

10-2013

# Feeling Welcomed and Empowered: A Formula of Success

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## Recommended Citation

Nawar, Essraa, "Feeling Welcomed and Empowered: A Formula of Success" (2013). *Library Presentations, Posters, and Videos*. Paper 4.  
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# Feeling Welcomed and Empowered: A Formula of Success

## **Comments**

Presented at Temple Judea of Laguna Hills, Laguna Hills, California.

# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*

***Essraa Nawar, MBA***

***Assistant to the Dean for  
Communications and External Relations  
Chapman University***

***December 4, 2013***

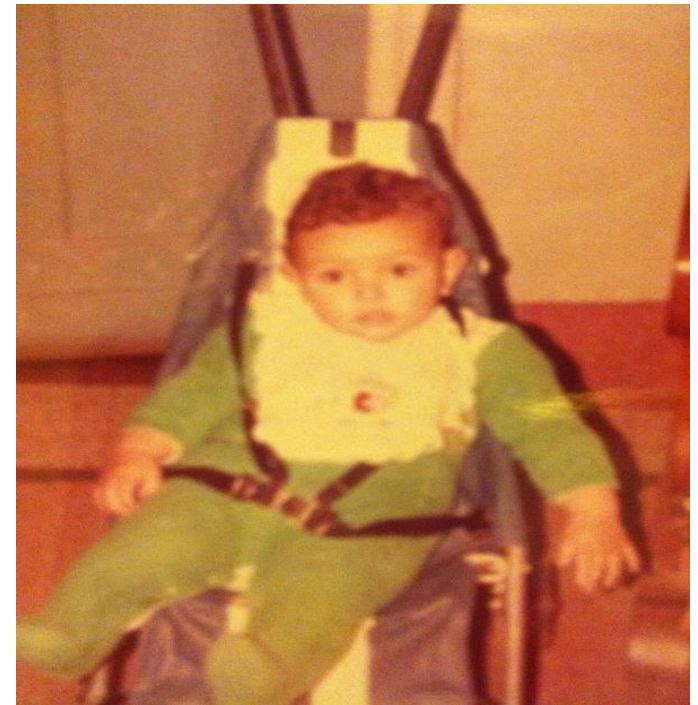
***Temple Judea***

***Laguna Woods, CA***

# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*



- \* Introduction and Background
- \* Timeline
  - \* 1981: Egypt and family background



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- \* 1982 – 1996 : Living in Doha, Qatar (Gulf Area)
  - \* What I learned



- \* 1996- 2002 : Moved back to Alexandria for High School and College



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## **2002 BIG CHANGES**

- \* Corneal ulcer: The Faith test
- \* Destiny and fate
- \* Getting Married
- \* Getting ready for the big move...
- \* 9/11 and Family fears



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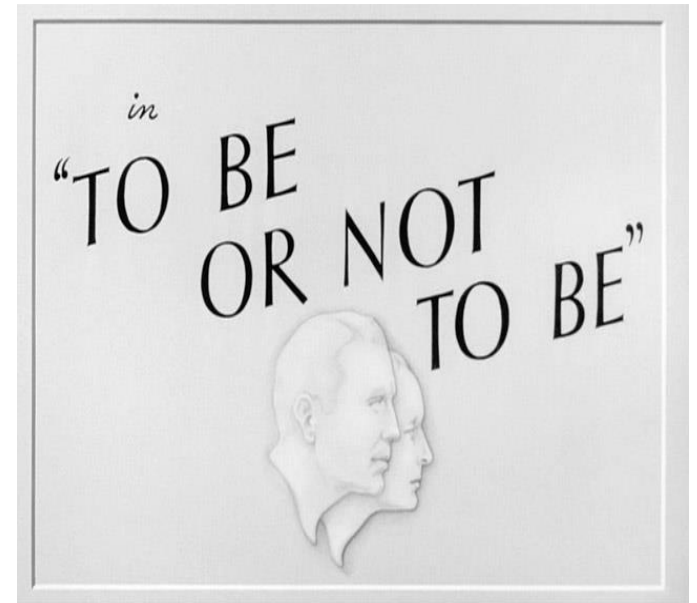
- \* Moving to Virginia, USA

- \* Two options

- \* To be or not to be!!

