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Dr. Hani Rashed, 2014

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Transcript for Dr. Hani Rashed

Sharif Rashad: (speaking Arabic) My name is Sharif Rashad and on behalf of the Inspire 2014 summer program here at Rhodes College and the Crossroads to Freedom program I would like to thank you for your time and thank you for your time to see us today on July 17.

Dr. Hani Rashed: My pleasure

Sharif Rashad: Would you like to introduce yourself

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes my name is Hani Rashed

Sharif Rashad: Would you like to tell us about what you do

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes I'm the ??? director around the coordinator for ???????? surgery group at Miss Healthcare Memphis hospitals so my work is about research which is very similar to what you doing and I'm very interested to know more about what you

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are doing as this wonderful project

Sharif Rashad: Have you been been working there very often or long?

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes I'm here in Memphis United States for about next month will be my third year in this city I came here September 1 1984 I used to remember it, it was hot afternoon summer and that how when I came here to this country

Sharif Rashad: Talk about a little bit more about your first impression of the United States

Dr. Hani Rashed: It's a very good question because I still remember it I went I came from Middle East I want to Europe when I was in the medical schools for during

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some more time so I had some experience about however coming to United States it was a big step everything at that time back in eight years about United States was about cowboys movie cowboys guys riding horses and lots of guns so when I came to this country I expected to see some cowboys about I was surprised at I didn't see anyone in Memphis I still remember when I my flight coming to landing here in Memphis the most distinguishing thing I saw from the airplane was the brownish color of the land try to remember I came from Middle East desert Egypt

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was desert so nothing ??? Here look color and on this wall strip of green around the Nile River so seeing this difference in color was amazing it was summer time hot time I know they told us

you know in Memphis the weather can change dramatically from very hot during summer time was a lot of fan and very cold in winter time was this snow so I came with my sister because my sister got accepted in science ??? So from our culture we wanted to make sure that our sister or the

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female figure is in safe place and in good hands as a big brother you had to make sure that my sister was in good hands so I decided to venture I have brother to on my father he is a judge back home in Egypt he was a judge back home in Egypt at the time cannot travel or have law vacation I decided to volunteer around come for a period of six months to make sure that she is ok we arrived here in Memphis and it was again hot we came with heavy clothes because we expecting to stay for winter time so we had the coats in our bags and then showed our shoulders and it was very striking I think when people see us coming with coats

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and this very hot it was saucing their front we stayed with a relative here when we arrive here and I still remember first thing that got my attention how big the fruits are here the grapes offered us some fruits like grapes and apples the grapes were huge like six time size bigger than back home in Egypt so it was interesting observation and all we coming from there airport to their house the streets were so big so huge long and you don't see anyone walking on the streets compared to culture from Middle East at any time they not you will found people walking on the streets in Europe as well Europe to you will found some people walking the streets but here it was quiet different nobody walks

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on the street of course who can walk in 100 degree weather here it was insane and everybody driving and so we went the their house didn't see any grocery stores in all way or vendor in this streets like back home in Egypt anywhere you will go and found some vendor in this streets selling something here they don't have any Europe they have some small vegetable stores or grocery stores in the streets in the ??? Area but here it was quite difficult to see some grocery stores closed by their homes or Creation Park to it was I didn't see any creation parks coming back from here and the surprising thing I didn't see any cowboy or horses here so I expected in eighties

Sharif Rashad: Let's talk about your family little bit more what did your family say when they heard that you wanted to

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go to America what was their reaction

Dr. Hani Rashed: It was big surprised for them and it wasn't strange for them because I used to travel a boat to Europe so my absent for short time was ok but when the I told them that my sister is coming here and she stayed for long time years and I would be here with her for six

months especially my grand-mother and one out on the streets outside I had and they were crying and do really touched by how long did the generation will be here I still remember my grandmother told me and all make sure that you will have guns because the cowboys over there can shoot you so I told them no no no I don't want to used

