



## **Vigil for Walji family by Social Justice & Peace Students**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 11, 2013**

King's students in the Social Justice and Peace Studies program have organized a vigil to remember the Walji family who died in London last week. The vigil will be held on Tuesday November 12 at 7 p.m. in front of Cardinal Carter Library on the King's campus, 266 Epworth Ave, London.

The Walji family immigrated to Canada from Tanzania more than 15 years ago and lived near campus. They came to Canada to seek care for their daughter, 21 year old Qyzra Walji, who had cerebral palsy. Although she had significant physical disabilities, she was not intellectually disabled and graduated from Oakridge high school last year.

The family constantly feared deportation and struggled to obtain permanent landed status. They spent thousands of dollars on immigration lawyers and were required to travel to Toronto monthly to report to immigration authorities, and recently received a prepare to depart order.

"We need to send a message to the community that there are people who care. We cannot sit idly by knowing that there are more Walji families who lack the support they need," says Courtney Vaughan, 3<sup>rd</sup> year Social Justice & Peace studies student at King's.

During their time in Canada, the Walji family relied on donations from friends and community members to help with costs related to Qyzra. "They were in need of refuge and care for their daughter, and while they supported others in their need, in the end, they were neglected," says Mick Kunze, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Social Justice & Peace studies student at King's

The candlelight vigil is being held in remembrance of the Walji family, and in solidarity with the thousands of other families who are seeking asylum and support in Canadian communities.

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