

Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers

Law Day 2013

GOOD MORNING, AND WELCOME TO THE SUPREME COURT COURTROOM AS WE CELEBRATE LAW DAY 2013.

IT IS ENTIRELY FITTING THAT WE ARE HERE TODAY TO RECOGNIZE THIS YEAR'S THEME OF *REALIZING THE DREAM: EQUALITY FOR ALL*. IN FACT, I THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT THE 2013 LAW DAY THEME GOES TO THE HEART OF WHAT OUR COURT SYSTEM IS ALL ABOUT - WHICH IS ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL. THIS IS REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOU WORSHIP IN A SYNAGOGUE, A CATHEDRAL OR A MOSQUE.

IN SHORT, WHEN YOU GO TO COURT IN AMERICA, YOU ARE ENTERING WITH THE EXPECTATION OF JUSTICE FOR ALL. IT IS PART OF THE SOCIAL COMPACT OUR COURTS HAVE WITH ANYONE ENTERING OUR DOORS, AND WE MUST ENSURE THAT WE UPHOLD OUR END OF THE BARGAIN IF THIS GREAT DEMOCRACY IS TO SURVIVE.

MORE THAN EVER, OUR COURTS MUST BE GUIDED BY THE RULE OF LAW AND UNAFRAID TO MAKE RULINGS THAT RUN COUNTER TO PUBLIC OPINION, ESPECIALLY WHEN DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT IS INVOLVED.

COURTS, HOWEVER, ARE ONLY ONE PART OF THE ANSWER. EDUCATION IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT COMPONENT TO ACHIEVING

PROGRESS AND THE GOAL OF EQUALITY FOR ALL -- WHICH LEADS ME TO THE PRIVILEGE OF INTRODUCING TODAY'S HONOREE.

THE MUSLIM COALITION OF CONNECTICUT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND OUTREACH EFFORTS THAT SEEK TO PROMOTE SHARED VALUES OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. I WOULD URGE YOU TO VIEW ITS WEBSITE, WHERE YOU'LL SEE A FULL MENU OF ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY – HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, SHELTER SERVE DATES, AND A WALK AGAINST HUNGER TO NAME JUST A FEW. IT ALSO HAS A VERY ACTIVE SPEAKERS BUREAU, AND THE COALITION JUST RECENTLY SPENT THE MORNING WITH A GROUP OF JUDICIAL BRANCH EMPLOYEES, PRESENTING A PROGRAM THAT WAS EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED.

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT THIS GROUP MAKES TO ITS COMMUNITY AND THE ENTIRE STATE AND IT IS THROUGH EFFORTS SUCH AS THESE THAT A CRUCIAL DIALOGUE IN THIS STATE AND COUNTRY IS ELEVATED TO A LEVEL WHERE A PRODUCTIVE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND CULTURES CAN THRIVE.

IN SUM, OUR COURTS ARE HERE TO MAKE SURE EQUAL RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED AND WE WILL DO THAT. WE ARE BOLSTERED, HOWEVER, BY THE INITIATIVES AND HARD WORK OF COMMUNITY GROUPS, SUCH AS OUR HONOREE TODAY, THAT SEEK TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS THROUGH RESPECT FOR ONE

ANOTHER AND THE BELIEF THAT THE RULE OF LAW IS ALIVE AND WELL.

IT IS NOW MY GREAT PLEASURE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND COALITION VICE PRESIDENT, ATTORNEY REFAI AREFIN. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T KNOW ATTORNEY AREFIN, HE CURRENTLY SERVES AS THE ASSISTANT IMAM OF THE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION OF GREATER HARTFORD. HE ALSO SPENDS HIS TIME VOLUNTEERING FOR CIVICS FIRST AND ORGANIZING YOUTH ACTIVITIES AT THE MOSQUE. ATTORNEY AREFIN IS A LITIGATION ATTORNEY AT TRENDOWSKI & ALLEN. ATTORNEY AREFIN....