

Nura Bawab

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SPEAKERS

Nura Bawab, Rimsha Syed



Rimsha Syed 00:03

Hi, this is Rimsha Syed with the Institute for diversity and Civic Life. The date is January 18, 2022, and I'm here on a Zoom call with Nura Bawab for the Voices of Change oral history project. Nura, hello, how are you?



Nura Bawab 00:21

Hi, I'm doing well. How are you?



Rimsha Syed 00:24

Good, good. Can you start by introducing yourself, and also telling us where in Texas you're joining the call from today?




Nura Bawab 00:32

Yes, so my name is Nura Bawab, and I am a fifth year advertising and textiles and apparel major at UT Austin. I am Palestinian and Ecuadorian, and I am currently joining the call from Austin as well.



Rimsha Syed 00:54

Great. So I want to start off by thinking way back in time. Can you share a little about your childhood and your upbringing, and any formative experiences that come to mind in that timeframe?



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Nura Bawab 01:09

Yeah, I guess just generally, with my childhood, I think my sisters have always been my best friends, you could say. We've always had this really strong close relationship. By the way, I'm the youngest, and I have two older sisters. But everything my sisters have done, has always shaped my life, and it's always influenced me. So I guess in that sense, my sisters have just always been there for me and everything. I think something major about my childhood aside from my sisterhood and all of that stuff, is also growing up in a multicultural and multi-religious household. Like I mentioned earlier, my dad is Palestinian, and my mom is Ecuadorian, and my dad is Muslim, and my mom is Christian. So growing up in that household, I think, is probably one of the biggest things that shaped my life and the way that I was growing up. So yeah, I guess to give a background of what it was like growing up in a multicultural household, it was definitely very cool. Always being able to have my mom's side of the family and getting to experience my Latina side and my Latin culture, and then also with my dad's side always getting to go to Amman in Jordan and visit his family, and getting just two bits of the world into my life. So I think that was something that I'm really, really grateful for.

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Nura Bawab 03:01

But whenever I was younger, I didn't really necessarily see it that way. Whenever I was growing up, it was, I guess, a little difficult for me to feel the strong cultural attachment to either of my cultures, because in the household, the common language was English because that's how my parents talked to each other. So growing up, I think I was very westernized, in a sense, and I didn't really see a strong identity to any of my cultures. I think ultimately, growing up in a multicultural household, because I didn't have a strong attachment to any language or any one culture, I felt like I didn't belong in either of them. Then I felt this sense of westernization and wanting to be quote, unquote, "normal" in the western society growing up and wanting to fit in with people at my school and things like that. That's kind of how I grew up, and I think that also affected, I guess, my personality as well. Whenever I was a child, I was very shy, and I think it was because of that insecurity of my identity. Yeah, so I think that's just something that really shaped who I was back then. But also as I grew up, and as I contemplated and reflected on my identities and what makes me, me, and what it means to be part of one culture, I think that that ultimately brought me to become who I am today, and what makes me so passionate about on both my cultures and everything that I guess I stand for now.



Rimsha Syed 05:07

Yeah, thank you so much for sharing that. Do you remember much about your parents' migration stories and how they met or ended up in Texas?

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Nura Bawab 05:18

Yeah, so I know a little bit. I feel like this is something with all children of immigrants, is that you always find out different things here and there, and you never hear the full story all at once. I feel like in this part of my life it's something that I'm still figuring out. I think just generally, my mom - my mom is the youngest of nine kids, and she and my grandma, they lived in Ecuador for a good amount of time. Then, once she was an early teenager, they moved to New York in order to live with one of her older brothers. Then from there, they went back to

Ecuador for a couple years. Ultimately, they both went to Florida. That was around whenever my mom was seventeen, eighteen, and she went to school here in the US. I think the major reason why they came here was for my mom's education.

