



The Interfaith Center of New York Annual Report 2012

Astoria Blvd Hoyt Avenue

Transforming a City of Strangers into a City of Neighbors

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Mission Statement

The Interfaith Center of New York seeks to make New York City and the world safe for religious differences by increasing respect and mutual understanding among people of different faiths, ethnicities, and cultural traditions, and by fostering cooperation among religious communities and civic organizations to solve common social problems.



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Letter from the Founder & Executive Director

Throughout its 15 years, ICNY has engaged in peace-making efforts in all five boroughs in neighborhoods from Highbridge to Astoria to Sheepshead Bay. In November, following a year of discussions with stakeholders including religious and civic leaders, ICNY held a community event entitled “*Astoria, Then & Now,*” which celebrated Astoria’s diversity through storytelling, films, and photography. The event bridged differences and created pathways for shared civic engagement between new and older immigrants from diverse religious communities in this popular urban neighborhood. As such it reflected our mission to “help make New York and the world safe for religious diversity” and at the same time transform a city of strangers into a city of neighbors.

This year our annual report features evocative stories of individuals whose lives and work have been impacted by ICNY’s programs. You will read about Simranpreet, a Sikh teen of Indian descent, who joined ICNY’s *Debate in the Neighborhood*; religious leaders Rev. Louis Riddle and Arvind Kaur who participated in our *Domestic Violence Prevention Training for Religious Leaders*; and the Rev. Al Taylor and Rev. Kenneth L. Radcliffe, who describe their faith communities’ support of formerly incarcerated individuals returning to Harlem. They are both participants in ICNY’s ground-breaking program *Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support* with the Harlem Community Justice Center.

In addition, high school teachers Maureen Foley-Benson and Geoff Cobb reflect on their three weeks with noted academics and local religious leaders in ICNY and Union Theological Seminary’s *Religious Worlds of New York* supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Finally, Albanian Muslim leader Imam Tahir describes how Staten Island Catholic and Muslim students came together to learn about each other’s religious traditions and ended up becoming more than mall buddies.

Hostility and violence against faith communities once again surfaced locally, nationally and globally. The “ICNY in the Public Square” and “ICNY Staff Notable & Noteworthy” sections of the report chronicle our behind-the-scenes work bringing together diverse religious leaders to support religious freedom and speak out against religious intolerance. The massacre at the Oak Creek Sikh Gurdwara, The New York Police Department’s surveillance of mosques, the anti-Muslim hate ads posted in New York subway stations, and the persecution of Buddhists in Bangladesh are core subjects of our interfaith advocacy coalitions, press conferences, and commentary.

ICNY has begun the process of self-evaluation by distributing surveys to friends, donors and stakeholders for feedback to fine-tune our mission and to ensure we remain on target in our work. We hope you will take a minute to send us your thoughts. In conjunction with this long-term planning process, we have recently created the **James Parks Morton Legacy Circle**, which offers you the opportunity to make ICNY part of your long-term estate planning and help to secure a place for ICNY’s future.

Wishing you a peaceful and happy holiday season.



The Very Rev. James Parks Morton
Founder and Chair Emeritus



The Rev. Chloe Breyer
Executive Director

Strangers to Neighbors: ICNY Program Participants Tell Their Stories of Faith, Connection & Healing



ICNY Vice Chair Rev. Dr. TK Nakagaki touring Jain Center of America, NY organized by ICNY, (4/18/12).

1. ICNY and International Debate Education Association bring *Debate in the Neighborhood* to Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Youth in Queens
2. More than Mall Buddies: Muslim and Catholic Youth Volunteering Together on Staten Island
3. Harlem Pastors and Imams Lead Reentry Circles of Support for Parolees and their Families
4. Religious Leaders Reflect on Domestic Violence Training
5. Nationwide Educators Reflect on ICNY's Religious Worlds of New York Summer Institute



ICNY and International Debate Education Association bring *Debate in the Neighborhood* to Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Youth in Queens

Queens, New York boasts its own version of the “Silk Road” where a multitude of distinctive immigrant communities thrive. This year, with the help of a grant from the **Open Society Foundation**, ICNY partnered with the **International Debate Education Association (IDEA)** to launch *Debate in the Neighborhood* clubs for high school students at The Hindu Temple Society of North America, the Jamaica Muslim Center, and the Sikh Cultural

“One of the most vital things I’ve learned is how to make friends...To my surprise, all of us were curious in learning more about one another. It’s a trait I’ll carry over for the rest of my life.”

Society and Gurdwara. After providing debate education, IDEA trainers divided students into interfaith teams for a program-ending tournament about racial profiling that was judged by author and former New York Times reporter Amy Waldman, NYC Commission on Human Rights Staff Attorney Rudolph Pyatt, and former Solicitor General of the State of New York Preeta Bansal. The purpose of *Debate in the Neighborhood* was to boost the students’ public speaking skills, make them more competitive for admissions to college, and introduce them to other youth as together they inherited a rich American tradition.

Simranpreet Kainth, a 16-year old Brooklyn Tech high school junior who worships at the Sikh Cultural Society and Gurdwara in Ozone Park, participated in the program. As a first generation New Yorker residing in an immigrant community, Simranpreet thinks that “many Americans take for granted democratic principles that people of other nationalities are killed for – like freedom of speech, the right to advocate, women’s rights, and religious freedom.”

Discussing racial profiling was the first step. Using David Cole’s “Securing Liberty” (2011), the students learned about the common perceptions of 9/11 as not just a terrorist attack, but as an attack on fundamental American values. As Simranpreet put it, “More important than the

nitty-gritty details, we comprehended an overall concept that 9/11 wasn’t people against society; it was values against values.” Once the topic was well established in the students’ minds, they began the most influential portion of the program – the debate itself.

Simranpreet truly appreciates how learning to debate has made him stronger intellectually and socially. “I was taught how to combat ideas that are often feared more than anything else. I learned how to speak to an audience while arguing a point. We were taught to be able to balance our thoughts even in the most fragile circumstances. As a result, I am more confident and optimistic. All of us have grown as thinkers, as listeners, as students, but most importantly, as people. The ways we’ve been taught to view the world and think is something unlike anything else we’ve ever experienced. Personally, I deeply acknowledge my peers, mentors, and teachers, for everything they’ve given me.”

