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At the Intersection of Faith and Politics

11.06.2008 | Culture and Society

Reza Aslan, author of *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution and Future of Islam*, and Marc Ginsberg, former U.S. ambassador to Morocco and an analyst for major television news networks, will explore the intersection of faith and politics at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 11, in the Kennedy Union Ballroom at the University of Dayton.

The talk, part of the University of Dayton's Diversity Lecture Series, is free and open to the public. Ellen Fleischmann, associate professor of history who specializes in the Mideast, will moderate

the conversation.

Ginsberg is replacing Gideon Yago, former MTV news correspondent, in the program. Yago is beginning work on a new television program on the Independent Film Channel, which goes into production next week.

An internationally acclaimed writer and scholar of religions, Aslan is a fellow at the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy and a Middle East analyst for CBS News. *No god But God*, his first book — a *New York Times* bestseller — has been translated into 13 languages, short-listed for the Guardian First Book Award in the United Kingdom and nominated for a PEN Center USA award for research nonfiction. His next book, *How to Win a Cosmic War*, is expected to be published in April 2009, followed by an edited anthology, *Words Without Borders: Contemporary Literature from the Muslim World*, due for publication in 2010.

Born in Iran, Aslan is co-founder and creative director of BoomGen Studios, a hub for creative content from and about the Middle East, as well as the editorial executive of Mecca.com, an online community for Muslim youth. He serves as an assistant professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside.

As ambassador to Morocco during the Clinton administration, Ginsberg served as the first U.S. ambassador of Jewish heritage to a Middle East nation. With a three-decade career focused on the Middle East, he is an expert on the politics and economics of this volatile part of the world. He began his career as a Middle East foreign policy adviser to Sen. Edward Kennedy, then joined the Carter administration as special assistant to the secretary of state for White House relations. He was later appointed deputy senior adviser to the president for Middle East policy. Ginsberg served as Bill Clinton's deputy press secretary for foreign affairs during the 1992 campaign and transition. In 2000, Al Gore recruited him as senior foreign policy coordinator for his presidential campaign.

During the Gulf War, he was a consultant to CBS, CNN and NBC news operations. As a global affairs analyst for Fox News, he is a nationally recognized authority on U.S.-Middle East relations and international events.

Born in New York and raised in Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon Ginsberg is currently the managing director and CEO of Northstar Equity Group, a technology venture funding company specializing in equity placements for e-commerce and software application developers.

The Diversity Lecture Series is part of a larger strategic plan to increase inclusion and diversity on campus and prepare students, faculty, staff and the Dayton community for success in a global society. Past speakers have included Andrew Young, Coretta Scott King, Spike Lee, Kirk Franklin, Clarence Page, Nikki Giovanni, Azar Nafisi and Johnnetta B. Cole.

UD's commitment to diversity is founded in its Catholic heritage of social justice and the Marianist tradition of equality and being inclusive of people from all segments of society.

The Diversity Lecture Series is co-sponsored by the offices of the president and provost, with the generous support of such community partners as The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ); Dayton Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; United Way of the Greater Dayton Area; YWCA Dayton; Victoria Theatre Association; Markey's Audio Visual; Ross Buick-GMC-Hummer; RTA; UD's Media Production Group; Dayton Daily News; WDTN-TV; and WDAO-1210 AM.

Lynnette Heard, executive director of the president's office, at 937-229-4122.

