

The Haji Ebrahim Patel/Crescents of Brisbane Special Achievement Award

Presented by Kemal Omar on behalf of the Crescents of Brisbane Team

at

CresWalk2016

Sunday 4 September 2016

Selecting a winner for the Haj Ebrahim Patel award is not an easy task. There are many worthy nominees and very high standards. People's names keep popping up but there can always only be one winner this year and we go through the same process the next.

So finally David Forde, your name came up in the carefully considered lottery.

Let me start by saying I and many others have known David for more than a decade. And during most of that time we've had endless robust disagreements about the best way to do things...David, is possibly the most obstinate Yet fair minded, stubborn yet kind hearted and headstrong but with a moral compass that is extremely rare in the world as we know it today.

But lest you think I am being inappropriate by mentioning this, all of those are redeeming qualities as you will soon see...

David's involvement in community includes;

1. Membership of the Kuraby Lions in which he's partnered with Crescents of Brisbane on a number of projects raising funds for others as well as greening the environment.
2. Fund raising dinners for Kuraby Special School.
3. Raising funds for the Milperra State School and Mathew Holland.
4. Organising contributor to the Aussie Rules Clinic
5. Raising Funds for The Cyclone Larry Appeal
6. Taking part in 100km OXFAM Trail walk to raise funds for OXFAM
7. David was and still is to some extent an active member of the Queensland branch of Amnesty International
8. Senior Vice President of the Sunnybank RSL, David has helped the Islamic College of Brisbane with the ANZAC Day commemorations at the school ensuring that detractors are silenced when it comes to the empathising with the Anzacs
9. He is on the board of Australian Palestinian Advocacy Network.
10. He has helped and continues to help the Rohingya community to articulate the story of the condition of their families and friends back home

These represent only some of David's activities...

But... We are here to acknowledge David's tireless and extensive contribution to the Muslim community spanning at least the many years we know him.

His efforts in relation to the community are too numerous to mention. But the constant vigilance he displays in order to ensure our community doesn't suffer harm must be commended and applauded.

He goes above and beyond the requisites of his job as Senior Policy Advisor in the Queensland Government's Department of Multicultural Affairs.

In his professional and private capacity he has come to the defence of the Muslim community when we've been misrepresented, unfairly portrayed or maligned in the media and other social forums.

His valiant yet unsuccessful attempts at getting into Parliament to defend justice for all are not to be forgotten. However, David is probably most noted for his sincere, passionate and brazenly outspoken support of the Palestinian cause. Something very dear to our hearts. Having an excellent understanding of the politics of the region David campaigns tirelessly now with APAN to raise awareness in Australia about the plight of Palestinians.

As you can imagine, All of this does come at significant sacrifice to himself and his family.

So then, you must agree with me, without all those redeeming qualities we mentioned at the beginning and I'll repeat them... His relentless determination, unyielding single-mindedness and dogged insistence on pursuing something, Not much of what we mentioned would have taken place. He has fought many causes on our behalf and continues to do so.

As an idealist, I used to think it unnecessary to thank those who stand up for justice, simply because in my view, it was the honourable and expected thing to do. That was until I heard the hadith of the Prophet SAW when he said

"One who does not thank people does not thank Allah"

The operative word being People and not Muslims only.

So thank you David, Please accept the Hajji Ebrahim Patel award from us on behalf of our community for all of the excellent work you do. Hajji Ebrahim Patel was indeed a pioneer in assisting our local community settle into this country comfortably and maintain their ideals. We think you embody this ethos.

Please join me in thanking David and showing our appreciation for his efforts over the years