



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Why Talk ISIS in Iowa? Exploring the meaning of True *Jihad***

*Cedar Rapids, IA, USA - Sept 1, 2017* - On September 16, speakers from the worlds of national security, education and Muslim, Christian, and civic leadership will gather in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They will discuss the true meanings of jihad as reflected in the life of Emir Abdelkader, after whom a town was named in Iowa in 1846. Considered Algeria's George Washington, this 19th century Arab scholar/warrior/statesman counted among his admirers Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, Pius IX, and captured French prisoners who had been treated with great humanity.

Abdelkader demonstrated that "true" Jihad was about the heart and the head, as well as the sword... leading Peter Maurer, President of the Int'l Red Cross to call the emir, "the undisputed leader in the codification of modern international humanitarian law."

**Abdelkader vs. ISIS: *The Many Meanings of Jihad***, this day long public forum builds on the annual Abdelkader Global Leadership Prize essay contest sponsored by the Abdelkader Education Project (AEP) and is open to high school and college students around the country. The forum honors students who have best articulated how Abdelkader's lived Islam offers an example both to leaders today and can serve as an antidote to both islamophobia and the radicalization of youth drawn to the allures of ISIS ideology.

This year AEP has added a screening of the Emmy Award-nominated video series, *The Secret Life of Muslims*, featuring a contemporary hero, a forgiving Bangladeshi-Texan who was shot in the face (and lived) by a white supremacist, yet like Emir Abdelkader, sought reconciliation with his attack

### **Topics addressed will include:**

\* Why speakers from faith communities, the security world, educators, students, writers and humanitarian leaders see Abdelkader's example as an antidote to ISIS ideology.

\* How Elkader (Iowa) got its name in 1846, becoming the launch pad for today's Abdelkader Education Project.

- \*Why a Virginia pig farmer spent eight years writing about this forgotten world here
- \* Learn why Christians name their sons “jihad.” What are the deeper meanings of Jihad?
- \*Why the Emir’s bust is in the foyer of the International Red Cross in Geneva.
- \* Learn Islamic rules of warfare that ISIS violates

**Abdelkader vs. ISIS: The Many Meanings of Jihad**

**September 16, 9:00AM to 4:00PM**

Mt. Mercy University CRST Graduate Center  
1650 Matterhorn Drive NE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa USA

<http://www.abdelkaderproject.org>