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guns or anything around and I'm peaceful guy and anyway it was interesting for them to surprise for them the rule my father was he would encourage us to continue our education about learning from other cultures is good to know experiences being ??? On other country or another culture its lifetime experience you can not learn about other cultures unless if you live with them you can ??? From other cultures by just watching TVs or seeing documentary you have to live with people and see how the think about other countries when I started here my sister founded

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difficult for her to go to get her groceries or even to go to school so we decided to look for apartment very close walking distance to her school University of Tennessee we found apartment than it was very hardship for us to founded it close by a grocery store so we had to walked like every week twice every week to go grocery store to buy our milk bread for about four or five miles one way with her regardless it's cold rains snow hot I had to get our milk and grocery

Sharif Rashad: You mention on how you came here with your sister did you take a plane here

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or

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes we came by airplane and it was long way compared to our trouble previous experience to Europe it was short to our but United States about more than sixteen hours on the airplane

Sharif Rashad: So did you have any issues with cousins there like pass security

Dr. Hani Rashed: No I don't time it was very easy and no problem release ??? Started to have problems not only for Muslims but for everybody since September 11

Sharif Rashad: Let's talk about the history of Islamic in Memphis now when you were first arrive in this country in the mid-eighties were there any ??? That you could pray at

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Dr. Hani Rashed: ?????? Means this question because when I came to this country I didn't know where is the ??? Are and one day I was in medical conference at the University of Tennessee and I so nice guy who is white good but his named wasn't Muslim my name ??? So I approached him in I asked him about

Muslims here in Memphis and he offered to take me to see the ??? So on the ??? Was here when I arrived at back in 80s worlds ????? Us in downtown and as far away from medical center but he told me the reason why the ??? Is under construction and stressful and offer to take me on Friday prayers I was well

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that I was going to the prayer because back home in Egypt and the ??? Of the streets you will found ??? Some group sit during the prayers you will found most numerous number of ??? You can go just go short walking distance to the ??? Of prayer that's what I miss when I came to this country during my regular prayer and congregation and others Muslim brothers and sisters I miss it a lot so I was rarely doing the offer to take me to the ??? So the ??? Was under construction so sometimes we had to pray in the front porch of the house next to the ??? Sometime it was raining on us but we did the prayer

Sharif Rashad: So were there a lot of Muslims who you was especially was grateful for when you first arrive there

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes

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I mention one brother I was ready fortune to know him and it was by accident and the interesting things to me give me a lessons that I have to approach people to ??? Conversation untack because this can increase our communication this is the most difficult thing for human beings is communication and if you communicate with someone you will ??? More information don't stay away from serving the community or communicate with other members with the community because from each one regardless of their reoccupation or race or color you will learn something diversity is the best thing in our religion

Sharif Rashad: I agree so in particular where there any other colors that you can name for us

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes I met

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couple more brothers when I started to go there congregation prayer and ??? Br.??? He was like the father figure for Muslims in Memphis back in the 80s and the early 90s and Br. ??? Was also a good brother to communicate and learn from him there would be four new by some years but short years not long time they were very friendly Br.??? Also heard by me to know more about the community here and he told me about the idea lets us do Friday prayer at University of Tennessee to make it easier for medical students to do the Friday prayer

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so we started it like 1985 which mean one year after my arrival we started to establish regular prayer I loved it and it's like it became like a mission for me everywhere I go to work I tried to establish regular prayer in the area we manage to establish regular prayer not only at University of Tennessee also after that I wanted to work at St. Jude I worked at Methodist hospital and a v-air also (speaking Arabic) during this prayer and it's very helpful because those people who work on that prayer or in downtown area it is easier to help quickly and do the prayer in the area not to go to the ??? But we usually encourage people to go

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to the ??? To get more rewards when they do the prayer together

Sharif Rashad: So how longed did you pray at University of Tennessee

Dr. Hani Rashed: Well it's quite long time it was about like ten years and we started it with two brothers Br. Khandekar was one of them the other brother from Egypt Maddie also we did this prayer it started by two and ??? by now heard that the number was about thirty they go over there and V.A. now about the same number to at Methodist we started it to the regular Friday prayer president ?????? he was before us there working there and he manage to reserve the room for us to the regular prayers there but for

