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## The Faith Line

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## The Faith Line

**12.14.2012 | Hot Topics, Students, Culture and Society, Campus and Community**

Eboo Patel, founder of a global movement promoting interfaith cooperation, will keynote the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday celebration at the University of Dayton at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 22, in the RecPlex.

The celebration will begin with short student reflections and performances. Part of the University of Dayton Speaker Series, the evening events are free and open to the public. Parking is available in C and P lots. A book signing will follow.

As founder and executive director of the Chicago-based Interfaith Youth Core, Patel encourages college students take up interfaith activism with as much passion they exhibit for environmental causes, women's rights and other issues. He has written two books about interfaith cooperation, *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* and *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America*. In 2009, he was named one of "America's Best Leaders" by *U.S. News & World Report*.

"Religious pluralism is one of the most pressing and challenging issues of our day. Addressing this in a positive way, with an intellectual, strategic and faith-full approach to interreligious cooperation, is Patel's gift and expertise. The fact that he is a really engaging and inspiring speaker whose passion is working with college students makes his visit all the more exciting for us," said Sheila Hassell Hughes, chair of the University of Dayton's English department, who directs the series.

A Muslim born in India, Patel grew up in Chicago. He has been a regular contributor to the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, National Public Radio and CNN. He served on President Barack Obama's inaugural Advisory Council of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships and holds a doctorate in the sociology of religion from Oxford University, where he studied on a Rhodes scholarship. He's received six honorary degrees.

"Interfaith cooperation should be more than five people in a book club," Patel said in a June 13, 2011, feature story in *The New York Times*. "You need a critical mass of interfaith leaders who know how to build relationships across religious divides, and see it as a lifelong endeavor."

In an interview for *U.S. News and World Report*, he talked about one of the greatest issues of our day: "Everyone in America should challenge religious prejudice just like we challenge racial and gender prejudice."

Co-sponsors for the University of Dayton Speaker Series include the *Dayton Daily News*, WDAO-Radio, YWCA Dayton, the Bob Ross Auto Group Ross and Markey's Audio Visual.

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