Socially, Simranpreet says that “one of the most vital things I’ve learned is how to make friends. When the three different sects of this program first met, I expected an awkward environment. To my surprise, all of us were curious in learning more about one another. It’s a trait I’ll carry over for the rest of my life.”



Debate in the Neighborhood Participant Simranpreet Kainth.

More than Mall Buddies: Muslim and Catholic Youth Volunteering Together on Staten Island

Although Amna and Ashley both live in Staten Island, unless they bumped into each other at the Staten Island Mall, the probability of their meeting one another would have been extremely remote.

The rolling hills and attractive shoreline of Staten Island have long been the home of generations of mostly middle-class native New Yorkers, but within the last 20 years, groups of immigrants, including Albanian Muslims, have crossed the Verrazano Narrows Bridge to make the community their home. As mosques have popped up next to churches and temples, neighborhoods have changed, and hate crime rates have been on the rise.

Amna attends the Miraj Islamic School and Ashley is a member of the Staten Island Teen Federation, a program of the Catholic Youth Organization. Their paths crossed when ICNY brought them together with other teens from the Teen Federation and the Miraj School to learn about each other's religious traditions through a grant supported by the GHR Foundation. Not all the parents were happy about the teens mixing, as many were suspicious of the

Imam Tahir Kukiqi: "None of our (Muslim) students gave an inch from their religion, nor did the CYO students give an inch. What happened was that their faiths grew stronger."

Muslim community and denied the reality that Muslim New Yorkers, too, had lost close friends and relatives on 9/11. Thanks to the students' persistence, however – and eventually with the full support of their parents – the teens not only met to study together, but chose to work jointly on practical projects like sprucing up St. Joseph's Church and the Miraj School and co-sponsoring a food drive for Project Hospitality, an interfaith program that feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, and cares for people with HIV/AIDS.



Imam Tahir Kukiqi and food drive volunteer Catholic & Muslim students.

Both the Church and the Mosque welcomed the students warmly. Imam Tahir Kukiqi, who serves as Imam of the Albanian Islamic Cultural Center and as an Islamic Studies Teacher at the Miraj Islamic School said that "just getting the youth together either in the Mosque or in the Church was a very good achievement. None of our students gave an inch from their religion, nor did the CYO students give an inch from their religion. What happened was that their faiths grew stronger."

Another outcome has been that Amna and Ashley became good friends. And they're not alone in having formed strong bonds. Both groups have experienced the reality that being Catholic or Muslim is no barrier to building friendships, and that what counts most is working on practical projects that also touch people's minds and hearts.



More food drive volunteer Catholic and Muslim students including Ashley and Amna (eighth and ninth from left).

Harlem Pastors and Imams Lead Reentry Circles of Support for Parolees and their Families

Every Thursday at 6 in the morning, the Rev. Al Taylor, pastor at Harlem's Infinity Mennonite Church, starts a special part of his ministry at the subway station at 155th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. Rev. Taylor has served his community wearing many hats for the past 25 years. As Chief of Staff for State Assemblyman Herman "Denny" Farrell, he has walked the corridors of the State Capitol and the Legislative Office Building witnessing the ruthlessly competitive sport of lawmaking. But on Thursday mornings he switches gears and goes to the subway station to meet with a group called "Man Up in Harlem." From there, Rev. Taylor leads the group through the neighborhood praying for the end of violence in their community, for jobs, for people facing eviction, and especially for mothers worried that their sons coming home from prison will return to their former ways and be sent back. These prayer walks have caught on. They are now occurring in three of the five NYC boroughs with followers who have been moved by encounters with mothers of parolees, and are tired of their communities feeding what the Children's Defense Fund calls the "Cradle to Prison Pipeline" with their male youth.

Rev. Kenneth L. Radcliffe, a Permanent Deacon at Resurrection Chapel, St. Charles Borromeo, is familiar

with a different set of corridors. He retired from the New York City Department of Corrections as an Administrative Chaplain after 20 years of assignments at Rikers Island, "The Tombs", and detention centers in the Bronx and Brooklyn. Rev. Radcliffe offered spiritual counseling and comfort to thousands by lending his ear to men coping

Rev. Kenneth L. Radcliffe and members from his church Resurrection Chapel, St. Charles Borromeo offer a ministry of presence and hospitality for formerly incarcerated individuals Thursday mornings at the Harlem Community Justice Center as part of ICNY's Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support.



with separation from family and friends. Technically retired, Deacon Radcliffe still serves as a trained substance abuse/addictions counselor and certified recovery coach. He is the author of *Applying Alcoholics Anonymous Principles to the Disease of Racism* (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2012) and two reports, "The Crisis of the Poor in Black Urban America, A

Challenge for the Church and Other Houses of Worship," and "The Crisis of the Poor in Black Urban America, A Challenge for the President and Corporate America."

Both of these men are advisors to ICNY's "Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support," a program with the Harlem Community Justice Center, Harlem faith leaders, and the JC Flowers Foundation, which provides support to formerly incarcerated individuals between the ages of 18-26 and their families post release. Rev. Radcliffe and volunteer members from his church offer a ministry of presence and hospitality many Thursday mornings at the Harlem Community Justice Center, as formerly incarcerated individuals wait to meet with their parole officers. They are working with ICNY to launch their own ministry for returning citizens.

Above: Harlem Community Justice Center Parolee Graduation Ceremony. (From left to right: Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnerships for the U.S. Department of Justice Director Eugene Schneeberg, ICNY Outreach Coordinator Rev. Darren Ferguson, Infinity Mennonite Church Pastor Rev. Al Taylor, Project Director Harlem Community Justice Center Chris Watler, and Infinity Mennonite Church Lay Leader Laurence Jennings) (6/7/12).

Left: Rev. Radcliffe participating in first volunteer training of Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support (3/29/12).



