

Quad Cities' Diverse Population Needs Tolerance, Friendship

Written by Letter to Editor

Tuesday, 25 September 2001 18:00

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As the initial shock over the terrible events of September 11 turns into deep sadness and a profound sense of loss, our sympathy goes to those across the country and around the world who mourn loved ones. With a sense of awe and gratitude, we learn of those who survived, those who committed heroic acts, and those who continue to do so every day as they undertake the incredible task of search and rescue in New York. Those of us who were spared feel a new awareness of our relationships with others and are thankful for them.

Amidst all this, there is great uncertainty about the future. Many of us feel helpless in light of such overwhelming events. Now, more than ever, do we need our neighbors! They might be the people next door in a small town or people in another country halfway around the world. We need to learn from each other, understand each other's concerns, and approach each other with empathy and the will for peace.

We are blessed with a richly diverse population in the Quad Cities. People from Bosnia to Vietnam, from Mexico to Belgium, from Senegal to France have made this place their home. Let us be grateful for them and the richness they contribute to our daily lives! Let us learn from them and let them learn from us! Only mutual understanding and appreciation can bring lasting peace anywhere. Let us practice the tolerance that the best voices in our history have taught us!

At Black Hawk College, we have students, staff, and faculty from around the world. We are deeply grateful for their presence. They teach and delight us and each other every day, and they create a microcosm of what our world might be with the tolerance and the will to work together. This is an experience in which we can all share. Please reach out to those members of our community who might now feel very alone, rejected, and fearful, whatever their place of origin might be. Let them know that they are where they belong: among friends.

Peace to us all.

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