

South Brunswick Post

SOUTH BRUNSWICK: Mosque collects food to honor victims

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Azra Baig photo. Children at the Islamic Society of Central Jersey build a castle of donated canned foods during the "Feed Their Legacy" food drive last weekend.

The Islamic Society of Central Jersey participated in the National Charity Food Drive called "Feed Their Legacy" last weekend.

The drive was created in honor of three Muslims, Deah Barakat, 23, his wife, Yusor Abu-Salha, 21, and her sister, Razan Abu-Salha, 19, who were found shot and killed in their apartment in Chapel Hill, North Carolina on Feb. 10, according to a press release.

"During their short time here, these three American Muslim students selflessly spent time giving back to the community through organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and United Muslim Relief," the release said.

Mr. Barakat also started his own initiative called Project Smile where several dentists traveled from all around the world to provide dental care to the Syrian Refugees in Turkey.

"Whether it be the homeless community of Durham, North Carolina, or Syrian refugees, these three exemplary leaders were coordinating ways to help and serve others," according to the release.

To honor the victims, Muslims and others joined together in this initiative to continue their legacy by setting a goal of collecting 100,000 cans of food all over the country and donating them to local food pantries.

Several of the states competed to see who could collect more cans to help reach this goal.

"In less than a week's time, ISCJ collected a total of 514 cans and we still had people donating up to the last few hours of the campaign," ISCJ's food drive's organizer, Mona Mostafa, 22, from Monmouth Junction said.

She said she was "inspired" by the incredible work of the three individuals who were tragically murdered.

"The main thing I wanted to focus on during this campaign was the involvement of families and children," she said of coordinating the drive. "I think it is so important to have kids participating in charity work so they could learn about giving back at an early age."

At the end of the campaign, children joined the adults in counting and packaging the canned goods to be delivered to the South Brunswick Food Pantry.

When asked about the canned food donation, Mustafa Abdelilah , 8, said, "We care collecting for the poor people."

The children constructed a castle and also helped write out the letters NJ with all the cans.

"I would hope that these kinds of initiatives would teach them and other children to do charity work as they get older the way Deah, Yusor and Razan did," Ms. Mostafa said.

She said she was confident that the "Feed Their Legacy" campaign exceeded the goal of 100,000 cans and was very thankful to the members of ISCJ and to the community of South Brunswick for everyone's generous donations in honor of the three individuals.

The Director of the South Brunswick Food Pantry, LouAnne Wolf, said she was excited and thankful to see the outpouring of cans donated from ISCJ.

"We are thrilled to have the continued support from the ISCJ and especially for the worthy cause of the National Food drive campaign 'Feed Their Legacy,'" She said.

She said the South Brunswick Social Services Department is holding the "Give Until You Are Full" campaign which has replaced the Feinstein Foundation Challenge and encouraged the South Brunswick community for their contributions.

For more information on the "Feed Their Legacy" campaign, please visit www.feedtheirlegacy.com. For more information on the "Give Until Your Full" campaign please contact (732) 329-4000, extension 7674.