Religious Leaders Reflect on



Arvind Kaur lost her sister to domestic violence, but despite her training in psychology, she had not come to terms with the tragedy. Arvind described her sister as a pretty, thoughtful PhD in cancer research with a zeal for life, who was always head of her class and excelled

in everything she did. She was married to a Hindu and had adopted all Hindu rituals despite having been born a Sikh. This was her love for him. “He is God to me” is what she would always say.

The death of Arvind’s sister was a big blow for the family but Arvind wanted to move on as she herself had just married days before. For years she kept pushing the thought aside, though it would haunt her repeatedly. She always wanted to do something about domestic violence and just did not know how.

Through grants funded by **ML Resources – Social Visions and Barbara Slifka Fund**, all that changed when Arvind worked with staff at ICNY and **CONNECTFaith** to start an interfaith group for women who had survived domestic violence, were currently suffering from it, or simply wanted to help. “I came to understand that passion wasn’t enough,” reflected Arvind, “I also needed training and support. Now I feel the group is doable.”

In the first meeting of Arvind’s Sikh DV group, she witnessed the power of simply being together with the other women. Although nothing overtly “happened,” the demeanor, tone, and expressions of the group members told her that this was going to work. She wondered whether it was what she was observing or whether it was that she was healing. Maybe it was both. For the first few sessions Arvind kept busy with the logistics; but eventually she just let it be. Because the group sat together, sharing and talking, things came up naturally. One woman would accept what she was going through, and another made sense out of it.

Recently Arvind named her group *The Kaur Sisters* to raise the spirit of the members. The word “Kaur” means princess and no woman, she believes, is less than a princess. Arvind says, “I am coming to terms with what happened in my family and feel peaceful to be attending to what my soul needs to do. My sister didn’t deserve what happened to her. She didn’t deserve to suffer. Now I feel, if she was anywhere, watching me, she would be happier.”

“I came to understand that passion wasn’t enough. I also needed training and support. Now I feel the group [The Kaur Sisters] is doable.”

Domestic Violence Training



“We’re the people’s healers, not the people’s police.” That’s what Rev. Louis Riddle heard when he tried to get other chaplains involved in ICNY’s Domestic Violence Training Program for Religious Leaders. So Rev. Riddle just went himself. He wanted to get knowledge to help others

because he believed that’s what pastors do. “We’re not supposed to just preach, we’re supposed to help someone. That’s why we’re called shepherds. Shepherds don’t just guide; they help feed and protect.”

At the beginning of the program, Rev. Riddle was surprised that when ICNY’s partners at CONNECTFaith asked what domestic violence was, he did not really have an answer. He realized that everything they described as domestic violence, he had done himself. “From insults, to beating, to violence – even in my marriage – that was me. And I was like, ‘Should I be here or should I go back?’ But when the light shines, you have to stay with it. And I had to be there – for myself at least – and for other people.”

According to Rev. Riddle the program wasn’t just a blessing to him. It was much more – educational, even enlightening, especially hearing the women’s voices. “When I was growing up, it was different. Women had a voice but not a loud voice. Here, they had a loud voice and it was crying.”

Rev. Riddle now believes that all seminaries should include DV training because domestic violence “runs very deep. It runs generations deep. I grew up in a father-son nation. We would see DV. It was common. It was always looked upon as ‘discipline.’ As in, ‘I can’t tell you how to treat your woman, how to discipline your woman.’ Even though it got out of hand many times, the way I saw it – it wasn’t my position to do anything.”

Rev. Riddle also recommends the ICNY program to other pastors because “it’s really got something. You know, a lot of preachers are scared of interfaith. They think, ‘it’s challenging my belief system.’ But it’s not. It’s me exploring my beliefs and getting to know more about my neighbors’ faiths.”

“Domestic Violence runs deep. It runs generations deep . . . From insults, to beating, to violence – even in my marriage – that was me. And I was like, ‘Should I be here or should I go back?’ But when the light shines, you have to stay with it. And I had to be there – for myself at least – and for other people.”

Nationwide Educators Reflect on ICNY's Religious Worlds of New York Summer Institute



Geoff Cobb had been teaching a world religions class to high school students for three years at the Chelsea-based New York City Museum School. His students were certainly religiously diverse - they included Hindus, Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Geoff had lingering doubts, however, about whether he

was teaching religion correctly. After all, the bar is set high at the Museum School because its students have easy access to rich primary source collections at the city's museums. Compounding his concerns, was the fact that Geoff had no formal academic training in religious studies.

When he heard about the new *Religious Worlds of New York* summer institute in partnership with **Union**

Theological Seminary and supported by the **National Endowment for the Humanities**, Geoff jumped at the chance to apply. For three weeks, Geoff and his fellow teachers worked with leading scholars of religion such as **First Amendment Center Senior Scholar Charles Haynes**, who spoke about religious liberty in American ideals and K-12 classrooms, and **Northwestern University Professor Robert Orsi**, who explored his own groundbreaking work on the study of lived religions. Geoff and his peers also met with a wide range of New York religious leaders and visited local houses of worship. These experiences introduced him to six traditions that are part of the fabric of American life - Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Afro-Caribbean religions - and gave him the pedagogic tools he needs to teach about contemporary religious life.

Geoff says that "the biggest thing that I got out of the seminar was the idea that a religion is much more than a set of core beliefs or understanding a holy book. Religions are living things and my class now explores how religion is lived. I learned to look at religion as a part of culture. I see religion now as a verb, whereas before I saw it more as a noun."

For the new school year, Geoff was inspired to change the focus of his class to look first at religious diversity close to home and then use this knowledge as a bridge to understand more distant cultures. He is now crafting lessons that ask his students to look around Chelsea and their own neighborhoods for signs of how people live their faiths. Now who's raising the bar?



Maureen Foley-Bensen is one of two history instructors at Omak High School in rural Washington State. She teaches different history courses to ninth, tenth, and twelfth grade students, but for her tenth graders she concentrates on the history of the world from 1450 to the present - including religions of

the world - all in one semester. Needless to say, her days are hectic enough already. But last winter Maureen was intrigued when she saw an announcement flashing across her computer screen about the launch of *Religious Worlds of New York* sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"Students who had shown little enthusiasm for the study of history have become willing participants in our conversation about religious worlds."