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Nura Bawab 06:29

Same for my dad, well, not really same. He grew up in Saudi, so my dad never lived in Palestine. My grandparents, they were the ones that lived in Palestine, and then they were displaced a couple years before the Nakba in 1948. They first lived in Jordan, but then they stayed in Saudi. So my dad, he has Jordanian citizenship, or he had Jordanian citizenship. Then eventually, he grew up most of his life in Saudi, and then him and his brothers came, they went to Florida as well in order to get an education. So they met in school in Florida, and then from there, I don't know too much of the in between, but at some point, they moved to Texas. Yeah, that's how they got here.



Rimsha Syed 07:30

Yeah, so do you have a lot of family here in Texas or in the States?

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Nura Bawab 07:39

From my mom's side, not many in Texas. Actually, from either my mom and dad's side, there's not many of them in Texas. But on my mom's side, all of them are in the US. So most of them are living in Florida, a couple in New York, and then my mom is the only one in Texas. And then on my dad's side, he only actually has one brother here in Texas, and then the rest are dispersed. He has a sibling in Jordan, and he has another sibling in Saudi, and he has another sibling in Canada, so they're everywhere.



Rimsha Syed 08:18

That makes sense. That's kind of the same with me. Earlier, you mentioned that you live in not only multicultural, but a multi-religious household, and I am curious about what that was like for you. Did your family celebrate both Christmas and Eid, or one or the other? And where are you with your personal relationship with religion at this point?

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Nura Bawab 08:48

Yes, that's actually a really good question. So growing up, it was definitely a mixture of both religions. Well, my parents, I guess before they had kids - and this is something that my mom has told me - they decided that they would raise us Muslim. That was just a decision that they had both come to make. But as we grew up, whenever we were younger, we did celebrate Eid, and we also would do Christmas. My dad wouldn't really participate or anything, but he wouldn't mind that we would put up a Christmas tree, that we would exchange gifts, and all of that stuff. As for other aspects of religion, we never went to a church. I don't think I ever remember my mom ever taking us to a church or anything like that.

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Nura Bawab 09:50

Every now and then, it wasn't anything super like often, but my dad would take us to the mosque every now and then. But it wasn't anything - I feel like that you see a lot of Muslim kids growing up going to Islamic school or anything like that. It was just going to the mosque for Iftar sometimes or going for Friday prayer. Just going here and there. I think also as we got older, it was a little difficult to take us to the masjid, because of the gender separation. So since my mom wasn't Muslim, then my dad, he would be the one bringing us, then I guess we would just disperse and my dad would be on the men's side. Then me and my sisters, we would all just be on the women's side. I guess there was a lack of parental overseeing, right, like a parent overseeing us at the masjid. Aside from that, as we did get older, because we were raised Muslim, I think me and my sisters, we did start to lean more towards Islam, but I think to a very light extent. It wasn't a strong draw to our religion, I think it was just this is how we were raised.

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Nura Bawab 11:30

As we got older, I would say teenage years, we kind of stopped celebrating Christmas. We would still get my mom gifts and stuff like that, but it wasn't anything super major. We stopped decorating the Christmas tree and things like that. The biggest thing that we would do is probably go to visit my aunt. Me and my sisters and my mom, we would go to New York and visit my aunt, and we would celebrate over there. But yeah, I think as of now, it's just more of a Muslim dominant household. Rather than a Christian one or a mixed one at this point.



Rimsha Syed 12:14

Wow, that's really fascinating. Also, out of curiosity, did you and your sisters - I guess you can't speak for your sisters - but did you ever feel conflicted between the two cultures and religions?

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Nura Bawab 12:33

I don't think so. At least on my behalf, I don't think I did. Honestly, Christianity was never anything that I really thought about too much. I guess in a sense of which religion to choose from, I guess I never thought of Christianity that way. I think again, that was because of my upbringing and Islam being the way that we were taught growing up. Yeah, so I don't think that really ever came into question. I think that sometimes though, I would - again, this would tie into cultural things as well, and wanting to be westernized and feel that sense of belonging with Western culture growing up. But I think sometimes I would be ashamed of being Muslim because it wasn't something big that you would see in the school or there wasn't a large Muslim community at the school that I would go to, or anything like that. So I think that sometimes it was just I would feel a little ashamed, as sad as that is. But yeah, I think that's where I stood with it as a child.



