

Julie Dachtler

From: Faten Rocha <fatenrocha@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 6:05 AM
To: Clerkoftheboard
Subject: Resolution for ceasefire

My name is Faten Rocha. I am a Woodland constituent and taught in WJUSD for over a decade at multiple sites, (WHS, LMS, and Beamer). I have and continue to serve Woodland. I am of Palestinian descent and above all, I am a human being. Please help save innocent lives, especially those of innocent children. Please support a ceasefire resolution.

My background drew me to Woodland. My ancestors in Palestine were dispersed before the 1967 war. My parents ended in Honduras, where I was born and thus my first language is Spanish. My uncle landed in California and brought my family over. My immigrant experience led me to want to work with other immigrants and I chose WJUSD because of their large English language learner population. I started in 1996 as a mentor to at risk students at LMS. Then a teacher assistant at DMS. Upon my completion of my credential, I became a teacher at WHS. I left for maternity leave and returned to work at LMS and Beamer meanwhile continuing to contribute to the community as PTA Treasurer at Beamer Park Elementary School, as soccer and volleyball coach at YMCA and by providing tutoring to WJUSD students in need for no fee.

I care about residents in Woodland and everywhere. And as Martin Luther King said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." And right now, there is an injustice occurring in Gaza. I have been to Palestine and witnessed with my own eyes the discrimination on other Palestinians. My USA passport shielded me from this discrimination...but not the lack of water and having to pass through the checkpoints as my family lives enclosed by the Separation Wall, (which is a violation of international law according to the United Nations). My own family has been subject to humiliation, segregation and injustice. Whether it is through long interrogations, harassment at checkpoints from a pregnant cousin to elderly aunt trying to pass through to receive medical care, or from being denied crossing at all. Before the implementation of the barriers, my mom would reach the town by walking. Because of the barriers, a short distance can now take hours. Even the nice roads are segregated banning Palestinians from using them. The Palestinians are treated as lower class and their rights are denied. They have dreams like everyone else. They simply want to live in peace and dignity. They want to live free from oppression, free from segregation, free from homes being demolished, free from raids, free from being forced from their homes, free from gate closures so kids can go to school and adults to work, free from starvation, free from bombs, and instead have the right to exist.

My family are good people. We are not subhuman. We are not animals. We are not people of the dark. Collective punishment is wrong. One war crime does not justify another war crime. Growing up I learned about the Holocaust. I cried at such crimes against humanity and wondered how this could happen. How could the world turn its backs. And now I am seeing it. But I cannot turn my back. I refuse to stay silent. As a WJUSD teacher, we were trained about bullying and instilled in all our students to be upstanders not bystanders. We must always do everything possible to prevent injustice to anyone. People are dying every day from US bombs provided by our tax dollars. Over 25,000 people have been killed in Gaza. Please be an upstander. I urge you to enact a resolution for a ceasefire.

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