Maureen applied to the Institute for several reasons. She realized that a contemporary study of religious worlds would not only help her "to grow as a teacher" but, as important, "would bring the world to the students of Omak High School." Omak's demographics include European Americans, Native Americans and Mexican and Central Americans with the exception of one Sikh family from India whose son happens to be in Maureen's World History class. In a quiet moment, the student shared with Maureen that "while most students were polite about his dress, particularly his head covering, they would rarely ask him questions or talk to him about his religious world; the students were simply silent."

After being selected from a pool of 180 applicants to attend the Institute last summer, Maureen returned to the classroom in September ready to try out her new teaching techniques. She began using "language that encourages students to appreciate the complexity of the world religious traditions," referring to religious worlds as "large umbrellas" rather than defined "buckets" of information. Maureen says, "students who had shown little enthusiasm for the study of history have become willing participants in our conversation about religious worlds" and that since she modified her religious world study, they have been showing respectful curiosity towards their Sikh classmate. "Kids are asking me lots of questions," the student told Maureen recently, "and they are so respectful of me . . . I like to be able to talk about my religion and help kids understand who I am."

ICNY Internationally

Building on three years of the JPM International Visiting Fellows Sister Cities Program with Barcelona and Glasgow, ICNY will be holding its first international Rabbi Marshall Meyer Retreat. In the spring of 2013, *The 29th Rabbi Marshall Meyer Retreat "Preserving Religious Freedom and Community Safety: Comparing Police-Community Relations Across Cities"* will take on issues like racial and religious profiling and surveillance as well as cultural and religious competency training for police recruits. New York faith leaders and law enforcement officials will have a chance to hear from members of the Equalities Division of the Strathclyde Police in Scotland, along with religious leaders and law enforcement experts from other U.S. cities like Los Angeles and Chicago. At this internationally-informed Marshall Meyer Retreat, ICNY hopes to share culturally-competent practices of law enforcement agencies drawn from long-term relationships with other international and national cities.



The International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. State Department sponsors many foreign delegations and frequently calls upon ICNY to share information about its distinctive approach to interfaith work. In 2012, ICNY spent time with separate delegations of students from South Korea and Germany, youth social workers from Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, educators from East and Southeast Asian countries, and law enforcement agents from Great Britain. For the UN Alliance of Civilizations, ICNY has organized three interfaith panels - on lessons learned from 9/11, on trauma and healing, and on religion and the media - for their Middle East and North African Fellowship Programme, which includes many representatives from Arab Spring countries.

Further ICNY international activity appears in the ICNY Staff Notable and Noteworthy section.



Above: U.S. State Department International Visitor Leadership Program, delegation of youth leaders from Israel, Gaza and the West Bank with ICNY staff (6/28/12).

Below: U.S. State Department International Visitor Leadership Program, delegation of students from Germany (10/12/12)

ICNY at a Glance: Program Highlights from 2012

Civic Connections

Catholic-Muslim Common Action Initiative

Staff: Dr. Sarah Sayeed and Cara Ryan in collaboration with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and local Muslim organizations

Funder: GHR Foundation

Fosters relationships between Catholics and Muslims in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island through interfaith dialogue about social justice issues and shared social service projects that impact the two religious groups and the wider community

- Provided capacity building and opportunities for civic engagement to hunger relief staff and volunteers in Bronx and Manhattan, established Catholic-Muslim-Jewish women's monthly dialogue group in Manhattan and teen group that conducted food drives for a soup kitchen and made improvements to a church and Muslim school in Staten Island

- Convened meeting of over 100 Catholic and Muslim social service providers, clergy and lay leaders, and thought leaders to discuss best methods of transitioning from dialogue to action in building multi-faith partnerships

- With Circles of Support program, held session in Harlem on the "Cradle to Prison Pipeline"

- Worked with outside evaluation team to assess benefits of Initiative

Domestic Violence Training for Ordained Religious and Lay Leaders

Staff: Anushavan Margaryan in partnership with CONNECT
Funder: M.L. Resources – Social Visions & Barbara Slifka Fund

Provided ordained and lay religious leaders training in the complex dynamics of intimate partner abuse, knowledge of community and faith based referral sources, and methods for mobilizing faith communities to take action to prevent violent acts

- Provided 24 hours of DV prevention training for 45 ordained and lay religious leaders

- Recruited immigrant women's group to launch new round of training

- Offered technical support to faith communities starting spinoff programs including DV prevention telephone hot lines and support programs for males and women at houses of worship

NY State Court Roundtable

Staff: Anushavan Margarayn & Kevin Childress

Provides a platform for judges, attorneys, and advocates to educate religious leaders

- Held Bronx, Manhattan & Queens Roundtables on What Barriers Do DV Immigrant Victims Face When Reporting Abuse?

- Held Brooklyn & Bronx Roundtables on What to do about Domestic Violence and the Houses of Faith?

- Sponsored Free Legal Clinics at Upper Room Baptist Church, Brooklyn; Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Bronx; Interfaith Harmony and World Peace, Queens; Union United Methodist Church, Brooklyn; St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, Manhattan

- Hosted Brooklyn Court Roundtable on Elder Abuse

- Partnered with St. Luke AME Church and NYC Family Court to host over 20 safe exchange visits for children of couples with a history of domestic violence

Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support

Staff: Annie Rawlings and Rev. Darren Ferguson in collaboration with the Harlem Community Justice Center

Funder: JC Flowers Foundation

Builds network of Harlem faith communities to support young parolees returning to Harlem from prison

- Held orientation and training sessions to recruit faith communities featuring Rev. Dr. Harold Dean Trulear on how congregations can become "Healing Communities" for people in prison and returning from incarceration-and their families

- Established advisory board of religious leaders, prison system experts, and foundation staff

- In conjunction with rotating faith communities, provided a ministry of presence at Harlem Community Justice Center every Thursday morning when parolees meet with their parole officers

The Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat for Social Justice

Staff: Dr. Sarah Sayeed

A retreat for faith and lay leaders to network and discuss major issues impacting their communities, learning from each other's faith traditions