Rimsha Syed 13:55

Right. So you talked to me a little bit about being shy when you were younger. I was wondering if you could talk more about your schooling experience through grade school, elementary, middle, high school. What are your memories of that like, and did you have a favorite subject or a favorite teacher?

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Nura Bawab 14:23

Let me think. Well, some of the biggest things that I remember in elementary school is that my mom, at that time, she was a substitute. She substituted for a really long portion of my life. A lot of times she would substitute at the school that I went to, and so I think that's something that shaped my childhood as well because I always knew that if I ever got in trouble about anything, my mom was right down the hallway, so I was like, "Hmm, let me think twice before I do something dumb." That's one big part of my grade school experience. But aside from that, favorite subjects, honestly I did really like math. I think I was definitely a math kid whenever I was growing up. Then aside from that, I joined orchestra in fifth grade. That was something really fun and different that I was part of that I really, really enjoyed as well. I feel like from orchestra, I found a smaller sense of community and friendships through music.



Rimsha Syed 15:52

Yeah. Shifting gears here just a little, I was curious about at what point in your life do you feel like you started becoming more politically aware? I'm curious if it was your dad or your dad's side of the family that introduced you to what was going on in Palestine or ever talked about the Nakba within your household.

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Nura Bawab 16:23

Yeah, so surprisingly, actually no. We never really talked about the Nakba. My dad never really mentioned Palestine to us to the point where growing up, honestly, I didn't even know I was Palestinian. I remember the moment that I guess I came to that realization. It was one time, I don't remember how old I was, but I think I would say junior high. My family, we all went on a camping trip or something with my uncle and the rest of our family. It was just, I guess, a reunion type of thing. My dad and my uncle, they were arguing about something. I don't know. They were talking in Arabic, and I didn't understand. But after that whole argument, I remember my uncle, he had asked me, he was like, "Hey, whenever people ask you what you are, where your family's from, what do you tell them?" And I was like, "Oh, I say that my mom is from Ecuador, and that my dad is Jordanian." And he started laughing at me. And he was like, "No, we're not Jordanian, we're Palestinian." And I was just like, "What?" And I was really confused.

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Nura Bawab 17:51

Yeah, so I think that was that was a little turning point in my life, because that was the first time, honestly, that anyone had really told me about my identity and that I was Palestinian. I think that that goes to show Palestine, especially at that time, it was just a very taboo topic, and it was even to the point where my dad didn't even want to talk to us about it. I think it also

goes to show the effects that displacement has on Palestinian identities, because I think for some people - for all Palestinians, it looks different. For some Palestinians, displacement gives this stronger sense of identity to the point where it's always in everybody's faces, but to other people, displacement really separates you from the culture and really makes you feel isolated. I think that's kind of how my dad was. He didn't feel this strong sense of identity, because he never grew up in Palestine. He never felt that strong sense of being a Palestinian, because he never grew up there. I guess he grew up in the culture, but maybe he just never really thought too much about it.



Rimsha Syed 19:20

Right, so I'm assuming that growing up, you weren't necessarily surrounded by a Palestinian community. But I feel like that's changed a little bit since you've gone to college and joined PSC.



Nura Bawab 19:38

Yeah. I guess that leads to the second part of the question that you asked. Yeah, so we grew up in Arlington, Texas, and there actually is a pretty decently sized Palestinian community there. But like you said, we didn't really grow up in it or alongside it. My dad wasn't really - again, he didn't really feel that connection. I don't know, he wasn't really friends with the Palestinians in Arlington or in the DFW area. So again, that affected the way I saw our culture and the way I interacted with being Palestinian as well. Whenever I came to Austin, my sister was actually a senior whenever I was a freshman, and so whenever I got here, she had already known about PSC, and she was already pretty much a strong member of PSC and everything. So she was the one that would really encourage me to go to PSC events. Oh, and PSC, by the way, stands for Palestine Solidarity Committee, which is an organization here at UT Austin. So she would always encourage me to go to their events and stuff with her because I didn't really know many people in Austin, and she was my main person here whenever I first got here. I was like, "Okay, whatever, I'll just go with her."



