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NORMAN
HEARD IT THROUGH THE TRUMPET VINE
 Trumpet vines grow in a parking garage Friday at the University of Oklahoma in Norman.
PHOTO BY STEVE SOBIEK FOR THE OKLAHOMAN

METRO | STATE

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Muslim leaders say 'sanctity of life' outranks stance on homosexuality

In the aftermath of the Orlando shooting, numerous Muslim leaders around the country stood alongside leaders from the gay community at prayer vigils and rallies held for victims of the tragedy.

Nihad Awad, of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, expressed unequivocal support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights in a news conference held in Washing-



Carla Hinton
 Muslim scholar
OKLAHOMAN
STAFF WRITER

ton, D.C., immediately after the attack.

The same year, members of the (LGBT) community have

stood shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim community against any acts of hate crimes, Islamophobia, marginalization and discrimination. Today, we stand with them, shoulder to shoulder? Awad said. "We cannot fight injustice against some group and not against others."

More recently, 65 American Muslim and LGBT organizations released a joint statement expressing their accord.

Avoid this unified approach, Muslim attitudes and perceptions about homophobia have been pushed to the forefront.

In Oklahoma, some Muslim leaders acknowledged that the June 11 shooting at the Pulse gay night club in Orlando has played a role in Islamic views on homosexuality.

"That's something that people are curious about," said Adam Solani, executive director of the

Council on American Islamic Relations-Oklahoma chapter.

"It's not the story we necessarily want. We want stories about Muslims helping their communities but we know that people are talking about this."

Several news outlets have reported that Omar Mateen, the American Muslim gunman responsible for 49 deaths at

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Police cadets become first to graduate new program



Cadets D'Angela Hunter and Jairo Garcia during interview with reporter Wednesday at the Oklahoma City Police Department. (PHOTO BY AMBERLEE FOR THE OKLAHOMAN)

BY ERECH TAPIA
 Staff writer
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Nineform students have completed the first Oklahoma City Police Department Cadet Academy, often over-coming troubled family histories as they set their sights on becoming part of the police force of the future.

"I wanted to have a career that means something and makes a difference... It is not about the money, you just have to have a love for people," said Andrea Wood, 24, of Choctaw.

Wood, who was home-schooled, said the police department is where she belongs, but the average \$50,000-a-year starting pay is not the reason for her passion.

"It is a passion for me," Wood said, having told more friends she used to associate with on her path to becoming a police officer.

After two years at the Metro Technology Center and Francis Tuttle, students can apply for the program, which

is launched by a week-long training course.

Cadets learn about community relations, the duties of police officers and the service they will be providing to the department every month.

The cadets are required to complete at least eight hours of service a month at events across the city, gaining experience that will help them become more prepared when they reach the required age to apply for the police force, said Capt. Paco Bakderama, public information officer for the police department.

"It is not better to have our own Oklahoma City kids protecting the city," Bakderama said. "We saw a greater need for changing our police department."

Cadet Jimmy Renee, 20, who is from northwest Oklahoma City, said he made the decision to enroll in a different town than that of many of his relatives.

"If they are not cops, then they hate cops, it is just how they are," Renee said. "I told



Cadets include, front, from left, Jimmy Renee, D'Angela Hunter and Andrea Wood, and back, from left, Zaira Triana, Kerystee McNick and Jairo Garcia.

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