



# The Interfaith Center of New York 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



# Letter from the Executive Director

Week in and week out, individuals, organizations, and government entities alike approach the Interfaith Center of New York for guidance, action, and an answer to the question: *How do we find hope amid so much hate?* As leaders in the fight for religious diversity, we are grateful to be able to answer the calls we receive, thanks entirely to the support of our donors.

With your help, ICNY works to advocate for, train, and lift up faith leaders in every borough to overcome prejudice, violence, and misunderstanding. While we continue to share our model for grassroots interfaith work with delegations internationally, here in New York we strive to break new ground for the common good, in particular within the congressional and courts systems.

Here are just a few highlights of our work since July of 2017:

- ICNY provided hands-on civic leadership training to **18 emerging grassroots leaders** of diverse faiths including Baptist, Buddhist, Muslim, and Mormon. The program culminated in exciting community-based projects as included in the pages of this report
- Along with The Micah Institute and our partner the New Sanctuary Movement, ICNY **successfully lobbied the Mayor's Office to adopt stricter checks on local law enforcement and city agencies** cooperating with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- We saw our successful, long-running *Religious Leaders and the Courts Roundtables* program **replicated and adopted by the New York State Unified Court System** in the form of community outreach breakfasts for faith leaders
- We **brought faith communities' perspectives** to the New York State Assembly Roundtable hearing on foster care support after President Trump's "zero-tolerance" policy, and we continue to lend our support to the Separated Children Accountability Response Act (SCAR), which aims to introduce a state reporting requirement for foster agencies with federal contracts
- And our work with Harlem-based St. Luke AME Church led to the New York State Unified Court System's interest in **expanding centers that offer better court-sanctioned alternative sites** for the supervised exchange of children between justice-involved family members, and to financially support other houses of worship who also want to provide this game-changing service

This work could not happen without the faith leaders we train, just as it could not happen without you. We are particularly grateful to our generous funders and grant partners, including the **National Endowment for the Humanities, Ms. Barbara Slifka and the Joseph & Sylvia Slifka Foundation, Trinity Church Wall Street, the J.C. Flowers Foundation, and Episcopal Charities**, as well as our many other long-standing and new supporters.

When he founded ICNY 21 years ago, Dean James Parks Morton was cognizant of the words of the late Kofi Annan, that "There will be no peace until there is peace between religions." We hold these words and Jim's strong vision close to our heart as we enter our 22nd year as a non-profit dedicated to ending misunderstanding, violence, and prejudice, just as we hold you and your support in the highest esteem.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer

# New to the Interfaith Center of New York

This year saw the addition of three talented new staff members, who together help make the organization the strongest it has been in years. We are also very proud to welcome former Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger and Dr. Rajinder P. Gandhi to the Board of Directors.



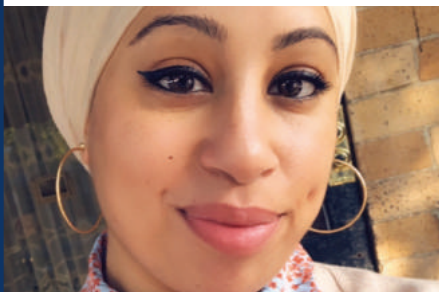
A retired Associate Clinical Professor of Surgery at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, **Board Member Rajinder P. Gandhi, MD** has been an attending pediatric surgeon at the Valley Hospital for over 30 years, and has been featured in *New York Magazine* as one of the best physicians in the New York area. Born in Burma (Myanmar), he has volunteered for eight medical missions abroad. Having received his teacher's training in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction at the University of Massachusetts, Dr. Gandhi has given over 40 talks and workshops on Mindfulness at the Valley Hospital and Ridgewood YMCA.



From 1998 to 2016, **Board Member Ruth Messinger** was the CEO of American Jewish World Service, and she currently serves as its Global Ambassador, working to engage rabbis and international interfaith leaders to work against poverty and oppression. Ruth also works as a consultant for AIDS-Free World and does social justice teaching, activism and organizing work broadly in the American Jewish community including at the Jewish Theological Seminary and at the Marlene Meyerson JCC in Manhattan. Previously, Ruth served as an elected member of the New York City Council and Manhattan borough president.