Nura Bawab 21:21

Yeah, so that really started to make me question my identity and made me question how political my identity is. I guess from there, all of the strings started to tie together. Again, that also goes back to the point of my sisters having such a strong influence on my life. Because everything they learned, we would always talk about, or anything new that they had in their life, they would always share it with me. So whenever my sister started learning about Palestine, or whenever she started learning about our culture, she started to pass that down to me and my other sister. Honestly, yeah, it was something that was much needed, because that was something that my dad or my parents never really did to us so discreetly. So then once we started to go to PSC events together, it all just started tying together.



Nura Bawab 22:35

I don't know, I guess I started feeling that strong sense of identity. I don't know, I guess, I had

been in the dark for a while, for a long time, actually. For my entire childhood. Just reflecting on why that was, it really angered me. It's not my dad's fault. I mean, yeah, he didn't feel that strong sense of culture, but at the same time, it's ultimately not his fault. At the end of the day, I realized how strongly tied my identity was to politics, and it was something that I didn't want to just stand idle to, and so from that moment forward, I realized how important it was to educate myself and continue to grow my knowledge in both of my cultures and to see how the ethnic cleansing and state of Israel has been robbing that from me. Then yeah, from there, it just started to grow and grown to who I am now.



Rimsha Syed 24:01

Thanks for sharing that. Sounds like quite a journey. I should mention that Nura and I do know each other from PSC, but I joined much later. I wanted to ask, in your words, how would you describe the vision behind PSC and some of the goals that the organization has?



Nura Bawab 24:23

Yeah, so I think the biggest thing about PSC is we're an organization that ultimately, our main goal is to spread awareness of the Palestinian cause on campus and ultimately to challenge Israel's ongoing settler-colonial project, and how that's connected to the displacement of Palestinians and the robbing of our culture, and all of that stuff. Aside from that main mission, I think other other parts that have been really important to me - it's been the fact that PSC has also been this hub that really centered uplifting Palestinian and Arab voices. Although it's not a Palestinian-only organization, I think that that prioritization was really important. It was really important for me because, again, I didn't know enough, or I felt like I didn't know enough. I didn't know a lot about my culture, and I didn't know a lot about Palestine and the politics behind it. Growing up, having other Palestinians explain it all to me, was something that really formulated my way of thinking and my want to be involved politically in the Palestinian cause. That's something that I always think about, and something that I want to always continue to do with other people who may be new to PSC, or to other people who are just starting to, I guess, enhance their political ideology on Palestine.



Rimsha Syed 26:22

Right. So I know that as an organizer, no day or political campaign looks the same. Do you have any formative stories to share, or maybe even what a day in the life as someone in PSC would look like for you?



Nura Bawab 26:44

Yeah, let me think for a second. I think a formative story would definitely be a retreat that I went on. I think it was 2019 or 2020, something like that. But it was a winter retreat put on by the Palestinian Youth Movement. Essentially, they had called on students and younger people who are getting into organizing to join them for this retreat. They did a lot of political education and workshops and stuff at the retreat, and also just a lot of bonding activities for us to be part of and get to know each other. And this was a Texas-wide thing. So it wasn't just Austin students

or anything like that. It was students from UT Dallas, students from the University of Houston and A&M, and so it was really a Texas-wide thing. So I think that that was something that really formulating my political thought as well.

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Nura Bawab 28:03

Also, I think, something that I really got from that retreat was that one member had told me that - so I guess, for some context, she was she was part of PSC right before I had joined, whenever I had joined PSC, and whenever I had first started to come to UT Austin, and then she graduated. So I knew her, but we didn't know each other too well, or anything like that. But she would always ask me about how PSC is doing and things like that, because, again, she was a steering member, and I think once you start organizing with PSC, it's something that you always care about. It's kind of a part of you. I was telling her about it, and how a lot of us who were the ones leading PSC, we were very new members, and it was really hard to navigate and things like that. And something that she told me that I think really pushed me forward to keep on going was that sometimes we have to be a leader even if we feel like we aren't the one to lead.

