

Patel first Muslim to win Grawemeyer religion prize: Director of Interfaith Youth Core

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Eboo Patel, founder and executive director of the community service group Interfaith Youth Core, has become the first Muslim to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award in Religion from the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and the University of Louisville.

Patel, 34, is a member of the White House's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Religious Advisory Committee of the Council on Foreign Relations. His Chicago-based interfaith group, launched in 1998, is now active on about 75 college campuses.

He won the \$200,000 prize for his 2007 autobiography *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*. In the book, Patel argues for exposing young people to pluralism to help counteract the influence of religious radicals.

"Religious extremists all over the world are harnessing adolescent angst for their own ends," said Louisville Seminary professor Susan Garrett, who oversees the religion prize judging.

Patel was named one of "America's Best Leaders 2009" by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine. Harvard's *Kennedy School Review* cited him as one of "five future policy leaders to watch."