



Participant Biographies

Venerable Guo Chan Fashi has been studying under the late Most Venerable Master Sheng Yen, founder of Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association since 1991. She received full ordination as a Buddhist nun of the Chinese Mahayana tradition in 1992. She served as a director of the Anhe branch in downtown Taipei for more than 3 years since 1996. Throughout these years of service, she has demonstrated great flexibility as an open-minded administrator and creativity in developing new programs for Buddhist practice and meditation. She also served as executive secretary to the Venerable Master Sheng Yen for six years since 2000. Guo Chan Fashi participated in many international conferences on the themes of Spiritual Environmentalism, peace, education and youth in the countries of Jordan, USA, Africa, India and Europe. Currently she works with Chang Ji Fashi in the fields of interfaith and NGOs to continue the legacy of the late Venerable Master Sheng Yen in sharing the wisdom and compassion of Buddhism with people around the world.

Michael Callaghan, C.O., is a priest of the Brooklyn Oratory of St. Philip Neri, a Roman Catholic congregation located in downtown Brooklyn. In the course of his career, he has served in a variety of pastoral and non-profit roles. Since 2006, Michael has been privileged to serve as the Executive Director of Nazareth Housing, a vibrant and growing nonprofit dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness, strengthening families and building economic security for low income individuals and households. Born of the homesteading movement in the Lower East Side and incorporated as a 501c3 in 1983, Nazareth Housing' current portfolio includes supportive low income housing, emergency family shelter, extensive homelessness prevention services and urgent needs assistance, including Hurricane Sandy recovery. In addition to his work with Nazareth Housing, Michael is in his second term as President of the Board of Directors for Homeless Services United (HSU), a consortium of forty-five nonprofit organizations specializing in single and family shelters, transitional housing, youth shelters, senior shelters and a wide array of homelessness prevention efforts. He is active in advocacy with city and state leadership. Michael's academic studies have included Loyola University in Maryland, Marquette University, The Catholic University of America and St. Mary's Seminary and University. Currently he is completing his Master in Nonprofit Administration at the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame.

Susan A. Nayowith runs the Office of Client Advocacy at the NYC Department of Homeless Services. The Office of Client Advocacy assists clients by providing an advocates voice within DHS, as well as with provider organizations and other agencies. It also works with clients before they enter the shelter system with a goal of preventing homelessness, while they are in the shelter system to help them to move into permanent housing and after they leave shelter to ensure they remain in the community. Susan has spent the past 25 years of her career working with homeless individuals and families in shelter and community settings with non profit and government agencies. She has experience in mental health, substance abuse and community services, providing direct services to clients, supervision to staff and the development and administration of programs. Throughout this time she has supervised students in the field in the areas of clinical practice, policy and research. Ms. Nayowith received her BA in American History at Boston University, her M.S.S.W. in 1984 at Columbia University School of Social Work (CUSS) and her Ph.D. in 2000 at New York University School of Social Work. She teaches courses about homeless policy, nonprofit organizations in various academic institutions including Silberman School of Social Work and Hunter's Department of Urban Affairs.

Sara Zuiderveen is the Assistant Commissioner for the Prevention Services division of the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS), where she administers 26 million dollars in Homelessness Prevention contracts with 20 social service vendors. She joined the agency in early 2004, assisting with the planning and implementation of the HomeBase homelessness prevention program, an innovative pilot program that was expanded city-wide in 2007. Previously at DHS, she was the Director of Program Analysis for Prevention, managing data collection, reporting, quality assurance, and ongoing program development for HomeBase and other prevention efforts. Prior to that, she worked in the field of child abuse prevention as a program analyst for Healthy Families America, a national home visiting program based in Chicago.

Larry Wood has worked at Goddard Riverside Community Center since 1987 in different programs as a tenant and community organizer. He oversees an advocacy program called the "Family Council" and supervises the tenant organizers at the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project. Larry also serves on the board of several non-profits. He has been the board



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president of the Citywide Task Force on Housing Court since 1993 and also serves on the board of The Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness & Housing and the NYS Alliance for Quality Education. Larry also represents GRCC in many coalitions, currently including the New York Network for Action on Medicare & Social Security (NYNAMSS), Housing First!, Real Rent Reform Campaign, NY Immigration Coalition, and Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE). Larry holds a Bachelor of Engineering from The Cooper Union.