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Nura Bawab 29:30

That was just something that really always stuck with me because I think from that moment, 'til previously before then, I never really saw myself as a true leader, and I think a lot of us on PSC, we didn't see ourselves as the leader of PSC. So that specific conversation really pushed me to be like, "Okay, I might not see myself as a leader, but that's something that can change. That's something that I can work towards." And obviously, I'm going to make mistakes along the way, but this is something that I want to do, and this is something that I want to be better at, and something that I want to grow in. So with growth, obviously, it takes hardship. So I just kept on practicing and practicing, and even if I didn't know what I was doing, or if I made mistakes or anything, I still kept on pushing myself, because I believed in myself. I don't know, I guess I could see that other people believed in me as well.



Rimsha Syed 30:48

Yeah, sounds like that retreat was very eye-opening. Thanks for sharing that experience with me. For the record, I think you're a great leader.

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Nura Bawab 30:58

Thank you.



Rimsha Syed 31:00

How did your dad end up reacting to you being involved in Palestinian organizing?

N**Nura Bawab 31:08**

I feel like to this day, he doesn't know. Excuse me. My voice is a little raspy. But I feel like to this day, my dad actually doesn't know how involved I am. I don't think he knows. Yeah, I don't think he knows how much I do with PSC. It's not something that I technically would say I avoid talking to him about, but I think it's just something that doesn't really come up in conversations. He just knows that I'm always in a lot of meetings and stuff. I think he does know it's for PSC, but again, it's not something that he's entirely aware of, how deeply entrenched I am in it now. So yeah, I haven't really ever gotten any type of major reactions from him. It's never been anything negative, but it's also never been anything super encouraging, like, "You're doing something great," or whatever, which would be nice to hear, but again, he's not very political in that sense. So it's not something that I really expect from him. So yeah, I think just overall, it's just like he knows it's there, but it's not something that he comments on, but it's not something he looks down upon, either.

**Rimsha Syed 32:35**

Right. I think that's actually a pretty common experience with immigrant parents.

N**Nura Bawab 32:43**

Yeah, yeah, I think so too. Yeah, I think with my mom, I don't know. I think that her opinion on it is a little different. I think she definitely knows more about it than my dad, because I don't know, maybe I talk to her a little more, and she knows I'll be going to Austin to help organize a protest. I'm transparent to her about it. I don't lie to either of them about it, but I guess my mom just asks more questions than my dad. So yeah, but I think sometimes my mom does get a little worried about it. I think she does know that it can be a little bit dangerous, so she worries a little bit. And sometimes, I think she does think that sometimes I care too much about it in her eyes. But to me that's not the case.

**Rimsha Syed 33:42**

That makes sense. Going back to your Islamic identity, would you say that religion or spirituality guides the work that you do in any capacity? Does it guide your sense of social justice or ethics?

N**Nura Bawab 33:58**

So I think now it does, but whenever I first started, it was the other way around. So whenever I had joined PSC, again, I guess I was still pretty young, and I didn't feel a strong sense of attachment to my religion. But honestly, I think organizing brought me to have a stronger sense of my religion, and I think it brought me closer to Islam, honestly. So I feel like sometimes I hear stories of it being the other way around, Islam bringing people to organizing or to politics and political work. But for me, the political work brought me to Islam, and I think throughout these years, not only have I grown in my organizing abilities, but I've grown in my connection to my religion. So now, because I guess I am more experienced than some of the

newer members and stuff. I feel like I do experience more burnout than a couple of other ones. The thing that always brings me back and that always pushes me forward now is Islam. So I think it's this really interesting cycle that I saw where it was like organizing pushed me to Islam, and now Islam pushes me to organizing whenever I feel burnout. It's just this perpetual cycle of organizing and religion. I think that also goes to show how intertwined religion is with politics. That's something that I've personally reflected on a lot about my identity and who I am now.