**Operations Manager Eddie Diaz** joins us with an extensive background in the operations of both nonprofit organizations and independent production companies alike. After graduating from New York University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Media, Culture, and Communications, he became an AmeriCorps Vista member, working to combat poverty in California through successful adult education initiatives. He then returned to New York to champion nonprofits fighting for social and economic causes, and also continues to produce films that are both entertaining and socially-conscious.



**Hanadi Doleh, Program Associate for Community Partnerships**, is the quintessential New Yorker: a hijab-wearing, attitude-toting Brooklynite, born of Muslim parents who immigrated to America for a better life. After receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, she pursued a Master of Arts in International Relations at CUNY Brooklyn, which led to her work in social justice activism for underrepresented communities. Hanadi has spent her adult life working in and for New York's Muslim community in particular, and believes in being the change she wants to see.



Dedicated to nonprofits fighting for social justice since 2010, **Director of Development Jonill Mayer** brings a strong background in strategy and events to her role at the Interfaith Center of New York. A graduate of Cornell University with a master's degree from Sotheby's, Jonill's background in hospitality and the art world helped shape her work as a nonprofit consultant, during which time she managed, created, and reinvigorated fundraising events for clients like the Anti-Violence Project, OutRight Action International (formerly IGLHRC), and the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care.

# ADVOCACY IN 2017/1018



*The Interfaith Center of New York has made certain that diverse faith voices are around the table when it comes to speaking up for the rights of our newest New Yorkers.*

— Ravi Ragbir,  
Immigration Activist



Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy Fellow Davanie Singhroy attends a rally in response to attacks on young women of minority religious groups in India.



ICNY brings religiously diverse leaders to support the Fourth Universalist Society's physical sanctuary for Aura Hernandez on Maundy Thursday, 2018.

For the last 18 months, communities of faith across New York have worked with ICNY's help to provide support and sanctuary for immigrants of all backgrounds. From praying at vigils outside the Federal Building and Varick Street Detention Center to pressing city government on stronger policies preventing ICE collaboration with local law enforcement, ICNY continues to support immigrants who are being forced onto the margins of society by hostile immigration policies.



*ICNY makes sure that women of faith are recognized for their leadership inside and outside their communities—whether they are ordained or not.*

— Dr. Debbie Almontaser,  
Muslim Community Network  
(pictured with Rabbi Marisa James  
and Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer)



# ICNY IN THE PRESS

## 1 Vigil for victims of terror truck attack offers messages of peace

Ginger Adams Otis



## 2 Allies Form Human Chain Around Muslims Praying During Travel Ban Protest

Bahij Chance Square. (AND A sundown interfaith c



## 3 Islamophobia disqualifies Mike Pompeo to serve as secretary of state

By Chloe Breyer and Debbie Almontaser

Chloe Breyer of New



## 4 Immigrant mother hiding in NY sanctuary church vows to stay

By The Associated Press

Mike Pompeo By now the CIA Direct hearings b the positio



Rev. Chloe Breyer, right, washes Aura Hernandez' feet during a service at the Fourth Universalist Society in New York, Thursday, March 23, 2018. People attended the service to show support for Hernandez, an undocumented immigrant that has taken sanctuary in the church to prevent her from being deported and separated from her family. During the Maundy Thursday service people washed Hernandez and other undocumented immigrants' feet, recreating the moment when Jesus washed his apostles' feet. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

Since 2014, at least 70 publicly known cases have emerged of people seeking sanctuary in churches for immigration-related reasons, according to Church World Service, a New York organization that supports the sanctuary efforts. Of those, 51 have come up since President Donald Trump took office in January 2017 and



In a CBSN interview after the deadly anti-Semitic attack in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, the Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer tackles the question: *How do we find hope amid so much hate?*

1. The *New York Daily News* covers the ICNY co-sponsored interfaith vigil following the lower Manhattan terror attack on October 31, 2017.
2. The *Huffington Post* covers interfaith prayers on the 1-year anniversary of President Trump's Muslim ban as coordinated by former Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy fellow Imam Asad Dandia.
3. In a *Daily News* opinion piece, Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer and Dr. Debbie Almontaser explain why islamophobia disqualifies Pompeo to serve as secretary of state.
4. AP article shows Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer as she washes the feet of Aura Hernandez, an undocumented immigrant that has taken sanctuary at Fourth Universalist Society.

