



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Senator Cooney, Leaders of Rochester's Muslim Community, Host 2nd Annual Community Iftar During Ramadan

JEREMY COONEY March 21, 2025

| ISSUE: [RAMADAN](#)



(ROCHESTER, NY) - Last night, **Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester)** and members of Rochester's Muslim community celebrated Ramadan together with a free community iftar dinner hosted by Senator Cooney at Edgerton R-Center.

"This community iftar was a chance to give back to our Muslim community, as well as an opportunity to educate the rest of the community on the significance of Ramadan to our

neighbors,” said **Senator Cooney**. “It was a pleasure to host this dinner for the 2nd straight year, honor those making a difference in the community, and gather during this special time of reflection and spiritual healing. For all who celebrate, Ramadan Mubarak!”

Murat Al, President of the Turkish Cultural Center of Rochester said, “We are grateful for sharing our Ramadan Iftar Dinner with friends in Rochester. Ramadan is indeed a special time for self-reflection, gratitude, and strengthening bonds with others. It is a full month-long self rehabilitation in which we improve spiritually as we fast, realize blessings around us and increase our gratitude to Allah. We hope this gathering will help build good relations within the community that will strengthen peace and mutual understanding in every aspect. Thank you Senator Cooney for facilitating this gathering and joining us.”

During this year’s celebration, Senator Cooney honored those making a difference in the Muslim Community.

A New York State Commendation was awarded to Mohamed Omar. Since 1996, Mohamed has opened his home as a center of assistance for Somali refugees, helping them navigate critical services such as obtaining DSS assistance and securing housing. His efforts have been instrumental in ensuring that countless individuals and families have the resources and guidance they need to build stable, fulfilling lives. Mohamed has also been a vital asset to Barakah Muslim Charities, where he has played a key role in assisting community members with passports and immigration matters.

A New York State Empire Award was given to A&S Express Auto, operating for the past five years as both a repair shop but also a place of support for newly arrived refugees. Founded by a new American from Morocco, A&S has gone above and beyond to ensure that

individuals, especially refugees who may be unfamiliar with the process of car ownership and maintenance in the U.S., receive fair pricing, reliable service, and guidance.

A Senate Proclamation was awarded to the Rochester Firefighters Local IAFF 1071. Local 1071's Union Hall is located next to Masjid Tawfeeq of Rochester and the union has been allowing members of the Muslim community to park during times of prayer, ensuring that worshippers have a safe and accessible space to observe their religious obligations.

Ramadan is a holy month in Islam that occurs each year during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and takes place each day between sunrise and sunset. Fasts are broken after sunset with iftar dinners between family and friends. Ramadan is seen as a time for spiritual reflection with special attention to reading the Quran.

Senator Cooney organized the iftar alongside the Turkish Cultural Center of Rochester, MECA (Muslim Engagement for Civil Action), Peace Islands Institute, and Masjid Tawfeeq of Rochester. MVP Healthcare sponsored the event.

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