

Brunch Update

Issue 76 – November 2015

Sufi Service Committee of Boston

Serving the Most Pressing Needs of Our Community



Mayor Maher poses with Thomas Xie and Moh Noorae of Sufi Service Committee

"To see this effect made by an individual in the community... that's what strikes me as so outstanding."

- David Maher, Mayor of Cambridge, MA

Happenings



This month, a new clothing drop box was unveiled at Noor Orientals Rugs, Inc. during a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 18th 2015. All are welcome to donate clothing in good condition, knowing that their heartfelt gift will help fulfill the mission of addressing persistent income inequality in our community, and will keep many warm this upcoming winter. The ceremony was made possible through the perseverance and coordination of Ms. Mackenzie Bigelow of Leader Bank, who reflected upon the event as one which “made [her] feel incredibly hopeful when . . . people . . . try to help, inspire, and make a better world every day.”

The issue of income inequality in Cambridge, MA was touched upon by Mayor Maher, Councilman McGovern, Sergeant Wilson, WANG YMCA Director Patricia Barnwell, Peter Grossi, Barrett Deros, Daniel Muneramesa, and Rick Rubinstein. Their words evoked a powerful message on the importance of treating every member of our community with dignity, respect, and love. This love for others must extend beyond the close proximity of our neighbors, and encompass an awareness of the needs of all.



Marc McGovern, Moh Noorae, and Mayor Maher share a moment



Cambridge Mayor Maher enjoys a cup of Persian tea while discussing homelessness with members of the Sufi Service Committee

Mayor Maher introduced a thought-provoking question by asking “how crucial is it for individuals and small businesses to address the most pressing needs in our community?” To this, a speaker replied “every minute of such participation saves a tax dollar, securing safety in our community without law-enforcement.” Sergeant Wilson similarly commented that the safety and well-being of the community is placed in the hands of all individuals. Indeed, the government, as a single institution, is limited, and the support of individuals and businesses is vital for community betterment.

Councilman McGovern also noted the growing economic disparity between those of higher and lower income and how today, even with jobs and housing, people can struggle to sustain their families with food, clothes, and other necessities. Statistically, he emphasized that to survive with even just the basic necessities of living in Cambridge, a family of four needs to make around \$108,000 annually. This high cost of living makes essential community support like the drop box in Noor Oriental Rugs. Councilman McGovern further reflected on his own



community service experiences, what they taught him, and how he has come to the conclusion that income inequality and high living costs in Cambridge require support both for those under and over the federal poverty line.

In addition to the contributions from the above individuals, volunteers from the Sufi Service Committee offered a spiritual viewpoint on charity work. Their presence portrayed a united, strong bond among those who share similar sentiments of love and a sense, as Daniel Muneramesa puts it, that “the inequality has to end!” Peter Grossi explained that part of the solution to ending today’s current income inequality can be addressed in the structure of charitable organizations. When charity campaigns, such as those of the Sufi Service Committee, have a spiritual background, the poor become the genuine



Barrett Deros speaks about the value of service.

focus of the organization. Without such background, “a charity organization may lead to an empire of directors and well-paid employees leaving the cause of the poor in the crucible of oblivion altogether!” said Grossi.

Barrett Deros expressed the idea that charity should be about embracing the needy with love, and that such love radiates in ceremonies such as this. What distinguishes charity work of the Sufi Service is that the volunteers truly care for and support one another, and those to whom they lend a helping hand. Rick Rubinstein, a dedicated volunteer, added “You, the volunteers, are the beating heart of this! I am proud to know you all.” His words echo the way in

which true charity should be performed: with a genuine love both towards those in need of help and those who happily give their help. That is what keeps supporters coming back. Volunteers are the true assets of charity work, the heart and soul of its success.

On Our Website

[Clothes and the Poor, a reflection by Sheriff Farrag](#)

"There are many reasons why donating clothing to others is a great action. When you give people access to clothes, you give them more than a protection from the cold. You give them an ability to socialize, express themselves, and feel dignified." [Click title for link to full text]

[Peter Grossi Speech on September 18 ceremony](#)

"No one person or organization can take on such matters alone and as a facet of our humanity, deep down we know we have to do our part to help in whatever capacity we can.

I was in need for guidance on my own spiritual path as I entered the House of Sufism. I quickly learned of the charity initiative that was in place where as volunteers we had the opportunity to prepare meals for those who are homeless and in transition. The things that one can do in this kind of service are far from limited... It's the one on one camaraderie that ends up being the most rewarding since that is what can truly make someone's day with something as simple as a smile and a friendly hello. I found that we were quick in getting to know one another and it is that kind of love that things come down to.

...the highest form of love ...the kind of love known as agape in Greek and is translated as charity... This is the kind of love that we hold deep down and is always a work in progress. It would take a lifetime to get it perfect since the Self is the greatest obstacle to conquer. With practice by showing loving-kindness to others..." [click title for link to full text]



"I work with Sufi Service Committee because of what I've seen in others that do.

The dedication and love I've seen is truly inspiring and with such great people I know great things will be accomplished."

Peter's Interview with Spare Change TV:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfvZXum3AM0>

Barrett Deris Speech on September 18 ceremony

"At the surface, our reasons [to do charitable works] may seem different... could be love..... This perspective is the essence of empathy and the desire to help, and is what unites us here today whether we recognize it immediately or not..... although the number of problems that we feel responsible for seem to multiply - all of our problems (somehow!) become easier to handle when we develop this perspective.... somehow the benefits are immeasurable compared to the investment." [click title for link to full text]

Video of the event:

www.nimatullahisufiboston.org/NoorDonationBoxMidQuality.mp4

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



The new clothing donation box gets its first order of business.

Volunteers of all backgrounds are welcome to get involved by

- Preparing and serving meals
- Delivering food and clothes
- Visiting hospitals
- Providing administrative assistance
- Making financial contributions
- Donating food and clothes
- Purchasing \$25 gift cards from local vendors

Contact:

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