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they prayers was studied it to recent like the beginning of this here we started to ??? Brothers but (speaking Arabic) twelve older brothers they come different times so this is good things we establish this small buckets of places they cannot offer regular prayers numbers of ??? Increase since our arrived it here we had only when I arrive back in the 80s ?????? In downtown ??? Street and ??? Islam now ??? Added to the ??? Process also to serve the students at the University of Memphis so it was there but it's in enlarged it ??? I used to go to prayers over there and it was a small house like maybe a prayer whole like this size of this room and students come from different campus to the prayer of ???

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Now Marshall ??? Manage to add couple more houses demolish them and built big ??? We used them (speaking Arabic) And ?????? Also for the (speaking Arabic) Brothers was establish and one just started the streets (speaking Arabic) Are brothers to ??? When I served it member of the ??? Council for the great Muslim society center in ?????? My mission is try to increase the interaction with each other with other brothers and other ??? So I was trying to attend different activities and different ??? Regardless Muslim and ??? Because we should be all

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together as brothers you know different experience beautiful I still remember when I want to (speaking Arabic) It's different at most fears and brothers doing the ??? In ?????? They sit on the floor and eat together its symbol humble beautiful and different but sharing the meal with a other brother it's a good idea to increase the communication with other brother and sisters

Sharif Rashad: Were there any other ??? that you are in

Dr. Hani Rashed: I wasn't dressed to teacher our young brother and sister Arabic and ??? still remember our sisters for my students and

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Sunday school now ?????? Now have good profession is the position or lawyers or and having families and sometime I don't recognized them they changed having family but they still have the same spirit and ??? Interaction I have to mention that Muslims sisters from some continents like from (speaking Arabic) recognized more than the sisters and more activity in the community service Muslim sister from

Middle East and I would love to you know have them to interact with those sisters who are not part participating in active or having an active role in this community to encourage them to go ahead

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and have some kind of relationship and communication with other and when I go for the eat prayers I see groups focus of people extending one corner or rabs in one corner and it's not good I once ??? Mangle with each other because you learned a lot from each other however we have to understand language prayer can be a issue so language prayer is an issue for us I wish we can have service here in our community like in the Catholic church whoever come to this country need to have some kind of educational classes for them to teach them not only the language also something about the culture here so if you understand the culture you can give them the good

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message about Islam

Sharif Rashad: So were you saying that we need to try to get the group together and try more often

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes communication foot is one way to bring people together sports is amazing I used to coach soccer for the Muslim kids and it was good that they know how to talk with each other but they can play and interact and having fun having fun is very nice to brother ????? Started nice way to having filled the trips to out of town take bus rent a bus and have different families to go and visit different places I help him to organized one trip to Jackson Mississippi they have beautiful

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Islamic museums over there wealth culture there different objects and different we took some Muslim brothers and sisters over there for that trip it was a good idea and I hope we can festively and have more

Sharif Rashad: So one of event that really put things in prospective is 9/11 would you care to talk to us about that

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes that true rarely it was a big shocked for us I stilled remember I was driving early in the morning to my mother -in-law because my kid had to drop one of my kids over there my kid didn't start school at that time so I heard it in the news the first airplane had to the first tower and then the second one I was really

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shocked about this so that maybe by accident but later we learned that it was a Muslim group and at that time I felt so bad because everybody started to look at and label Muslim by different way my mission was to interact with non-Muslims and showed them the beauty of Islam and what Islam and we did ??? Work before September 11 to have community around different ??? And different organization to know more about Islam I used to volunteer at City of Memphis male group for interaction different religion group meetings so when September 11

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happen it was shocked for us but the good thing is we built some kind of radio communication non-Muslim around us before September 11 and ??? The attack on Muslims community was not significant because we already built roots for good communication and I want you young generation to continue this kind of building good communication non-Muslims September 11 was a big shocked for us and we had to increase our efforts to educate non-Muslims about our religion because the problem come from non-educated people

