a 2010 Pew Research Center study found that 53% of Muslims began to experience profound increases in discrimination after 9/11 even through the majority (76%) worry as much, if not more, about Muslim extremists than do non-Muslims. In addition, a 2006 Gallup poll revealed that most Americans do not know any Muslims personally and that one in four Americans reported not wanting a Muslim as a neighbor.

Religions without Borders USA is conducting an awareness campaign series to provide information as to protect the life and wellness of innocent Muslims who risk potential victimization, but also to prevent the general non-Muslim communities from harboring feelings of unnecessary anger and divisiveness between themselves and others unknown to them. The series is in the form of round table discussions, live videos/shows and video screening. Additionally, the series explores the day to day experience for Muslims living in the United States and what it means for their neighbors and American communities post September 11th, 2001. The first two series are in the form of round table discussions. Below are venues, dates and time.

1. Islam in the Fabric of America Today-Myths & Realities. Venue: 34 Jay Street, Schenectady NY 12305; Date: April 25th, 2014; Time: 3:00p
2. Changing Fear Into Awareness. Venue: 100 Malcolm X Blvd, Roxburg Crossing, MA 02120. Date: Sunday May 11th, 2014; Time: 2:30 pm

Founded immediately after September 11, RWB has a decade-long history of developing international interventions targeted at youth who are at risk of involvement with extremist groups. Recently the organization extended its efforts in the United States, creating projects such as NY-AMANI, which provides numerous workshops and learning activities at Albany and Boston area universities, places of worship, public and local television programming, and a host of resources through social media. NY-AMANI project is supported partially by The Council on State Support to Non-governmental Organizations under the Auspices of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On January 1, 2014, the NY-AMANI project opened its office located at 34 Jay Street, Schenectady, NY 12304 (adjacent to the Schenectady Access Cable Council). The public is invited to learn more about religious pluralism and upcoming workshops by visiting www.nyamaniproject.com. NY-AMANI staff can also be reached by email at amaniproject.newyork@gmail.com or phone at 518-280-9047.