- Convened retreat for 90 religious leaders on "Building Interfaith Partnerships for Social Services and Common Action"

- Planned for next retreat on homelessness (Winter 2013) and police-community relations (Spring 2013)

Religious Diversity Education

Social Work and Religious Diversity

Staff: Dr. Henry Goldschmidt in collaboration with UJA-Federation of New York

An annual course introducing new and seasoned social workers to the role of religion in families and communities, as well as the diversity within all religious traditions

- Moderated panel discussions of local religious leaders, social service professionals, and academics covering Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Afro-Caribbean traditions over a seven-week period for an audience of 100 social work practitioners

Religious Worlds of New York

Staff: Dr. Henry Goldschmidt in collaboration with Union Theological Seminary

Funder: National Endowment for the Humanities

A three-week summer institute for teachers using a combination of classroom and community-based education to introduce participants to American religious diversity, and offer them pedagogic tools for teaching about lived religions

- Instituted a highly selective process recruiting 30 top-notch educators from across the nation
- Developed course curriculum that includes classroom discussions with religious scholars and local religious leaders and site visits to local houses of worship

Programs for Students

Staff: Dr. Henry Goldschmidt

Introducing young New Yorkers to the religious diversity of their own communities through site visits to local houses of worship, panel discussions with religious leaders, and other forms of community-based education

- Organized two programs for the Global History students from the Hudson High School of Learning Technologies that included site visits to a Buddhist temple in Chinatown, an Orthodox synagogue and a mosque in Manhattan
- Held a panel discussion with students at the Facing History School featuring two speakers about activities of interfaith coalitions 10 years after 9/11
- Led a series of site visits to local religious communities for 60 students attending Union Theological Seminary

Public Outreach

Debate in the Neighborhood

Staff: Kevin Childress in collaboration with International Debate Education Association

Funder: Youth Initiatives, Open Society Foundation

Brings the art of debating beyond the conventional school environment directly to immigrant/under-resourced high school students at houses of worship and youth centers

- Established debate teams at The Hindu Temple Society of North America, Jamaica Muslim Center, and Sikh Cultural Society and Gurdwara in Queens
- Recruited almost 40 high school students and held separate training sessions in basic debate components and practices
- Mixed groups and assigned them to 3-member teams to practice for competition about issues related to terrorism and democratic values after 9/11
- Held program-ending tournament on racial profiling

Astoria Conversations

Staff: Annie Rawlings, Anushavan Margaryan & Keith Connor

Funder: The New York Community Trust

A series of interfaith dialogues between new and older immigrants for purposes of bridging differences and creating new pathways for shared civic engagement in Astoria, Queens

- Held discussions with stakeholders including religious & civic leaders, representatives of social service providers, and others in Astoria
- Organized "Astoria, Then & Now," a community event celebrating Astoria's diversity through storytelling, film, and photography

Chinatown Conversations

Staff: Annie Rawlings & Kevin Childress

Funder: New York Council for the Humanities

Two interfaith programs on how development in Chinatown changed after 9/11

- "Life Near Zero" program explored how development in Chinatown changed after 9/11
- A follow-up meeting focused on the need to maintain affordable housing in Chinatown

The James Parks Morton Interfaith Awards Dinner

Since its founding 15 years ago, ICNY's practice has been to open its doors to "religious leaders" rather than "ordained clergy," broadening the opportunity for women of faith, who lack formal recognition from their mostly male hierarchies, to fully participate in our programs. Speaking at the 10th James Parks Morton Interfaith Awards Dinner, ICNY Executive Director conveyed to 300 ICNY friends and supporters that the event celebrated the empowerment of these women lay leaders who reach beyond their limits to seek and find sensible solutions to abate poverty, homelessness and violence, resulting in more secure and improved living standards for their religious communities. To exemplify the heart of the evening, the James Parks Morton Interfaith Awards were presented to 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate **Leymah Gbowee** and filmmaker and philanthropist **Abigail Disney** for their exceptional contributions towards creating more peaceful communities through interfaith cooperation.

In bestowing the award, Founder and Chair Emeritus **The Very Reverend James Parks Morton** told guests how Leymah Gbowee brought Christian and Muslim Liberian women together to hold nonviolent demonstrations that helped bring an end to the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003, and to the rule of President Charles Taylor, who has been sentenced by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague to 50 years imprisonment for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Abigail Disney was praised by WNET President Emeritus **William F. Baker** for her role as a documentary filmmaker, producer, and philanthropist whose distinctive focus in highlighting women's involvement in peacemaking and, in particular, her portrayal of Leymah Gbowee in "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" and later the



PBS-aired documentary series "Women, War and Peace" contributed to the world learning about atrocities occurring in Liberia. A screening of "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" was held for our dinner guests at the gala. The Corporation for Economic Opportunity President **Joseph J. James** paid homage to the honorees by giving them specially crafted quilts adorned with their images by **Quageh**, a women's quilting cooperative in Liberia. These quilts and others handsomely decorated the venue and were available for sale with proceeds going to Quageh.

Master of Ceremonies **The Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt** kept the evening's energy flowing by introducing Singer/Songwriter **Tina Lear**, who performed "Because of You", a song she expressly composed in tribute to Leymah Gbowee, and the **Forces of Nature Dance Theatre**, which presented a unique blend of contemporary dance, ballet, and hip-hop works. Rev. Dr. Wyatt also shared his enthusiasm for ICNY by recounting his firsthand experiences as both a participant and advisor and encouraging guests to stay engaged with its array of programs and events.



