



4.

IT IS OUR DUTY AS HUMAN BEINGS TO STAND UP AGAINST THESE ACTS OF INJUSTICES AND BIGOTED RHETORIC. ALTHOUGH THE PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT, I FEEL THEY HAVE MADE ME MORE PROUD TO BE AN ARABIC, MUSLIM WOMEN.

SUAD IBRAHIM
GLOBAL SOLIDARITY MARCH ORGANIZER



5.



6.

4 **DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor**
Surya Shahi and Suad Ibrahim give a speech before the Global Solidarity March Feb. 6.

5 **DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor**
Joel Harter and Imam Shane Atkinson speak at the Global Solidarity March Feb. 6.

6 **DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor**
Freshmen Emily Ford and Lucia Craige hold a sign during the Global Solidarity March.

humanized those touched by this circumstance. Sophie Zinn, Class of 2019 vice president, studied abroad in India during Winter Term, a country whose second largest religion is Muslim. Spending three weeks immersed in the culture broadened Zinn's perspective, and she said Muslims desire a sense of inclusion.

"The religion is very beautiful and they feel really silenced," Zinn said. "They want to feel like they can have someone to talk to."

Kenneth Brown Jr., Class of 2019 president, expressed a similar viewpoint. In a speech that garnered applause, Brown said it is imperative for others who aren't as afflicted to rally behind those who are. Only then, he said, would Muslims feel like they have a place in society.

"America is a concept, it's an idea that is always changing and sometimes people just need to learn how to adapt to the changing times," Brown said. "We have to not be scared of stepping outside first of ourselves and stepping outside of our bubbles. But we also have to realize that the thing that you're supporting reflects more things than you."

That same mentality — feelings of linking together for others — radiated Feb. 6 when the Elon community congregated for Global Solidarity March. When senior Suad Ibrahim planned the event, it was to cultivate momentum for her Muslim peers. Originally from Kuwait, Ibrahim pondered how Trump expresses "such little

regard for other human beings."

When Trump issued his ban, she said her mother advised her to shun her faith in public. Her grandmother, who is Sudanese wanted to surprise Ibrahim for graduation. Trump's ban drastically altered those plans. In her Elon career, she said she and other Muslims weren't assertive.

Now, she took a different approach.

"I should not fear to be who I am ... but that is the reality that I am facing every day right now," Ibrahim said in her speech before the march. "What happened to love, equality, fairness and the values of humanity? It is our duty as human beings to stand up against these acts of injustice and bigoted rhetoric. Although the past two weeks have been difficult, I feel they have made me more proud to be an Arabic, Muslim woman."

Around 100 people attended the march, which was preceded by student and faculty speakers. In her speech, Shereen Elgamal, lecturer in Arabic in the Department of World Languages and Cultures, emphatically denounced Trump. Wearing her hijab, the Egyptian native proudly said she is unafraid. She said that America is not defined by the actions of one man and the country can overcome anything Trump might do.

"Politicians come and go, but we will stay," Elgamal said. "Take your term, leave, and we will continue to do what we are going to do. Thank you, Mr. President, for bringing us all together. We have

I THINK THAT GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS — ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORS — AND THIS HATE STEMMING FROM THIS POLITICAL RHETORIC IS NOT LOVE.

KRISTINA MAYER
HIJAB DAY ORGANIZER

nothing to apologize for. We are good people. Thank you for highlighting to us how important it is to recognize our differences."

A wide range of students and faculty attended the march. Present senior level staff included Associate Provost for Inclusive Community Brooke Barnett, Provost and Executive Vice President Steven House and Associate Vice President for Campus Engagement Randy Williams. Similar to the Black Lives Matter march in September, Williams said when a certain sect of the community feels demonized, the university will deliberately and willingly show support.

"Relationships are important here and if members of the Elon community are being afflicted in some way, the senior staff of the university will show out and support," Williams said. "While we want to offer a great education and give great life experiences, we want to console the community as well. All together, we want to facilitate our students, faculty and staff to flourish together."

Comfortable being uncomfortable

Fuller said Hijab Day hinges on togetherness, like numerous things in life. She guessed many would flirt with participating in it, but may still remain hesitant. As of Feb. 1, 68 people said they would participate, and 102 people said they were interested. Even Meyer, whose participated in Hi-

job Day multiple times, said the night before she will probably have jitters. But Fuller said it is great that women of privilege feel uncomfortable.

That's the entire point.

"First, I'd say, 'Good for you' for identifying that you feel scared, because it's a moment of privilege to realize that I can get dressed and not feel scared," Fuller said. "I would say, 'Well done' for identifying that you're scared, and then I would say, 'You're going to be among friends, that it will be a good learning experience. We're not going to let you be alone, and we're going to get together at the end of the day'"

Though the last year has been hard for her, Okonofua said she feels "amazing" that so many people want to uplift her. While there is still much work to be done, she hopes the example she and Meyer are setting will open the floodgates to helping the Muslim community feel more connected and accepted.

"This really shows that there are people who recognize that we are just as important, just as valuable, just as deserving to be in this country as anyone else," Okonofua said. "In a society where there is an overwhelming majority of religious values that are different from ours, it's nice to see someone who's at least wearing something that reminds you of your difference from the main group. It feels amazing that people are showing you that they care and that you matter, and I think that's most important."