



Common Ground “West Bank Story” Screening

UC Davis School of Law Students Offer a Sign of Peace with a Side of Hummus

Davis, CA: The UC Davis School of Law Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA), Middle Eastern / South Asian Law Students Association (MESALSA), and Muslim Law Students Association (MLSA) continued their Common Ground series with “West Bank Story,” the 2006 Academy Award winner for Best Live Action Short Film. The short film is a parody of “West Side Story” surrounding two competing falafel stands (one Israeli, one Palestinian) in the West Bank. Student leaders decided to screen the award-winning short film because it offers something rarely seen in the world today: a message of peace for the future.

“The creators of ‘West Bank Story’ deserve high praise for creating a film that gets people to pay attention to the real need for a peaceful solution. Too many people are giving up on the Middle East peace process, believing it to be a lost cause,” explained Baraa Kahf, President of the Muslim Law Students Association at UC Davis School of Law. Kahf added, “We organized Common Ground to offer law students the chance to eat together, to laugh together, and to personally engage in the peace process.”

Kahf and other student organizers opened the room to discussion following the ‘West Bank Story’ screening. Students offered their reaction to the film itself and shared their thoughts on the role of comedy in social discourse. The UC Davis Law Students Association sponsored a falafel and hummus lunch, which was provided by Sam’s Mediterranean Cuisine, a local Davis restaurant.

The Common Ground series of events was created to build respectful relationships and constructive discussion among future leaders in the Middle East peace process. The series was designed to allow law students to learn more about the historical and modern day context of the Middle East crisis and to personally engage in a peaceful solution.

The Common Ground ‘West Bank Story’ screening was the second event in the new series. The Common Ground Tea Time kick-off event took place in mid-October and was attended by over one hundred students and faculty. Common Ground events are open to the entire UC Davis School of Law community and student organizations made a special invitation to faculty and staff.

For Spring semester, student leaders plan to invite historians and peace advocates to provide students with a historical backdrop for the Middle Eastern crisis and an analytical approach to peaceful solutions. Student leaders are hopeful that the Common Ground series will attract expert panelists of varied perspectives and backgrounds who emphasize a peaceful solution to the Middle East crisis.

For more information, please visit <http://www.law.ucdavis.edu/news/event.aspx?id=1517>.