



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

## *House of Representatives*

### In Recognition of the “Our Three Winners” Endowment Fund

*February 6, 2018*

**Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and legacy of Deah Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha, whose lives were taken in a violent hate crime three years ago at their home in Chapel Hill.

Deah was a 23-year-old student in the School of Dentistry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and had recently married Yusor, who was set to enroll in the School of Dentistry in the fall of 2015. Yusor’s sister, Razan, was a 19-year-old student of architecture at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

Diligent in their studies, these promising young adults also demonstrated a strong commitment to community service, consistent with the tenets of their Muslim faith. Deah organized food drives and provided free dental supplies to local homeless and underserved communities. Razan utilized her artistic talent through selling portraits reflecting pacifism and tolerance, using proceeds to provide medical and humanitarian aid for children in the Middle East. Yusor, a leader in N.C. State’s Muslim Student Association, traveled abroad to provide care for, and share the stories of, refugees displaced by war. In the months leading up to that devastating day, Deah, Yusor, and Razan were fundraising for the Project Refugee Smiles Dental Relief Mission to provide dental care to refugees from war-torn Syria.

These three exemplary lives were extinguished on February 10, 2015 by the acts of an anti-Muslim extremist who had long menaced the neighborhood and maintained an arsenal of lethal weapons. This appalling act of violence devastated our community and served as a harsh reminder of the bigotry and hatred that too many still face.

In the wake of the tragedy, classmates, friends, and family members came together to turn their grief into action by establishing the Our Three Winners Endowment Fund, a foundation to honor and continue the humanitarian efforts of Deah, Yusor, and Razan. The Foundation has provided grants to the annual Project Refugee Smiles Dental Relief Mission and scholarships for students who demonstrate values of academic excellence and community service.

Prejudice and violence against Muslim Americans and other religious, ethnic, or racial minorities has no place in American society, yet many of our fellow citizens continue to experience harassment and discrimination every day. On February 10 of each year, the anniversary of the senseless hate crime that took the lives of Deah, Yusor, and Razan, the people of Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and other communities touched by their lives come together to commemorate their humanitarian legacy and rededicate ourselves to building bridges of understanding, acceptance, and community.