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MUSLIM STUDENTS AT RICHLAND INSPIRED BY RAMADAN TO HELP FEED, CLOTHE THE HOMELESS

Muslim students at Richland College have enlisted the help of fellow students, faculty and staff as well as local businesses to raise money for the homeless by "going hungry" on Nov. 13.

The Muslim Student Association is collecting pledges for a Fast-A-Thon to benefit The Family Place, a local charity that provides emergency shelter, food, education and child care for victims of family violence.

The idea for the Fast-A-Thon was inspired by the observance of Ramadan, which began on Oct. 27. During Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food and drink during daylight hours as an act of submission, solidarity and remembrance. One of the main reasons for fasting is to call attention to those who go hungry every day, not as an exercise of religious expression, but as a fact of life.

Muslim Student Association sponsor Lamont Slater said that by fasting, students get a "minor sense of what the homeless and hungry go through." The students decided to ask their fellow Richland Thunderducks "to go hungry one day so that someone else won't have to."

After dark on Nov. 13, the MSA will host a cultural meal for those who fasted. The dinner will be at 5:30 p.m. in the student lounge in El Paso Hall of Richland College, 12800 Abrams Road in Dallas.

Richland's Fast-A-Thon is part of an initiative by MSAs at universities and colleges across the United States and Canada. This is the second Fast-A-Thon. Last year, more than 30 MSAs hosted Fast-A-Thons with more than 30,000 people participating.

For information about Richland College, contact Jenni Smith at 972-238-6022. For information about the national Fast-A-Thon initiative, contact Shaheen Kazi at 703-820-7900 or visit www.fast-a-thon.org.

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