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## OC interfaith leaders support upcoming award to local Muslim leader

Susan Valot, KPCC

Orange County interfaith leaders are throwing their support behind the Orange County Human Relations Commission for its decision to give an award to a local imam. The award presentation is in Anaheim Thursday night and its organizers expect protests outside.

The group that demonstrated outside a Yorba Linda fundraiser with Muslim speakers in February may do it again at the Orange County Human Relations Commission's annual awards dinner.

The Yorba Linda event turned ugly; some protesters yelled insults at Muslim families as they entered the event.

Villa Park City Councilwoman Deborah Pauly came under fire for taking part.

The organizer of that protest says it was intended to target two speakers allegedly connected to terrorist groups.

That same organizer claims that Orange County Imam Muzammil Siddiqi, who is being honored at the OC Human Relations Commission dinner, is tied to a terrorist group, too. Siddiqi denies that.

The OC Human Relations Commission says it will present him its Community Leader award.

The Orange County Interfaith Network and presidents of interfaith councils throughout Orange County have sent a letter in support of Siddiqi.

They say he and the other honorees have built bridges of good will in Orange County.