# INTERFAITH CIVIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

This year, thanks to the support of Trinity Church Wall Street, the Interfaith Center of New York launched the **Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy (ICLA)**, an intensive ten-month training program to provide a religiously-diverse group of leaders with the civic training and seed funding they need make a difference in today's polarized climate. Here are some of the unique community-based fellow-led projects that are making a difference in diverse communities throughout our city.



Trainer-led workshops, which included time for community building, focused on the city's complex government agencies, civic institutions, legal systems, and political processes. Trainers included representatives from the **Industrial Areas Foundation**, the **Mayor's Office**, the **New York Police Department**, and the **Center for Court Innovations**.



**Imam Dr. Ahmet Atlig's fellowship project** enables clergy to travel throughout New York City to meet with Turkish immigrants seeking resettlement and to offer them grief counseling and other support such as crisis ministry and referrals for mental health issues.



Fellow **Todd Fine** organized an interfaith dialogue to explore how Mormons and Muslims may benefit from conversations focused on their common experiences in the areas of faith and responding to outside perceptions.



**Manbo Dòwòti Désir**, a high priestess in the Haitian Vodou tradition, organized two community dialogues to explore the need for a collective place of worship for members of the city's African diaspora faith communities.



Published author **Dr. Marie Lily Cerat** created a series of workshops to train and subsequently place five Haitian Creole-speaking translators with organizations that provide services for domestic violence survivors, including Haitian immigrant women.



Fellows **Reverend Kyndra Frazier** and **Giovanna Maselli** partnered together to offer a weekend retreat that built awareness and encouraged greater compassion between Baptist and Buddhist communities.



*As we near the end of the training period and begin work on our projects, I am grateful not just for the knowledge I've gained, but for the relationships and conversations I've had with the fellows over the past six months. It is uniquely valuable to regularly meet and interact with people from such different walks of life, who are so different in their practices, lifestyles, even looks, but who share a common interest in furthering the well-being of their communities, and of our communal city.*

— Activist, parent, entrepreneur, and ICLA Fellow **Naureen Akhter**



## 35th Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat for Social Justice

Since 1998, ICNY has gathered religious and civic leaders together to address shared social justice concerns and build relationships of mutual understanding and respect. On May 2, 2018, the Interfaith Center of New York, the Micah Institute, and the New York State chapter of the Poor People's Campaign, brought together 125 religious and civic leaders to explore practical strategies for nonviolent action rooted in the diverse faiths of our pluralistic society.



# ICNY 2017-2018 Donors

We are very pleased to publicly acknowledge our donors and friends through this listing, and we apologize for any inadvertent omissions or incorrect information.

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Visit [www.interfaithcenter.org/donation](http://www.interfaithcenter.org/donation) to learn about the many ways to support the Interfaith Center of New York. For details about ICNY's Planned Giving Circle, created to honor the Very Rev. James Morton on the occasion of his retirement, please contact our new Director of Development Jonill Mayer at 212-870-3511.

# ICNY 2017-2018 Financial Information

Fiscal year revenues were down 19% from the prior year. The largest factor was a significant grant, received at the end of fiscal 2017, which funded the inaugural Civic Leadership Academy for a period of 18 months. We are hopeful for future funding and the continued success of the Academy, which we believe can yield more classes of talented future interfaith leaders. Our grant funding partners overall continue to fund important programming, and have covered about 40% of our total expenses over the past few years. Absent the fiscal year impact of grants, other revenue was down 3% for the year. Expenses were also down 3% for the year. We rely significantly on donations from supporting individuals and organizations. In an era where prejudice, violence, and misunderstanding are on the rise, the mission of the Interfaith Center of New York remains vital. We are grateful for our many partners and donors whose contributions and involvement sustain this work. With your help, we look forward to expanding our resources to match the current challenges we face.