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they don't know about our religion help is ??? How beautiful it is it's bad some bad apples were there but this doesn't mean all of the rest of the apples and the bad should be bad to we have to educate and continue our neighbors and our friends about the beauty of Islam it's different to try to make an hour and brief for Islam before you do that like the first rabs or the first Muslim houses spread Islam by communication by trades they showed them how beautiful Islam is they didn't went they didn't go over there to ??? or Pakistan or India you have to be a Muslim no they did some communication with them trades for example scholars

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went over there and from communication and how you react to others people get impressed by your behavior you are different than the other you don't cheat you don't committed crimes because your religion make you feel to do any bad thing which is important different cultures you know here in this culture you'll find some problems here but when you interact with someone and chosen that you are very straight forward and you don't drink you don't do bad things you know people look at you by different way and this can leave a good impression about not you only you but also by your religion

Sharif Rashad: So from our past interview we I remember

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what they was doing at that time when the towers were hit can you go in more depth in to what you was thinking at that time

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes that's a very good question because it was working day so when I went towards work everybody was looking at ??? You know did you know what happen yes I heard about it and this started to talk about it in front of me someone works in medical field and know the stages of reaction so people first as a Muslim I will denied what happen it can't be a Muslim so that was the first normal reaction for any human being regardless you are a Muslim or not this cannot happen I can't believe that my brother did something bad like this and then I started to understand why he did it what is their mission to do

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it once again when he did that did it again a lot of success and spreading Islam no it may be more ??? To understand what's Islam or to associate with any Muslims so our work as a community we started to increase our and increase education we prepared more books and more ??? About Islam and about how much you had to the real true meaning of you have and Islam Islam mean some mission that you have peaceful mind and peaceful heart when you deal with not only Muslims but non-Muslims we know the story of prophet Muhammad (speaking Arabic)how he deal with his bad neighbor who used to throw garage on him every day he pass in front of her house

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one day she didn't throw garbage on him so he was curious was is this bad lady didn't ??? Garage and mistreated me so ?????? He found out he was sick that day so he was kind with her and it left a good impression about him and she was really regret it on what she did and this example beautiful example from our ??? We should also be kind with our neighbors and be supportive to them increase our communication and again I mention again September 11 we didn't have a big impact on our community here because similar to other cities like in Chicago or we heard significant troubles happen to some extinct some ??? Were burned and some people some brothers and sisters were good hurt

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in the streets because there were dressing ??? Or dress the ??? In Memphis thanks to God that we didn't have similar experiences because we already when we came to this country we build good communications so when September 11 happen evil started to look at us by different way so it created some kind of fear from non-Muslims to the Muslim community also created problems between Muslim brother and sister this started to be suspicious about each other the ??? Brothers think that the Middle Eastern or the other brother is spying on him ??? To but understand this is not sharp behavior it happen in any war and any place when there is a big calamity people just started to divide

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you don't found this division in other countries like Middle East all of them are Muslims 90% or Arabs ????? In this country its humongous country diversity different culture are existed one member created a problem the labor older raise ??? Culture of this group you know by different way and that what you see here when ??? Cabin happen like this to the Muslims it create big shock and big response if this in Middle East you want see this shock happen because all of them Arabs here there are not this is the beauty of this country they came to ??? each other with this significant difference September 11 was

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at this for Muslims to show how solid we are about Islam you remember in history when ????? Have been divide and zero ??? Muslims and extend that the have to change their names from Islamic to non-Muslims named Muslims been departed from ?????? Because of they were this kind of different religion and this country the president here and the government really ??? Together with the Muslim community and they supportive them even they understood it was big calamity for the country but they understand well what Islam mean and that good because our leaders manage to give them good message to the leaders of this country to our country your country so you continue