Rimsha Syed 35:58

Right, thanks for sharing that. What would you say are some of the biggest challenges of being Palestinian in Texas and also being so vocal about the occupation?



Nura Bawab 36:13

Yeah, I think for that, it's really just the amount of Zionists. Especially at UT's campus, I feel like there's a strong presence of Zionists. I think that definitely will have me a little anxious every now and then. Sometimes I feel like I will try to censor myself a little bit, or I'll second guess the things that I'm doing. But then I always rethink about it, and I remember why I'm doing this and that I'm on the right side of history and that what's important is that I'm fighting for what's right. Although I have my doubts, and I think everybody always has their doubts in organizing and of course, being vocal about something as political as Palestine, I think at the same time, I always ensure myself to uplift my voice, rather than to silence it. I think being part of such a strong organizing scene on campus, I think that also helps as well because you always have people who are supporting you and people who are ready to back you up and things like that. That in itself is really, really powerful and has always pushed me forward as well.



Rimsha Syed 37:43

So Nura, do you have any organizers or historical figures that you look up to? Or maybe even mentors that you've met along the way?



Nura Bawab 37:55

Hmm. Let me think for a little bit. I think in regards to historical figures, I think it always changes because there's so many historical figures that have inspired me and that honestly I'll learn about more, and then I'll just be like, "Wow, this person was such an icon." But I think somebody who I actually recently - I very recently read Malcolm X's autobiography, finally, after being on my reading list for forever. I finally read Malcolm X's autobiography. Although I knew about his life, I didn't know about it to the details that are mentioned in his book. So I think just at this very moment, Malcolm X is probably one of the biggest influences on me right now. Because that's just very freshly on my mind. I guess this this past semester and stuff, I just keep on thinking of things that I read in the book and different parts that I highlighted and underlined and stuff that are really inspiring to me. I always feel like reading about organizers and activists by autobiographies and stuff, it really always moves me in a different way.

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Nura Bawab 39:28

In regards to mentors, let me think. Honestly, I wouldn't really call them my mentors. I would just say that they're really good friends of mine, comrades. But my friends from UH and UT Dallas, I think they really, really, again, they helped push me forward a lot. I think more so in this past year, specifically during - well, actually before that as well. I think during the May uprisings. One of my friends from UH, who's part of their SJP [Students for Justice in Palestine], and then one of my friends who's the leader of the SJP in UT Dallas, I remember during the May uprisings, we would all get onto calls super late at night organizing protests for each of our different cities. So one was organizing the protests in Houston, one was organizing them Dallas, and then I was organizing them in Austin. We were just getting our materials ready for the days before the protests that we were having. They would typically all be on the same day, or around the same time frames and stuff.

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Nura Bawab 40:57

We would all be working on speeches together, we would all be working on speaker lists, emcee, security announcements, and things like that. I just remember sometimes we were staying up to 4am, just making sure everything was prepared for the protests and everything. I remember just being so exhausted, but we were all just there uplifting each other. I think that this highlights how important it is to work collectively, because if it were just me, I would have gone to sleep. I don't know if things would have gone right for some of the protests. But the fact that we had each other, and we were all working towards the same thing, I think, really, really inspired me. Every day, I see the work that they do on their campuses, and that just inspires me to push myself even more and just seeing how involved they are and how well-educated they are. It pushes me to always go further. So yeah, I think they are some my biggest influences.

**Rimsha Syed 42:20**

Yeah. One thing I like asking in these interviews, which maybe you touched on a little bit already with camaraderie, but what do you find healing through this work? What do you do when things get a bit overwhelming?

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Nura Bawab 42:44

I think one of the things I do is pray. Sometimes I won't know the answer to things, and so at that point, I just have to leave it in God's hands, and hope that God leads me in the right path. But I think, yeah, it's always looking to other people, honestly, that always helps me. Whenever things are at a low point for me, or whenever I'm not sure what to do, always asking people that I trust for their advice. Yeah, just talking with other people. It doesn't even have to be working towards the things that I'm stuck on. But just even talking about it, I think, always gives me clarity and always helps me realize, like, "Oh, this is something that I can do better," or, "This is something that I never thought about doing," or even just a new idea for a way to move forward. So I think that always having those comrades and always having those friends there. That's probably the biggest thing that pushed me and that continues to push me. Just being able to talk with my friends is probably one of the most important things that has helped me throughout my organizing life.



