



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Young, Female, American, Muslim lawyer reaches out; Hanna Chandoo works to counter Islamophobia

December 22, 2015 – Hanna Chandoo, an associate attorney with Alexander Krakow + Glick, LLP, took matters into her own hands last Sunday, December 20, in an independent action to reach out to fellow Americans.

Chandoo, who just graduated from Whittier Law School in May, decided to see whether she, her family, and her friends could temper the recent rise in Islamophobia in Southern California by distributing over a thousand free roses and holiday cards in Downtown Disney.

During the week before Chandoo's rose distribution, Chandoo's fellow lawyers at AK+G, a Santa Monica based law firm that represents employees exclusively, expressed support and solidarity with the American Muslim community. Chandoo said that these expressions of kindness at work motivated her and her friends to share their own expressions of love.

Yesterday, she wrote the following in an email to her colleagues at AK+G after the event: "It has been a difficult couple of weeks for me, full of hopeless thoughts about what 'we' --- American Muslims, and specifically American Muslim women who wear hijab --- are supposed to be 'doing' right now to mitigate all the madness in our country. Thinking got old. So, my husband, sister-in-law, and I decided to set up a few 'random acts of kindness' events.

"Today (Sunday) was our first little event. At 3 p.m., we began to distribute over a thousand free roses and holiday cards (along with a few of our friends) in Downtown Disney. We spent the entire weekend making the cards and cleaning/grooming the roses, and it was definitely worth it."

Chandoo reported that 95% of the responses she received were positive and she noted that many people posted their reactions on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Attached are photographs from the event as well as screenshots of some of the social media chatter. To see more of these posts and comments, feel free to browse Hanna Chandoo's Facebook account or search for the hashtags she and her friends used during the event and on their holiday cards: #AmericanMuslim, #RealMuslims, #SayNoToIntolerance, and #SayNoToIslamophobia.

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Chandoo concluded, “The kindness we experienced during the event was overwhelming and made all of us hopeful about the state of affairs in our country. I hope seeing these pictures give you a bit of hope, too.”

Chandoo, who has a B.A. in Sociology from Smith College, graduated from Whitter with a lengthy list of honors and accomplishments. She completed her studies as the salutatorian in the class with highest honors and served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Law Review and the Administrative Justice of the Moot Court Honors Board.

Chandoo is grateful to Downtown Disney for granting her permit to engage in expressive activity and to the Muslim Women’s Network of Southern California for its guidance. Her fellow lawyers at AK+G strongly endorse their young colleague’s efforts. It reflects the firm’s commitment to battle discrimination in their work as well as contributing to reducing public tensions in the Southern California social and political environment.

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