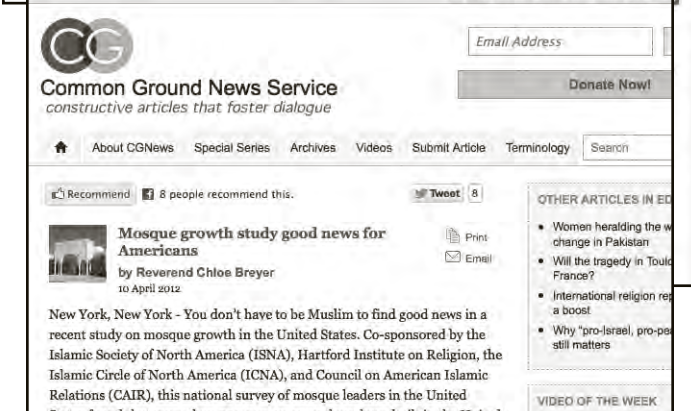
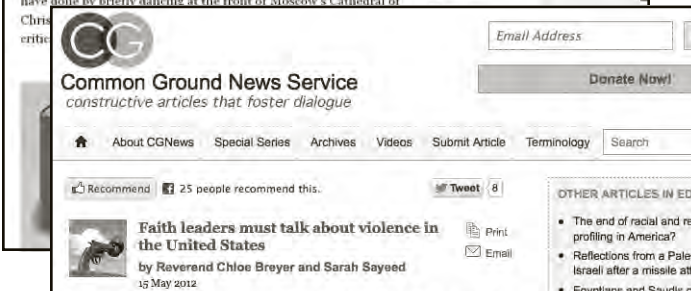
*Above: The Rev. Chloe Breyer, Abigail Disney, Nobel Laureate Leymah Gbowee, and The Very Rev. James Parks Morton.
Left: Forces of Nature Dance Theatre.
Right: The Rev. Drs. T.K. Nakagaki and James Forbes (6/11/12).*



ICNY IN THE HEADLINES

ICNY Staff offered commentary on topics facing religious communities at home and abroad. Articles and postings included:

- “The Dolphin and the Monkey and NYPD’s Disappointing Tactics” in *The Huffington Post*, commented on NYPD’s showing of an anti-Muslim film to police officers despite the Muslim community’s attempts to build a relationship with the police commissioner (1/26/12)
- “Catholics and Muslims in New York City and Beyond Work Together to Help the Neediest” in *The Huffington Post* described the deepening interfaith relationship between Catholics and Muslims in New York City as demonstrated by a generous contribution of food that was donated to a food pantry run by a local Muslim organization (2/27/12)
- “Mosque Growth Study Good News for America” appeared in *Common Ground News Service* (4/14/12)
- “Faith Leaders Must Talk About Violence in the United States” was posted on *Common Ground News Service* and urged faith leaders to learn how to prevent domestic violence (5/19/12)
- “Blasphemy and the Law,” printed in the *International Herald Tribune* argued that while the pain caused to believers by the defilement of cherished religious symbols and teachings is real and traumatic, laws that criminalize defamation of religion or inciting religious hatred are doctrinally unsound and legally dangerous (8/29/12)
- A recounting of the 4,000 year world history of the Golden Rule was posted on Twitter in commemoration of the 11th anniversary of 9/11 (9/11/12)
- “From World Religions to Lived Religion: Towards a Pedagogy of Civic Engagement in Secondary School Religious Studies Curricula” was accepted for publication in the volume *Civility and Education in a World of Religious Pluralism*. It will be published by Routledge in 2013



ICNY IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Coordinating a rapid response to critical issues across faith traditions

- ICNY co-sponsored a press conference on NYPD surveillance of New York City metro-area Muslim community (<http://www.odysseynetworks.org/video/a-call-on-nypd-to-stop-profiling-of-the-muslim-community>) (3/13/12)
- Program Associate Dr. Sarah Sayeed was interviewed by Virginia Swain, host of *Imagine Worcester*, a community-based television program that profiles local and global peacemakers. She spoke about her work at ICNY and her involvement with the Muslim community in New York City (4/10/12)
- Odyssey Networks in collaboration with *The Huffington Post* taped and posted a video about ICNY's *Debate in the Neighborhood Program* on their websites documenting the program for Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim high school students (<http://www.odysseynetworks.org/video/religion-without-borders>) (5/23/12)
- Sarah Sayeed was interviewed about Ramadan and two ICNY programs: *Catholic Muslim Common Action Initiative* and *Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support* on Sirius XM Radio Program *Just Love*, hosted by Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, Executive Director of Catholic Charities (7/8/12)
- Director of Outreach and Program Administration Annie Rawlings and ICNY Vice Chairs Rev. Dr. T.K. Nakagaki and Rabbi Joseph Potastnik offered condolences and prayers to the families of the victims and survivors of the Oak Creek, Wisconsin Sikh Gurdwara massacre at an interfaith vigil organized by the Sikh community in New York City (8/8/12)
- Annie Rawlings was quoted about the dangers of using hate speech aimed at a specific group in "Cultural Organizations Denounce Ads that Call Jihad 'Savage'" in *Metro New York* (9/24/12)
- ICNY coordinated a press conference of New York community and faith based organizations to denounce anti-Muslim hate advertisements posted on New York City subway platforms (9/25/12)
- Annie Rawlings was featured on Radio Islam to talk about the anti-Muslim hate advertisements posted on New York City subway platforms (9/28/12)
- ICNY Vice-Chairs Rabbi Joseph Potastnik and Rev. Dr. T.K. Nakagaki addressed the 9/11 community at the annual memorial service for Voices of September 11th, an organization providing information, resources, and support for the 9/11 community (9/10/12)
- Rev Dr. T.K. Nakagaki offered prayers at an interfaith vigil commemorating the first anniversary of the death of Private Danny Chen, the soldier from Chinatown who committed suicide amid racist bullying and hazing (10/3/12)
- Program Associate Anushavan Margaryan spoke at a UN rally and vigil offering support for Buddhists persecuted by extremists in Bangladesh, organized by Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Unity Council USA, and North American Buddhist Community (10/5)



Above: ICNY Director of Outreach and Program Administration Annie Rawlings and ICNY Vice Chair Rev. Dr. T.K. Nakagaki offering prayers at interfaith vigil for victims and survivors of Oak Creek Sikh Gurdwara massacre (8/8/12).

Below: Executive Director The Rev. Chloe Breyer speaking at City Hall press conference denouncing anti-Muslim hate advertisements posted on subway platforms (9/28/12).