Jeffrey Caltabiano is the Assistant Program Director at CAMBA where he works with the CAMBA's Gathering Place Homeless Drop-in Center. Each day the Brooklyn Drop-in Center serves homeless men and women age 18 and older. Open 13-hours-a-day/seven days a week, the center provides a safe, sanitary and stable alternative to the street using an individualized and flexible approach to serve the hard-to-reach homeless population. Jeffrey has over fifteen years of experience in all aspects of organizational and community development, with an emphasis on affordable housing, redevelopment, reinvestment, economic development, workforce development, homeless services, education, and community technology.

Jennifer Laurie is the Assistant Director of Housing Court Answers. Jenny Laurie has been at Housing Court Answers since 2008. She works with unrepresented people in Housing Court through the organization's information tables and telephone hotline. She also works on the organization's advocacy campaigns which are focused on ensuring justice and fairness for the many thousands of low income people in Housing Court. From 1988 to 2008, Jenny worked at Met Council on Housing, first as organizer and later as director, on strengthening rights and protections for the city's tenants. Born but not raised in New York, Jenny now lives with her family on the Upper West Side.

Christy Parque, MSW, is the Executive Director of Homeless Services United. Ms. Parque brings with her over 10 years of experience in organizing and policy development around health care, homeless and labor issues. She was formerly the Associate and Organizing Director of Friends and Relatives of the Institutionalized Aged (FRIA) and Program Director of First Church Shelter of Cambridge in Massachusetts. She received her Master's Degree of Social Work from Boston University and Bachelors Degree of Social Work from San Francisco State University.

Lysander Puccio is the coordinator of the Robert Daniel Jones Memorial Shelter at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. She has also worked at the Center for Urban Community Services (CUCS), the nation's largest provider of supportive- housing social services and is experienced with doing street outreach for homeless people.

Marc Greenberg is the Founder and Executive Director of the Interfaith Assembly on Housing and Homelessness, where he also co-founded the Education-Outreach life-skills program in 1989. This life skills program has been adapted and replicated in Queens, Bronx, Bronxville, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. Over 1,000 individuals have graduated from these programs. He also helped establish the Interfaith Assembly's Speakers Bureau –in which program graduates share their stories of recovery from homelessness - which has now spoken on over 1,000 occasions. Marc coordinates the public policy advocacy efforts of the Interfaith Assembly which has played an active role in many city wide coalitions and promoted policies that resulted in the production and preservation of hundreds of thousands of units of affordable housing, increase in income support and emergency assistance for tens of thousands of individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Jeanne Newman founded SHARE the Project, Inc. was in 1987 while she was a high school teacher at a public school in Westchester, NY. The group's goal is to involve high school students and youth in community service. In the nearly 25 years since its birth, SHARE has helped guide students toward a clearer understanding of the social responsibilities required to ensure a brighter tomorrow for everyone. One of its flagship events is an annual, student-run Thanksgiving Dinner for the Homeless, which serves a delicious, nourishing Thanksgiving Dinner to over 500 men, women, and children from the five boroughs and Westchester. The dinner is run by 300 student volunteers from local high schools, who help to cook, set up, decorate, serve, and clean up. SHARE is a long-time partner of the Midnight Run, Inc., a group that delivers food, clothing, and kindness to New York City's homeless.



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Jim Melchiorre is a member of the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew and has been a shelter volunteer for 12 years. Jim is a journalist and video producer who also works part-time as an ESL teacher. He and Cheryl Allen-Melchiorre are the parents of three young-adult sons.

William Burnett is a Roman Catholic and a lifelong activist and organizer. He studied philosophy and theology at Wadhams Hall Seminary-College. William has been a leader of Picture the Homeless since 2004. He is also a former staffer at PTH, and as the Faith Community Outreach Coordinator, William led our Potter's Field Campaign to victory on a number of key demands regarding the handling and interment of the indigent dead in New York City, and regarding the right of homeless and poor people left behind to have closure in the loss of those close to them. William currently serves as the treasurer of the board of directors of Picture the Homeless; and is the administrator of information technology at Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing. William's writing has been published in *The Christian Citizen* and in many progressive blogs. William currently writes for *Our Daily Thread*, a Catholic-community progressive political blog sponsored by Catholics United.

