Civility in Action: Dialogues across Difference

Please join Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard for a series of conversations focused on building civility across difference.

Monday, May 8 - 7 p.m.

Neel Saxena
*Executive Director, Asian American LEAD*
Imam Yahya Hendi
*Muslim Chaplain, Georgetown University*

As the child of Indian immigrants, **Neel Saxena** understands the cultural and linguistic difference that many Asian immigrants experience and is a vociferous advocate for education. As the executive director at Asian American LEAD, his work supports low-income and underserved Asian Pacific American youth, helping them to construct educational goals, learn about their own and others’ cultures, and take on leadership roles in the community. In Saxena’s experience, engaging across cultural difference can be empowering and transforming, for people on both sides of the conversation. Reaching across difference to make education accessible to all is his personal and professional mission.

As the first Muslim chaplain at an American university, **Imam Yahya Hendi** teaches across difference everyday. As a chaplain at Georgetown University, a Catholic institution, part of his job description is to lead explorations about religious traditions and the roles they play in multicultural societies. As religion continues to be cast as a political narrative—as much as a cultural or national one—speaking productively across different forms of worship will be a skill that is much in demand. Imam Hendi’s experience and theological training will shed light on these processes and their impacts.

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About the Series

Civil discourse is a practice that strengthens society because it opens lines of contact and communication, and builds relationships. In the wake of a year marked by public incivility in politics, strained relationships in law enforcement, and violence that has planted suspicion across difference, more than ever our communities need to build bridges of understanding. A series of conversations led by MC President DeRionne Pollard will attempt to do that. The series will invite several experts in their fields to provoke dialogue that is inclusive, intelligent, and civil. By welcoming community members, students, faculty, staff, and elected officials, we invite all interested participants to join our engagement efforts to challenge misperceptions, interrogate contradictions, and explore solutions to community problems that respect all parties.

**For information about this series, contact the President’s Office at 240-567-5267.**

*For special accommodations, please email the Office of Disability Support Services at dss@montgomerycollege.edu*

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