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MEDIA ADVISORY  
#####

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

(COLUMBUS, OH) – **Columbus Youth Give Back in the Memory of 2015 Chapel Hill Shooting Victims**

**From Dr. King to Our Three Winners to Our Future: Compassionate Youth Building a Compassionate Community**

**Interfaith Food Drive | Soup Kitchen | Dental Supplies Drive | MY Deah's Renovation Day  
February. 6 - 27, 2016 - Three Weeks of Service and Leadership in Columbus**

MY Project USA's Muslim youth leaders in Columbus have teamed up with their peers of other faith to further the legacies of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Our Three Winners (last year's Chapel Hill Shooting victims from North Carolina) and hundreds of other civil and human rights activists and leaders that have helped build a stronger America through their service and leadership.

Deah Barakat, his wife Yusor Abu-Salha and her sister, Razan Abu-Salha, the three Muslim victims of the Chapel Hill Shooting were shot to death by a white neighbor at Barakat's home near UNC-Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on February 10, 2015. They were known in the community for their community service and leadership. Their murder stirred an international outcry and initiated several global, national and local community service projects in their honor.

That tragedy did hit home for Zerqa Abid, now a Hilliard resident, but a close family friend of the Barakat Family. She is also the founder and President of MY Project USA, a non-profit Columbus-based organization that focuses on the Muslim youth protection and empowerment.

The Barakat family and Abid have now joined forces to empower youth across the country. They have opened a chain of "MY Deah's" stores in Columbus and North Carolina as an initiative of MY Project USA. The organization plans to start more stores in other cities as well.

MY Deah's Columbus store is a goodwill type store at 3036 Sullivant Ave. It provides low-priced used and new clothing, shoes and household items to low-income, mostly refugee communities. It also serves as a youth activity and training center in a neighborhood that has a high presence of drug dealers and pimps that are preying upon the area youth on daily basis. MY Project USA has already engaged more than 100 youth just from that neighborhood and have been training them to become community organizers and activist to change the situation of their community. February events are the continuation of that ongoing mission.

On February, 6, 2016, the Kick Off Event of a three week campaign of community service and leadership was held after the Interfaith Prayer Services for the three victims. This campaign is to help the needy and homeless in Columbus and Syrian refugees in the refugee camps.



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Pastor Patricia Wagner of Maynor Ave. United Methodist Church spoke to the attendees at the interfaith service; Horsed Nooh, the executive Director and Imam of the Abubakar Assidiq Islamic Center, offered the prayers for Barakat and AbuSalhas; MY Project USA youth leaders Durya Nadeem, Lena Swalha, Sarah Seddah and Umulkheyr Hassan also spoke to the audience.

#### **THE UPCOMING EVENTS:**

##### **SOUP KITCHEN- Hot Meal Delivery**

Friday, February 12 | 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Cooking/packing/distribution of about 150 meals for needy neighbors and homeless on streets.

##### **FOOD DRIVE FOR MID-OH FOOD BANK**

Interfaith Food Drive by High School Youth - Collecting until February 26, 2016

##### **DENTAL SUPPLIES DRIVE FOR SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY**

Collecting until February 27, 2016

##### **MY DEAH'S RENOVATION DAY**

Saturday, February 20, 2016 | 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Volunteers will help with painting outdoor sign, indoor-paint, installing floor vinyl tiles, re-organizing etc. United Methodist Church will bring its congregation to help this day.

##### **CLOSING CEREMONY & PRESS CONFERENCE**

Saturday, February 27, 2016 | 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Packing of Food and dental supplies for delivery to food bank and SAMS - Closing Ceremony/Press Conference (3:30 p.m.) Departure to the Food Bank 4:00 p.m.

MY Project USA is a national organization focused on combating extremist violence, human trafficking, drugs, gangs and many other issues through grassroots mobilization and training of youth and families. It is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. It owns two MY Deah's Stores in North Carolina and one in Columbus, OH. These stores are named after Deah Barakat, the victim of Chapel Hill shooting in North Carolina past February.

For further information, please contact,

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