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History Making Moment in Mount Laurel as Fozia Janjua Becomes the First Muslim & South Asian Woman to Serve as Mayor

Nikitas Moustakas Elevated to Deputy Mayor

Mount Laurel, NJ — New Jersey State Assembly Majority Whip Carol Murphy (D- Mount Laurel) this evening administered the oath of office to Mount Laurel Mayor Fozia Janjua, who just became the first Muslim & South Asian woman to lead Mount Laurel Township.

“I’m proud of the tremendous leadership in our township from Mayor Stephen Steglik and Deputy Mayor Fozia Janjua, and have the utmost confidence in Deputy Mayor Janjua stepping forward in her new role as Mayor,” said State Assembly Majority Whip Carol Murphy. “Deputy Mayor Janjua continues to provide exceptional leadership with heart, and her ability to bring together our diverse community and lead with integrity is what makes her the perfect choice for Mayor. The work of both Fozia Janjua and Nikitas Moustakas, with their community first approach to government and strength of their diverse backgrounds, will provide a great team to lead our township.”

In 2021, Mount Laurel Township began a new era with the most diverse council in history. The swearing in of Mayor Fozia Janjua and Deputy Mayor Nikitas Moustakas builds on the hard work and successes of this council under former Mayor Stephen Steglik and former Mayor Kareem Pritchett. 2023 brought a number of successes for the Township and Township Council, including the news that PAWS Farm will be run by the new Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine of Rowan University starting later this month.

PAWS Farm remains an important part of Mount Laurel's history, and the Township Council delivered on their promise to find a long term solution to PAWs future, with the help and participation of Rowan University. Township Council continues its commitment to its community, by delivering on maintaining Mount Laurel's high quality level of services, events for residents, affordability, and continuing to be the best town to grow a business, raise a family, and connect with our growing diverse community.

Mayor Fozia Janjua said "It is a great privilege to serve as your Mayor for 2024. Being the first Muslim and South Asian woman in this position is an honor, and I look forward to continuing the progress this council has made over the past three years. Growing up, I was taught the values of hard work and community service. The people of Mount Laurel deserve leadership that is community driven, transparent, and responsive. I am proud to raise my family here, and love seeing how our growing township continues to be the perfect place to raise a family, start a small business, and grow as a diverse community. Working together with Deputy Mayor Nikitas Moustakas and Township Council members, we will continue to provide leadership that works for everyone, help grow our towns economic vitality, and work together to find solutions".

New Jersey State Assembly Majority Whip Carol Murphy also administered the oath of office to Deputy Mayor Nikitas Moustakas. Deputy Mayor Moustakas commented on the success of 2023, "One of the promises of the Township Council was to empower our business community and make Mount Laurel a great place to start a business and continue to grow our local community. 2023 brought a number of new businesses in our community, and we look forward to welcoming many more as Mount Laurel continues to grow."

During 2023 Township Council continued to celebrate old and new events, with a focus on inclusion for all families and residents to enjoy. The Township and The Diversity and Inclusion Board, one of the

creations of the Township Council, hosted the first Juneteenth event that brought our community together, fostered relationships, and showed that local government can bring together and represent residents of all backgrounds. The popular food truck festival, Greek Independence day event, menorah lighting, and tree lighting have all continued to be successful events due to working with Township management and creating a government that brings everyone together.

Mayor Fozia Janjua and Deputy Mayor Nikitas Moustakas will continue to work for the Mount Laurel community and build on the progress the Township Council has created.

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