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you need to continue as a youth the spread of the message of about what Islam is it's not jacked it's not fight suicide bomb it's how to work together on other thing good didn't create significant problem our Muslim brothers here in this country as while our sisters they work very hard what a regardless to their position or occupation when non-Muslims see us working so hard in different positions lawyer physicians share difference you know they look at us with respect and that's good that help us observed the shock of 9/11 much better than other cities

Sharif Rashad: I agree

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earlier you mention that the community change how you think it really did change

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes after ??? Left September 11 there was big change between how people non-Muslims look at us perceive us how Muslims them self to interact with each other to that was the big change and gradating we built bridge of communication again and thanks for the next generation who cane who manage increase our increase communication with non-Muslims under the organization and educate them about the true Islam

Sharif Rashad: So you think the change was for the good or the worst as the community after 9/11

Dr. Hani Rashed: There is a purpose for everything

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God created calamity for a reason calamity can help us to strengthen ourselves as a Muslim our Islam became more stronger calamity increase the communication between Muslims on Non-Muslims it was a test from God and God created something from something bad can be something beautiful can come in the future and you still see a nice fruits coming out of the calamity we had as a Muslim who lived in this country and being label as a tourists good things coming out and people are looking at us by different way and we respect because not because of September because of our activities our communication increase more

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Sharif Rashad: So is there anything you liked to share with the community here especially few enjoyers being the youth

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes for the youth they have a big task ready I understand the children they have all the youth here works and goes to school different schools with communicate and interact with non-Muslims they used they doing very good job they increasing the??? Of non-Muslims students about Islam and I want them to continue this I want them to invite non-Muslims to some Islamic activities I wish we can see a broke ground the youths can invite some groups let us say not only

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students maybe they can send invitation to organizing like for ??? Express any community or even grocery store come and visit us during ??? We have one ears activity we invite non-Muslims for ??? Is it enough I don't think so because you want to know how our culture is yes it is nice to invite them and nice facility but they would like to come visit us also to see our culture our small community our small ??? or our house that when they learned more about Islam

Sharif Rashad: As we search wrap up things review is there anything else you like to share with us

Dr. Hani Rashed: Yes I wanted to ask the youth

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as while as the adults to have a good communication between each other and try to interact with each other try to learn from the experience of the elder this program is wonderful why because you will learn from the experience of the elder at one point you will hear some stories it will leave a very long lasting impression in your personality I may be not the right person maybe another one you will found one

story the way he talks it will nice impact long impression in your and you will build your future correctly because as a Muslim after youths you are struggling now which group you want to be involve ways

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is the one next to you sitting in the class next to you or the one sitting in the ??? Away from you struggling between the two groups but I'm telling you guys you don't have to struggle just invite them show them that you are difference why not you are different it's not bad to be different for a boy you know it want to have a girlfriend you know he should show her that he is different than the other boys something for the girl she want to have long lasting relationship with her friend she had to show her or him that she's different and the difference is the beauty because this is God creation he created our hand with different lens of fingers if he once

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to create us all of us the same with the same shape same religion it would be boring correct

Sharif Rashad: I agree

Dr. Hani Rashed: But during wisdom from that from our creation

Sharif Rashad: This program isn't only helping our generation right now but it is going to help our generation right now but it's going to help generations to come in the future

Dr. Hani Rashed: Perfect that's what we need because ??? My work is ??? Taught me something I have to build the first step or to be involve with one step of development of our community you can't do it by yourself one hand can't clap you have to have someone else to want to help you and help the next one to continue your search so whenever you boot foundation for your

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research definitely not be accurate or be complete 100% from the first day so try to build up and this is the message you can give it to the next group who come after you tell them we started this it's your project now step back and show them that they have the room to involved develop and continue

Sharif Rashad: Again I would like to thank you for your time being here with us I appreciate

Dr. Hani Rashed: I'm glad you started to think about project like this it's wonderful but it is not the end try to be involved in the community activities try to organize more activities more interaction go and fulfill the trips sometimes here and there go for

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volunteering job and show the others non-Muslim while as Muslims that you are active in the community