



# Interfaith dialouge leads to cooperation and peace

Story Comments

Print Font Size:

Recommend {0} Tweet {0} +1 {0}

Posted: Thursday, September 20, 2012 12:00 am

Nabeel Chohan | 0 comments

At the dawn of the 21st century, religion plays a key role in public life and has become a significant identity marker for the individual. As the society around us grows more pluralistic, so should the need for promoting harmony and cooperation among all faiths and religions.

Interfaith dialogue can be seen as a cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both an individual and institutional level.

In a post 9/11 world, where we are constantly confronting religious prejudices, discriminations, violence and conflicts, interfaith provides us with a means of understanding and rationalizing differences; it provides us with a mechanism to achieve harmony by winning over the hearts and minds of people from diverse backgrounds; and it provides us with a lens into a world not very different from our own yet one that is shut off to us.

In a post 9/11 world, we are constantly confronting religious prejudices, discriminations, violence and conflicts. Interfaith provides us with a means of understanding and rationalizing differences, a mechanism to achieve harmony by winning over the hearts and minds of people from diverse backgrounds, and a lens into a world not very different from our own yet one that is shut off to us.

Fluid immigration among nation states has ensured that we live in an increasingly diverse society with varying belief systems, distinct traditions and differing values. In the backdrop of political happenings and the seemingly growing power of the right wing, it almost becomes a civic duty to engage in an interfaith dialogue.

On an individual level, this dialogue can be very simplistic, and society could collectively benefit a lot if a Muslim and a Christian neighbor made an attempt to know each other better. More often than not, interfaith dialogue leads one to see how wrong his or her prejudices have been and how incredibly similar the teaching of two seemingly different religions are.

On an institutional level, the dialogue can achieve wonders if religious leaders and men of spirituality make an attempt to understand the others' faith, and in turn educate their congregations and communities against stereotypes and labels. Many world leaders, including President Barack Obama, have recognized the power of interfaith dialogue, and therefore have emphasized the need for this dialogue among communities and among nations as a way to achieve a more harmonious state of affairs.

Currently, interfaith is getting plentiful attention in the more "liberal" states with dozens of interfaith groups working on promoting a peaceful environment. As residents of Blacksburg and students of Virginia Tech, it is time we introduce this dialogue to southern and southwestern Virginia. The dialogue is of paramount importance in enabling a harmonious and friendly environment in Blacksburg and is vital to our university's goal of celebrating our diversity.



Top Selling App on WIX.com

Get More Leads With Your Smart Form Building App!

START NOW. IT'S FREE!

WINDSOR HILLS APARTMENTS

Apply Online!

200 Hampton Court, Blacksburg, VA 24060  
866.906.8225 / www.Windsorhills.Apts.net

NEED A JOB?

LOOKS-GOOD-ON-YOUR-RESUME, PAYING, FLEXIBLE, REAL-WORLD-EXPERIENCE-GIVING, WITH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

well we need you.

DESIGN-EXPERIENCED, PASSIONATE, DETAIL-ORIENTED, STUDENT, CSS-PROFICIENT

APPLY NOW  
collegemedia.com/join  
creative.services@collegemedia.com

CollegeMedia Solutions

Living in a diverse atmosphere like Blacksburg, we are blessed with the opportunity to learn and experience different ideas, faiths and religions. Students should be encouraged to get involved in organizations like Virginia Tech Interfaith Initiative, a group that solely focuses on promoting interfaith dialogue on campus through various interfaith events. Similarly, other student organizations like the MSA (Muslim Student Association), Hillel, Christian Coalition and the Freethinkers, among others, should make an effort to reach out to other religious organizations and help promote the much-needed interfaith dialogue on campus.

Too often we see senseless acts of violence, stereotyping and labeling in this country based on our habitually misguided notions. Too often are we clueless on how to fight crimes of hatred and intolerance. It is time we reach out to people, to truly celebrate our diversity and value our differences.

Recommend 0 Tweet 0 g+1 0

Discuss Print

Posted in Columnists on Thursday, September 20, 2012 12:00 am.

### Similar Stories

- ### Most Read
- Dining Services battling low employee retention rates
  - Ohio State suspends Bosa, three others for season opener against Virginia Tech
  - Classes to be cancelled on Labor Day
  - The debate of the century: Qdoba v. Chipotle
  - C.J. Reavis loses student conduct appeal, remains not enrolled at Virginia Tech

## Rules of Conduct

<p><b>1 Keep it Clean.</b> Please avoid obscene, vulgar, lewd, racist or sexually-oriented language.</p> <p><b>2 Don't Threaten or Abuse.</b> Threats of harming another person will not be tolerated. AND PLEASE TURN OFF CAPS LOCK.</p> <p><b>3 Be Truthful.</b> Don't knowingly lie about anyone or anything.</p>	<p><b>4 Be Nice.</b> No racism, sexism or any sort of -ism that is degrading to another person.</p> <p><b>5 Be Proactive.</b> Use the 'Report' link on each comment to let us know of abusive posts.</p> <p><b>6 Share with Us.</b> We'd love to hear eyewitness accounts, the history behind an article.</p>
--	---

## Welcome to the discussion.

**Screen Name or Email**

**Or, use your facebook account:**

**Password**  [Forgot?](#)

**Remember me on this computer**

Tweets Follow

**Collegiate Times** @CollegiateTimes 2h  
 Pinball museum opens its doors in Roanoke [#CTnews](http://ow.ly/QeLUE)  
 Expand

**Collegiate Times** @CollegiateTimes 4h  
 What is "The Curse of the Unending Sneeze"? [ow.ly/Qfjo1](http://ow.ly/Qfjo1)  
 Expand

**Collegiate Times** @CollegiateTimes 4h  
 Tweet to @CollegiateTimes

## Notifications

### Today's Collegiate Times Headlines

Would you like to receive our FREE daily news email? **Sign up today!**

Email

[Manage Your Lists](#)

Like [Lauren Schwartz](#) and 4,481 others like this.



### Online Poll

**Do you support laws intended to allow business owners to operate their enterprise according to their religious faiths, such as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act?**

Yes

No

Undecided

Vote [View Results](#)

## Calendar

Post Anonymously

Need an account? Create one now.

Print comments

July 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
today's events		browse		submit		



### Sections

- Home
- News
- Sports
- A&E
- Lifestyle
- Opinion
- Databases
- Advertising
- Photos
- Videos
- Weather

### Services

- About Us
- Contact Us
- Media Kit
- Subscription Services
- Submission Forms
- Site Index
- Add Search Toolbar

### Contact us

collegiatetimes.com  
**Phone number:** 540-231-9865  
**E-mail:**  
[webeditor@collegiatetimes.com](mailto:webeditor@collegiatetimes.com)  
**Address:** 365 Squires Student Center  
 Blacksburg, VA 24061

### Search

Search in:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> A&E	<input type="checkbox"/> Databases
<input type="checkbox"/> News	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> Video