ICNY STAFF NOTABLE & NOTEWORTHY

Participating at government, nonprofit & faith-based events

Executive Director Rev. Chloe Breyer

- Traveled to Jakarta, Amman, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Tel Aviv and Washington, DC as a member of the Interfaith Mission for Peace and Understanding, a delegation of Abrahamic American and Indonesian religious leaders, meeting with senior government officials, NGO's and other leaders from Jewish, Muslim, and Christian faith traditions (2/3/12)
- Appeared on "Visitation: Need, Wants, and Realities" panel sponsored by the NYC Bar's Committee on Children and the Law and Committee on Family Court and Family Law, discussing groundbreaking ICNY-supported "Supervised Exchange Program" at St. Luke AME (4/23/12)
- Participated in three-day landmark international Christian-Muslim Peace Summit in Beirut, Lebanon organized by Washington National Cathedral that brought together representatives from Shi'ite, Sunni, Catholic and Protestant religious leaders (6/18/12)

Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support Outreach Coordinator Rev. Darren Ferguson

- Gave the keynote address on prisoner reentry at Antioch Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio (7/7/12)
- Presented ICNY's Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support at session on "Saving our African American Males" at the National Urban League Convention (7/26/12)
- "Starve the Beast" campaign initiated by Rev. Ferguson is featured in an article written by Rev. Dr. Harold Dean Trulear in *The Crime Report*. The campaign combats destructive behaviors of African American males before incarceration, promotes strategies that transform those in prison, and gives support to persons coming home to move beyond such behaviors to constructive engagement (10/2/12)

Director of Education Programs Dr. Henry Goldschmidt

- Led panel discussion on "Teaching the Everyday Life of American Religious Diversity" at the annual diversity conference of the NYS Association of Independent Schools (4/5/12)
- Featured speaker in webinar on "An Interfaith Approach to Teaching World Religions" sponsored by the National Association of Episcopal Schools (10/9/12)

Director of Outreach & Program Administration Annie Rawlings

- Attended the 220th Presbyterian Church U.S.A. General Assembly; one of nine commissioners representing the Presbytery of New York City (6/30/12 – 7/7/12)

Program & Communications Associate Dr. Sarah Sayeed

- Featured speaker on panel about the role of women in preventing and resolving conflicts and peace-building as part of the Women, Peace and Security-Women in Leadership Series at the UN (2/3/12)
- Presented at workshop on methods for peace-building and reconciliations in the post-9/11 period at UN Interagency Framework Team for Preventive Action (5/31/12)
- Represented ICNY at the Buncher Global Interfaith/Intercultural Conference on Humanitarian Work Program in London. The conference brought together faith-based and other humanitarian providers in North America, Europe, Japan, and the Middle East to exchange ways on how best to respond and give aid to those with different cultural and religious values, and the inherent challenges it poses to both donor and recipient communities (6/27/12)
- Gave presentation about cultural competence, the need to pay attention to religion and culture in health care delivery and management, including health care institutions working with religious leaders as their community's cultural brokers at the Greater New York Hospital Association's Summer Enrichment Program for College and Graduate Students (7/19/12)
- Spoke on a panel which explored resources and best practices for successful interfaith relations, arranged by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN and the Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the UN (9/27/12)
- Lectured at a diversity training session for members of the Episcopal Church's Executive Council and staff and offered comments about Islam/Muslims in the world and in the U.S. and American Muslim identity (10/16/12)

ICNY Interns Katherine Maxeiner, Natasha Japanwala, and Allegra Wiprud

- Organized "Bridging the Gap: Allyship between LGBTQ and Religious Communities," an interfaith panel of Gay and Lesbian activists talking about acceptance in their faiths (7/9/12)
- Organized "Women in Religion", a conversation about how women find their place in faith traditions featuring leading diverse women lay leaders (8/6/12)

Treasurer's Report

The results for Fiscal Year 2012 ending June 30, 2012 are set forth below in the format mandated by FASB 117 for Nonprofit Organizations. The advantage of this format over the more recognizable Profit and Loss financial statements for profit-making entities is that it more accurately reflects the use of funds by the organization. ICNY's operations use unrestricted and restricted funds received in the current year for current year's expenses. ICNY meets expenses for commitments made in prior years under multi-year grants. Prior years' unexpended restricted funds are applied to the current fiscal year's tranche of the grant-funded program's expenses.

Unlike many nonprofit corporations of comparable or larger size founded by sizeable bequests, ICNY activities are funded by contributions and grants from year to year. Consequently, ICNY is not primarily a grant-bestowing entity, except on a pass-through basis as part of a larger initiative. Paradoxically, however, this gives ICNY considerable flexibility in initiating, changing or terminating programs; it can identify observed needs while operating within its core competences. Not all programs are supported by restricted funds; at times, only unrestricted funds are available for initiating a particular program.

Statement of Activities

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2012 Total	2011 Total
Revenue and Support				
Contributions and grants	\$442,349	\$217,170	\$659,519	\$838,643
Contract revenue	70,679	-	70,679	-
In-kind contributions	25,415	-	25,415	30,287
Special events, net of direct costs of \$65,146 and \$58,609	206,388	-	206,388	187,429
Program fees	7,758	-	7,758	4,250
Interest income	6,185	-	6,185	8,854
Other income	12,000	-	12,000	3,682
Realized and unrealized (loss) gain on investments	(1,449)	-	(1,449)	382
Net assets released from restrictions	155,192	(155,192)	-	-
Total Revenue and Support	924,517	61,978	986,495	1,073,527
EXPENSES				
Program services	674,876	-	674,876	517,553
General and administrative	126,539	-	126,539	176,846
Fundraising	188,740	-	188,740	231,963
Total Expenses	990,155	-	990,155	926,362
Change in Net Assets	(65,638)	61,978	(3,660)	147,165
NET ASSETS				
Beginning of year	277,613	401,749	679,362	532,197
End of year	\$211,975	\$463,727	\$675,702	\$679,362

ICNY is undertaking a strategic analysis and long-term planning effort. Projections have been made to determine the appropriate mix of contributions, grants, service fees and income from a planned giving program. Such a program could involve donor advised funds, charitable gift annuities, charitable lead trusts and other similar instruments; the principal approach would be to conform such instruments to the donor's existing estate or gift plans. Our intention is that the income from such funds would always be subsidiary in amount to that generated by direct contributions and grants.

