



The Interfaith Center of New York

December 2013

Dear Friend,

Greetings and blessings during this holiday season.

Thank you for giving so generously to ICNY in previous appeals. Your on-going support helps ICNY meet its mission by making New York and the world safer for people of diverse faiths. In this letter and the 2013 annual report now available on the website, we will share with you a few examples of our work, which were only made possible by your caring gifts.

In the recreation room of a brand new Afghan mosque in Flushing, NY an African- American Shaykh is training three Afghan Imams on domestic violence prevention. "You don't need to tell us about the Qur'an," they say through the Pashto-English interpreter. "We already know the Qur'an. Please give us information we need about domestic violence."

Domestic Violence Training for Grassroots Religious Leaders has been part of ICNY's work since 2009, in conjunction with the domestic violence prevention organization CONNECT. We trained ordained and lay religious leaders in the complex dynamics of intimate partner abuse as well as methods for faith communities to mobilize and take action against domestic violence.

At the Harlem Community Justice Center in East Harlem, a parolee describes the effect of coffee and danishes on Thursday mornings offered by diverse religious leaders participating in ICNY's Reentry Family and Circles of Support program: "Everything in the system tells you that you are nothing and yet in this program they serve you orange juice while you are waiting to see the parole officer and judge. It's just mind blowing."

Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support, in partnership with the Harlem Community Justice Center, ICNY has been connecting religious leaders in Harlem with formerly incarcerated individuals since 2012 to reduce recidivism. The program, funded through a valuable grant by the J.C. Flowers Foundation, is expanding to include collaboration with an ex-offender support group called Network. But for the popular *Thursday Hospitality* and the *Food for Thought* programs to carry on, they require additional financial backing.

"I learned a lot about other cultures and religions, which I believe is a very important part of acceptance and integration within society," said one of more than 40 high school participants in ICNY's unique program Debate in the Neighborhood, attesting to the extraordinary value of the experience.

On the surface, **Debate in the Neighborhood** provides competitive debate training for immigrant and underserved high school students of diverse faiths at houses of worship around New York. Yet, the democracy building exercises serve as a catalyst in breaking barriers associated with prejudice, hatred and intolerance and building comradeship among New York City's future leaders. This critically acclaimed program is in high demand and is funded currently by the Foundation to Promote Open Society. It needs supplementary resources to extend its reach to other students seeking oratory skill development.

ICNY is empowering religious leaders to enact change in New York. We are helping to reframe conflict among people of diverse religion, faith and culture. We need your support to continue this crucial work. Our accomplishments can only be sustained by a tax deductible contribution from you. We ask you to once more consider ICNY in your end of year gift-giving and strengthen ICNY's ability to fulfill its mission.

For your convenience, please go to www.interfaithcenter.org and click on "Donate Now Online" where you will be transferred to the **Network for Good** website for payment. If you prefer to contribute by credit card, please call (212) 870-3510 or mail a check to **The Interfaith Center of New York, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 540, New York, NY 10115.**

Thank you for believing in The Interfaith Center of New York.

Sincerely,



The Reverend Chloe Breyer
Executive Director



The Very Reverend James Parks Morton
Founder & Chairman Emeritus