

May 14, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter regarding Raquel Saraswati. She has given me permission to share my experiences and perspective given what has occurred.

I am making this statement as a Neurosurgeon who has known Ms. Saraswati for over 15 years. I have witnessed her in both personal and professional settings. From my very first experience and to this day, Raquel has been absolutely consistent in her presentation as a woman of color, with her deep and abiding Muslim faith, and in the expression and actions supporting her value systems. There has never been a single instance in which I have ever had any reason to doubt the veracity of the person she is and presents herself to be. In fact, I hesitate to use the terminology "presents herself" as the implication is that the outward facing Raquel is somehow different from the genuine person. I can definitively state that the inside matches the outside.

I have found her to be a kind, gentle, honest, direct person. She has an incredible work ethic and is unerringly dedicated to human rights, women's rights, the peaceful practice of Islam, and diversity, equity, and inclusion both professionally and in her personal life. She has the courage to speak up against injustice even when it comes at deep personal expense. She has spent her career professionally working to further these values and create workspaces that are equitable, inclusive, and fair to all. She has spent countless personal hours working tirelessly to further these same values in her community and I have personally witnessed the profound positive effects of her work.

Over the past year and a half there have been blatant attacks on her personal character in traditional media and social media locally, nationally, and worldwide. The statements in the media have been a combination of salacious accusations with no objective proof that they are true; and malicious distortions and reckless manipulations of the truth. The result, as is often the case with irresponsible reporting, has been devastating to her personal and professional life. These stories have resulted in the most heinous vitriol being hurled at her including threats to her very life.

As a result of these accusations, she was threatened, blackmailed, hacked, surveilled, and lost her position costing her immeasurable financial loss.

I have personally seen extensive objective proof refuting these allegations. This data includes records, communications, and medical information that she may not wish to share publicly. Imagine just the idea of having to "prove" one's race or "prove" one is "Muslim enough" or "Christian enough" or "gay enough" or "straight enough". The mere idea is not only degrading but to do so feeds into the narrative that anyone even has the right to this information.

I have never met someone who in the face of the deepest personal anguish, had the courage of conviction to continue to fight for the values and principles she believes in; someone who continues to put others best interests above her own to do the right thing and stand up for the rights of all humans regardless of race, religion, orientation, or personal beliefs. I have never met someone who in the face of such hatred, remained genuine and who has not allowed the personal attacks to harden her heart. She remains one of the kindest, most genuine humans I have ever met.

It appears that history is repeating itself and the attacks continue. Those who are desperate and/or morally bankrupt will grasp at any low hanging fruit available to them regardless of its veracity in an effort to further their own cause. This cannot continue to be entertained.

For years she has made a positive impact in the communities and organizations she has touched. It is not hyperbole to say that this world is a better place in both big and small ways because of Raquel and her work. We need her desperately in this time and place.

She deserves kindness and respect and she has earned the support of those whose lives she has changed for the better. "We know better so we must be better."

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