But the Goal is:

**SUCCESS**



# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*

- \* Job offer
  - \* The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Washington, D.C.
- \* Education
  - \* MBA
  - \* CPA and examinations!
- \* kids



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**A  
positive attitude  
will get  
you  
anywhere !**

# MISCONCEPTIONS



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## **2005 – 2009 Alexandria, Egypt**

- \* Back to Egypt
- \* Job Offer
  - \* The great Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina)



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**2008**

**Another Big Change!**

**Chapman University offer  
+  
Orange County, California**



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- \* Getting ready for another big move...
- \* Relocation
- \* Quitting my job at the Bibliotheca
- \* New baby
- \* Get out there!
  - \* Volunteering....

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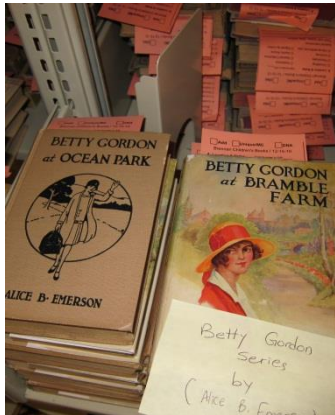
**“AFRAID OF CHANGE?  
THEN FAIL.”**

**- ROBERT KIYOSAKI**



# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*

Paging through generations of children's literature one book at a time



# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*

- \* Job offer
  - \* Chapman University, Leatherby Libraries
- \* The first and the only Full-time Hijabi employee in the organization
- \* Challenges or problems (??)
  - \* NONE/Never!!
  - \* Why?
    - \* I chose to embrace and be positive.
- \* Do I get Questions
  - \* Yes!! Funny ones!!



# Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success

Don't follow the  
crowd...



... and be no one  
but YOURSELF.

## Motto

- \* Dare to be different
- \* use this difference in a positive way
- \* Chapman University's interdisciplinary and accepting culture

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY  
LEATHERBY LIBRARIES

Cordially invites you and your guests to



Reception and Program  
March 14, 2012  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

# FIRST PROJECT



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**Commitment  
to interfaith  
Dialogue**

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**Commitment  
to interfaith  
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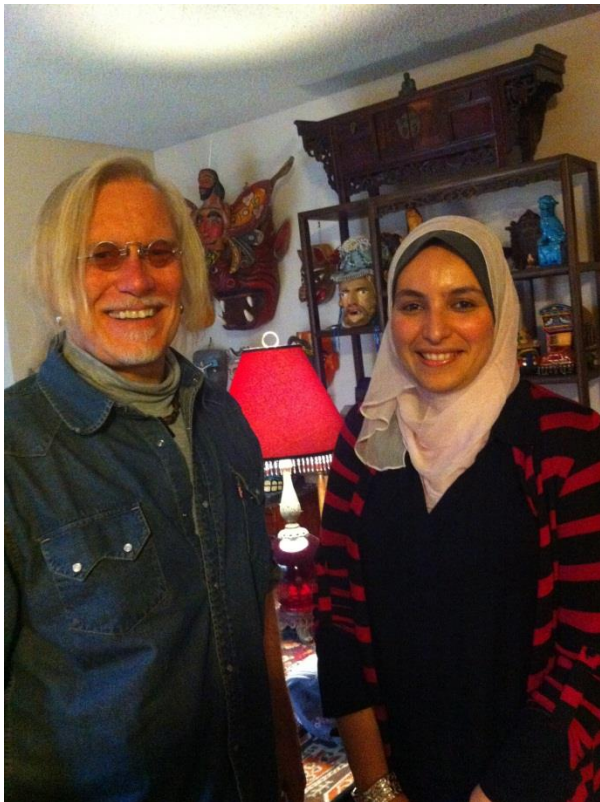


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## **Commitment to Diversity and open Dialogues**





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- Employee Star Award at the library
- Nominated to the Chancellor's Distinguished Staff Award

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## **How else can I use my abilities?**

- \* International Students on campus
- \* Interfaith center
- \* Collaboration with Arabic-Speaking professors and students
  - \* Paper on lack of leadership and critical pedagogy in Egypt
- \* Muslim Student Association (MSA)
- \* Senior thesis interviews and mentoring
- \* Educate students about Islam and Muslim women

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**Speaking to the international Law school students at Chapman Law School**

# Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success





# *Feeling welcomed and empowered: Formula for success*

## **Formula for success: Having a Different perspective....**

- \* Having fun!
- \* Explore and embrace the culture
- \* Embed yourself into the society
  - \* Kids
- \* Keeping my identity and staying true to myself
- \* Make my family proud
- \* Education and working hard
- \* Employ your abilities and differences



## GUEST COLUMN

# Feeling welcome in U.S.

For the past 10 or 15 years, Muslim women around the globe have been trying hard to erase the misconceptions that people have toward both Islam and women in Islam.