In this regard, we are pleased to announce the formation of the James Parks Morton Legacy Circle, a group of special friends that thoughtfully aim to ensure ICNY's financial stability through one-time gifts or estate plans. Our financial experts at First Republic Bank are available to help guide donors and their advisors through the process of selecting appropriate financial instruments that will be mutually beneficial to our Legacy Members and to ICNY. Please feel to contact Ellen Greeley, Development Director, for more information.



Stephen Guittard, *Treasurer*

Come be a member of the newly created James Parks Morton Legacy Circle. It's never too early and not too late to think about including ICNY into your estate planning. Our very qualified team of financial experts at First Republic Bank is ready to work with you and your legal and financial advisors in turning your commitment to interfaith collaboration into securing a future for ICNY.

For more information, please call Ellen Greeley, Development Director at (212) 870-3510

Statement of Financial Position

	2012	2011	Cash Flow
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$469,141	\$155,750	
Pledges and other receivables	174,717	170,654	(4,063)
Investments	138,647	383,857	245,210
Prepaid expenses	25,878	12,835	(13,043)
Property and equipment, net	899	2,236	1,337
	\$809,282	\$725,332	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$51,442	\$45,970	\$5,472
Contract advance	82,138	-	\$82,138
Total Liabilities	133,580	45,970	
Net Assets			
Unrestricted	211,975	277,613	
Temporarily restricted	463,727	401,749	
Total Net Assets	675,702	679,362	
	\$809,282	\$725,332	

The 2011 and 2012 financial amounts are audited. Financial statements of The Interfaith Center of New York, Inc. will be available by writing to The Interfaith Center of New York, Inc., 475 Riverside Drive, suite 540, New York, NY 10115 or to the Department of State Office of Charities Registration, Albany, NY 12331.

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New to ICNY

New ICNY Board Members

Joining the ICNY Board are **Preeta D. Bansal** and **Tonya Gonnella Frichner**, two dynamic women attorneys whose prestigious legal careers have touched thousands during their prestigious legal careers with their talents at exercising the rule of law to protect and promote the practice of religion and religious traditions



here and abroad. Preeta D. Bansal has recently joined HSBC as Global General Counsel for Litigation & Regulatory Affairs. Previously she served as the General Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor in President Obama's White House. Prior to that, she was a law partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom and the Solicitor

General of the State of New York. Ms. Bansal's interest in serving on ICNY's board comes from her voluntary experiences as Advisory Board Member of the Clinton Global Initiative and as Commissioner and Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, a bipartisan federal agency. She is currently directing ICNY's strategic analysis.



Tonya Gonnella Frichner's academic and professional life has been devoted to the pursuit of human rights for Indigenous Peoples. She is president and founder of the American Indian Law Alliance and a professor of American Indian law and international human rights. She has worked closely with the Grand

Council of Chiefs of the Haudenosaunee specifically with the leaders of the Onondaga Nation, and the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council of the Lakota Nations. Ms. Gonnella Frichner has served for three years as the North American Regional Representative to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and has been an active participant and legal and diplomatic counsel to Indigenous delegations in virtually all UN international forums affecting Indigenous Peoples. She sits on several boards of nonprofit organizations, including serving as Chairperson of the Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Development and Legal Advisor and Board Member for the Iroquois Nationals Lacrosse Team.

NEW STAFF

Rev. Darren Ferguson

Outreach Coordinator, Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support & Pastor, Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Far Rockaway, NY

Darren joins Annie Rawlings in recruiting and training Harlem-based congregations to become welcoming communities for parolees and their families. His passion for advocating for the disenfranchised is clearly identifiable by his ministry, preaching and community organizing. He has recently formed the citywide "Starve the Beast" campaign that aims to decrease gun violence and community apathy and encourage the growth of neighborhood based programs for conflict resolution, reentry, and community empowerment. Darren earned his Masters of Divinity from New York Theological Seminary, where he was named the Barbara J. and William M. Howard Scholar for 2006-2007. He is currently a Doctoral Candidate at NYTS, class of 2013. He was honored in 2009 as a "Pastor of Distinction" by the St. Luke's Cathedral in Laurelton, NY and for his work in the areas of youth advocacy and civil rights by the New York City Council. In 2010, Darren was bestowed with the "House of Justice" Award by Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network. Unfortunately, his home and church were severely damaged by Hurricane Sandy but he plans on rebuilding.

Kevin Childress

Social Media, IT, and Office Manager; Project Coordinator, Debate in the Neighborhood

Kevin is ICNY's "Renaissance Man," serving in many positions. He maintains ICNY's e-media by updating ICNY's website, blogging and tweeting. He is the key person in recruiting houses of worship to serve as sites for debate clubs for high school students. Kevin retired in 2001 from a professional career in the financial news reporting industry, where he worked extensively in editing, information technology and management. From 2002-2004 he served in the U.S. Peace Corps in Armenia as a Small Enterprise Development Consultant. He has since divided his time between serving humanitarian organizations and attending religious education courses. He has a BA in Religion from Hunter College.

Interns

Each year ICNY is blessed with interns from leading seminaries, colleges and universities who spend a summer, semester or year assisting in administering ICNY programs. A special shout out goes to Keith F. Connor, Eden Consenstein, Natasha Japanwala, Andrew Massena, Katherine Maxeiner, Cara Ryan and Allegra Wiprud for providing top-notch skills and making ICNY's programs most successful. We are forever grateful.

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Rev. Darren A. Ferguson, *Outreach Coordinator, Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support*

Kevin Childress, *Social Media, IT, and Office Manager; Project Coordinator for Debate in the Neighborhood*

Ellen Greeley, *Development Director*

Interns: Keith F. Connor, Eden Consenstein, Natasha Japanwala, Andrew Massena, Katherine Maxeiner, Cara Ryan and Allegra Wiprud



Rev. Darren Ferguson & friends at the Harlem Community Justice Center Family Street Fair (7/14).