Kevin Oro-Hahn, Treasurer

## FISCAL YEAR 2018 REVENUE

Contributions & Grants	383,023
Contract Revenue	112,051
Program Fees, Special Events, etc.	196,164
In-Kind Contributions, Investments, Interest, etc.	49,548
<b>Total</b>	<b>740,786</b>

## FISCAL YEAR 2018 EXPENDITURES

Programs	445,968
Fundraising	172,909
Administration	239,756
<b>Total</b>	<b>858,633</b>

Financial statements of The Interfaith Center of New York, Inc. are available at [www.interfaithcenter.org](http://www.interfaithcenter.org).

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# The James Parks Morton Interfaith Awards Dinner

Thank you again to those who supported our work through this vibrant event, which took place on June 11, 2018 at the Tribeca Rooftop in Manhattan. For details on how to become an early sponsor or ticket holder for future events, please send an email to [jonill@interfaithcenter.org](mailto:jonill@interfaithcenter.org). All images © Carolina Kroon, [www.carolinakroon.com](http://www.carolinakroon.com).



Pratima Doobay, member of Sadhana Coalition of Progressive Hindus, leads the opening prayer



Honorees Ryan Deitsch (left), Mary Jane Brock (center), and Chris Grady (right)



Zuhair Hussaini offers the Muslim call to prayer



U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, Honoree, poses with presenter Carol Bellamy



Lieutenant Rafet Awad of the NYPD talks about the benefits of ICNY's cultural diversity training video



Honorary Board Member Hans Li and Jennifer Kouvant



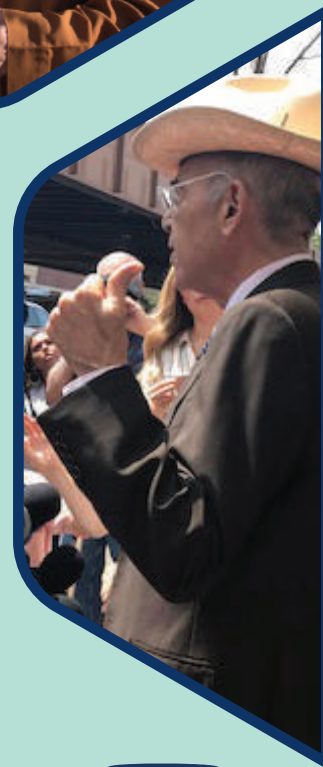
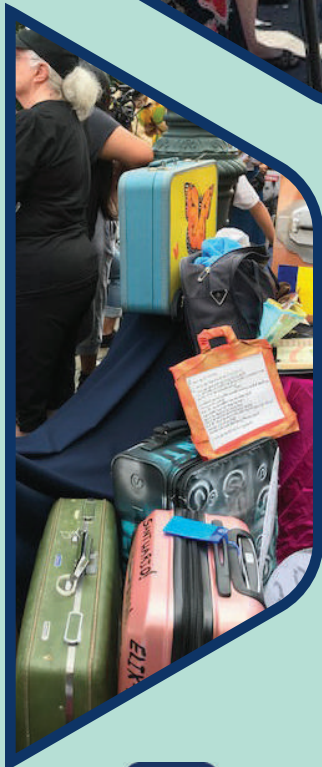
Guest and ICNY Supporter Ken Bryant



Prof. Ephraim Isaac and ICNY Board Co-Chair Dr. Kusumita P. Pedersen

# MISSION STATEMENT

The Interfaith Center of New York (ICNY) works to overcome prejudice, violence, and misunderstanding by activating the power of the city's grassroots religious and civic leaders and their communities.



InterfaithCenterNY



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