

## **MUSLIM COMMUNITY SENDS BEST WISHES TO JESSICA**

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The leader of West Virginia's Muslim community sees God's hand in the rescue of Pfc. Jessica Lynch.

Regardless of country, nationality or religion, the man who tipped off rescuers "reacted to her as a human being," Mohammad Jamal Daoudi, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Association of West Virginia, said Tuesday.

The fact that the man who helped the rescuers is named Mohammed is also significant to Daoudi. "It changes the whole perspective that people have. This is how God works," he said.

Daoudi noted the other coincidence that Jessica is also a Palestinian. She is not a resident of the country of Palestine, but she is certainly the most famous resident of her tiny Wirt County community of Palestine.

Last week, when members of Daoudi's board met, they agreed to send Jessica a card. "We are sharing our congratulations that she will soon be back home safely," he said.

The extra large card happens also to be yellow like the many yellow ribbons that have been on display in honor of the troops. The front of the card bears a mock warning: This card may be running a temperature.

Inside it reads: It's filled with extremely warm wishes!

Daoudi said members of the Islamic community would also like to welcome Mohammed to West Virginia, if he and his family are able to leave the country.

James Theibeault of Malden and others are putting together a group called the Friends of Mohammed, in an effort to bring Mohammed and his family to West Virginia. They would like for him to come to West Virginia, Jessica's home state. They have contacted Sen. Jay Rockefeller about their plans, Daoudi said.

According to news accounts, Mohammed, who is a 32-year-old lawyer, reacted after seeing Jessica's captors slap her twice while she was still in a hospital bed in Saddam Hospital.

Mohammed, whose wife is a nurse at that facility, risked his own life to walk six miles to the Marine base where he told the future rescuers where Jessica was held captive.

He also returned several times to convey information to the rescue team.

"She was in our prayers and thoughts from day one," Daoudi said.