They have traveled and spoken out, held high positions,

served in and run governments, raised amazing kids, became doctors, architects, engineers, musicians, etc.



**ESSRAA  
NAWAR**  
CHAPMAN  
UNIVERSITY

But even though Muslim women were empowered more than 1,400 years ago with rights to education, inheritance and the freedom of marriage and divorce, the world wanted some proof and validation to this.

These women's efforts were not only focused on showing examples of powerful Muslim women from the early times of Islam, but also making sure that this



FILE PHOTO: ROD VEAL, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

**Muslim women were empowered with rights more than 1,400 years ago, according to Essraa Nawar.**

## Essraa Nawar

Essraa Nawar is the assistant to the dean for communications and external relations at Chapman University's Leatherby Libraries. Born in Egypt, she received her bachelor's degree in commerce with an

ty. When I first moved to California, I told myself, "Let me just not assume that things will remain this way." I was a little bit anxious when I first moved.

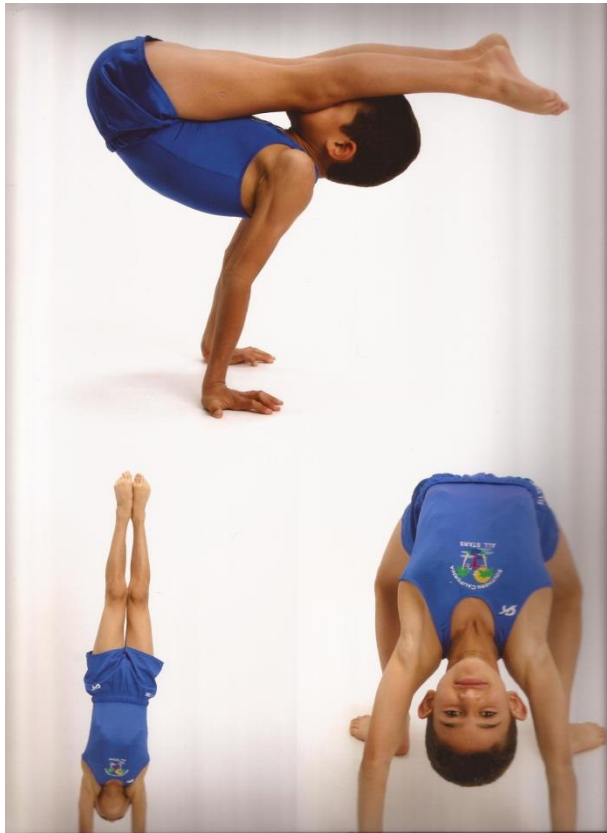
But as it happened, I got a full-time job as the assistant to the dean for communications and external relations at Chapman's Leatherby Libraries. For three years I have been the only

tions" have been slightly erased. Although we are not there yet, we have crossed a long road and it seems like we are about to hit the finish line very soon. In fact, we should never finish. We have to always have those open lines of communications, understanding and conversations. The best way to know somebody is to really to talk to him or her, visit, hang out together, ask questions and explore different things.

When I joined Chapman University, the first project I worked on was an event related to Jewish heritage, which turned out to be a great success. On that day after the event, I ran into one of the attendees in the elevator who looked at me and said, "This is quite interesting, a Muslim woman working in a university established by Protestants, organizing a Jewish event." He said it all. This is the United States, the home of everyone, and I wish that more and more people living in this country embraced this.



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**For everybody else**

We are cool, we are nice....we even do boogie boarding!!!



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Please help yourself to a copy of  
my Orange County Register  
Article dated October 7, 2013



~ شکرا ~

Thank you

תודה רבה  
Toda raba!

*This presentation is dedicated to my beloved dad may he rest in peace and to the love of my life - my husband and soul mate **Hesham El-Askary***

ANY  
QUESTIONS  
?