Rimsha Syed 44:24

More broadly speaking, what are you up to these days, and what are your goals for the future?



Nura Bawab 44:36

I guess organizing-wise, I'm still part of PSC. I recently joined the National Students for Justice in Palestine steering committee, so I've been helping out with them a lot. I actually also recently - I'm doing too much, actually - but I'm also part of the Nueces leadership as well, Nueces mosque here in Austin. I think one of my biggest goals in all of these roles right now is really expanding the reach into the Muslim community and mobilizing the Muslim community to become more organized and to become more involved in politics. So I think that's one of my biggest goals that I have for myself and in my organizing work that I do. Aside from that, I am currently doing an internship, and I will be graduating soon. I'll be graduating in May, so spring 2022. I am very, very excited to graduate. This is my fifth year, I think I mentioned that in the beginning. But I'm tired. I'm tired of school. Although I've learned a lot here, I'm ready to just be done with school and just be on my own and see where my own interest and my own path leads me.



Nura Bawab 46:28

I don't really have anything specific planned for myself work-wise. I think the plan for me right now is just to get through this internship and either see what happens after that. But ultimately, I want to take a little bit of a break. I want to take a summer off before starting my career, 'cause I know whenever I start, that's it. I'll be working forever. But yeah, I think that's where I'm at work-wise. Oh, one thing that I'm doing that I think is really cool is I got accepted by this UC Berkeley organizing committee to go on a trip to Palestine, with a bunch of organizers. A lot of them are law students, but they also opened it to Palestinian undergrad students. Yeah, so I got accepted, and I am super, super excited, because I've never been to Palestine. It's going to be the first time, and I think it's going to be such a worthwhile experience because it's not only just going to visit family or just going for fun, but there's an educational aspect to it as well. So we have reading groups, and during the trip, they're planning for us to meet some organizers, and speakers are gonna come and speak to us, and all of this stuff. So I'm really excited for that trip, and I think it's going to broaden my cultural connection to Palestine, and also just my political education as well. Yeah, that's going to be during spring break, and I'm very, very excited for it.



Rimsha Syed 48:22

Oh, my gosh, that does sound very exciting. I hope you have a really amazing trip, and personally, I can't wait to hear about it.



Nura Bawab 48:31

I'll come back with stories.



Rimsha Syed 48:33

I would love that. But I do want to be mindful of your time today. I have one last question before we sign off, and this one is a bit more open-ended. But seeing as this interview will be archived, and people might be listening to it tomorrow or several years down the line, do you have any words of wisdom or advice to impart, especially as someone who's an organizer who's had a lot of experience in movement building?



Nura Bawab 49:09

I think some advice that I would have for anybody interested would probably be to never limit yourself or to never doubt yourself, because I think a lot of us come into organizing with a bunch of doubts. Like I don't know enough, or the group that we have is not big enough to do any big campaigns, or anything. All of these things come into our mind that stop us from the work that we feel that we want to be part of. I know that's very classic and cheesy advice, but I think it's something that I really wish that I had kept in mind whenever I was younger. So yeah, I think that's something that I would definitely have as one of the biggest advice. Don't doubt yourself and always know that growth takes time and that things are gonna be frustrating. As a new organizer, or even if you're an experienced organizer, you're always gonna make mistakes. But that's okay, because again, that's how growth happens. That's how you become experienced. So I think that's the advice that I would leave off with.



Rimsha Syed 50:34

All right, lovely. Thank you so much. Thank you for this interview. I had a really great time.



Nura Bawab 50:40

Thank you.



Rimsha Syed 50:43

Cool. Well, I'll go ahead and stop the recording now.