Matt Dunbar is the Advocacy & Community Relations Manager at Habitat for Humanity - New York City. For the past 7 years, Matt has worked with faith communities, educating and mobilizing New Yorkers around issues of social justice including substance abuse, aging, environmental justice, poverty, and of course housing. Matt is a former employee of the Interfaith Center of New York, having once organized previous Marshall Meyer Retreats at Stony Point Retreat Center.

Patrick Markee is the Senior Policy Analyst and Director of the Advocacy Department at Coalition for the Homeless – the nation's oldest advocacy and direct service organization helping homeless men, women, and children – where he has worked since 1995. He has authored numerous research studies and briefing papers on affordable housing and homeless policies in New York City, including *Housing a Growing City: New York's Bust in Boom Times* and *Legacy of Neglect: The Impact of Welfare Reform on New York's Homeless*. In addition to studies for the Coalition, he has written articles and reviews for *The Nation* and *The New York Times Book Review*. He is also a member of the board of directors of the National Coalition for the Homeless.

Ted Houghton, is the Executive Director of the Supportive Housing Network of New York, a member organization of over 200 nonprofit supportive housing developers and providers that conducts training, technical assistance, research, public education and advocacy to expand access to supportive housing. Under Ted's leadership, the Network has substantially increased production of supportive housing in New York, and made supportive housing a central component of New York's Medicaid redesign plans. Prior to joining the Network in 2006, Ted was a writer and policy adviser to government, foundations and nonprofit organizations. He is the author of numerous reports and best practices papers on affordable and supportive housing, mental health, employment and homelessness, and has also worked for the New York City Department of Homeless Services and the Coalition for the Homeless.

Barika Williams serves as Policy Director at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD) where she works on the development, preservation, and promotion of affordable housing and community development policies for New York City. Previously she worked at NYU's Metropolitan Center for Urban Education where she was part of an innovative project that sought to unite the fields of neighborhood-based education, community development, community engagement, and healthy communities to achieve better outcomes for disadvantaged youth, their families and the surrounding community. Ms. Williams was a researcher at the Urban Institute in Washington, DC where she published on a number of topics including affordable housing practices, foreclosures, mixed-use neighborhoods, community development, community engagement, urban mobility, and post-Katrina Housing recovery, and the links between health, education, and housing on neighborhoods. Ms. Williams received a Master in City Planning from the MIT and a BA from Washington University in St. Louis.



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Hon. Letitia James is the current New York City Council member for Brooklyn's 35th Council District. Elected in November 2003, she represents the neighborhoods of Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, parts of Crown Heights, Prospect Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant. Letitia is Chair of the Committee on Economic Development and the Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management. Letitia also sits on Committees on Contracts and Small Business. She is an American lawyer, activist and politician in the Working Families Party. Council Member Letitia "Tish" James was born in Brooklyn, and except for her law school education at Howard University in Washington, D.C., she has lived in Brooklyn all her life. She loves her community, in all its diversity, and has devoted her life to helping it thrive

Tejpreet Kaur joined the Sikh Coalition in 2009 as Social and Community Services Manager. She works with Sikh youth and families in low-income neighborhoods in New York City, promoting and empowering new youth leaders and organizing around issues of social justice. Tejpreet's deep passion for social justice brings 13 years of experience in the field, including working on systemic issues affecting and limiting advancement for women, immigrants, low-income households and communities of color in Canada and the United States. Tejpreet has spent time in Namibia conducting research for the University of Toronto, where she investigated how HIV/AIDS contributed to economic instability for women living in informal sectors. She was selected for the Human Rights Institute Fellowship in 2012. Tejpreet holds a Bachelors of Arts and Sciences from the University of Toronto with a specialization in Women and Gender Studies.

Sunita Viswanath is co-founder and board member of Women for Afghan Women and editor of Women for Afghan Women: Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future, Palgrave/St. Martin's Press (October 2002). Sunita worked for many years as director of grants and programs at The Sister Fund, where WAW was founded and incubated. From 2006 to 2009, Sunita was executive director of Funders Concerned About AIDS. Sunita now volunteers full-time for WAW. Sunita was a 2011 recipient of the Feminist Majority Foundation's Global Women's Rights Award for her work with WAW. In 2011, she cofounded another grassroots organization, Sadhana: Coaliton of Progressive Hindus. She lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her husband Stephan Shaw and their three sons: Gautama, Akash, and Satya.