

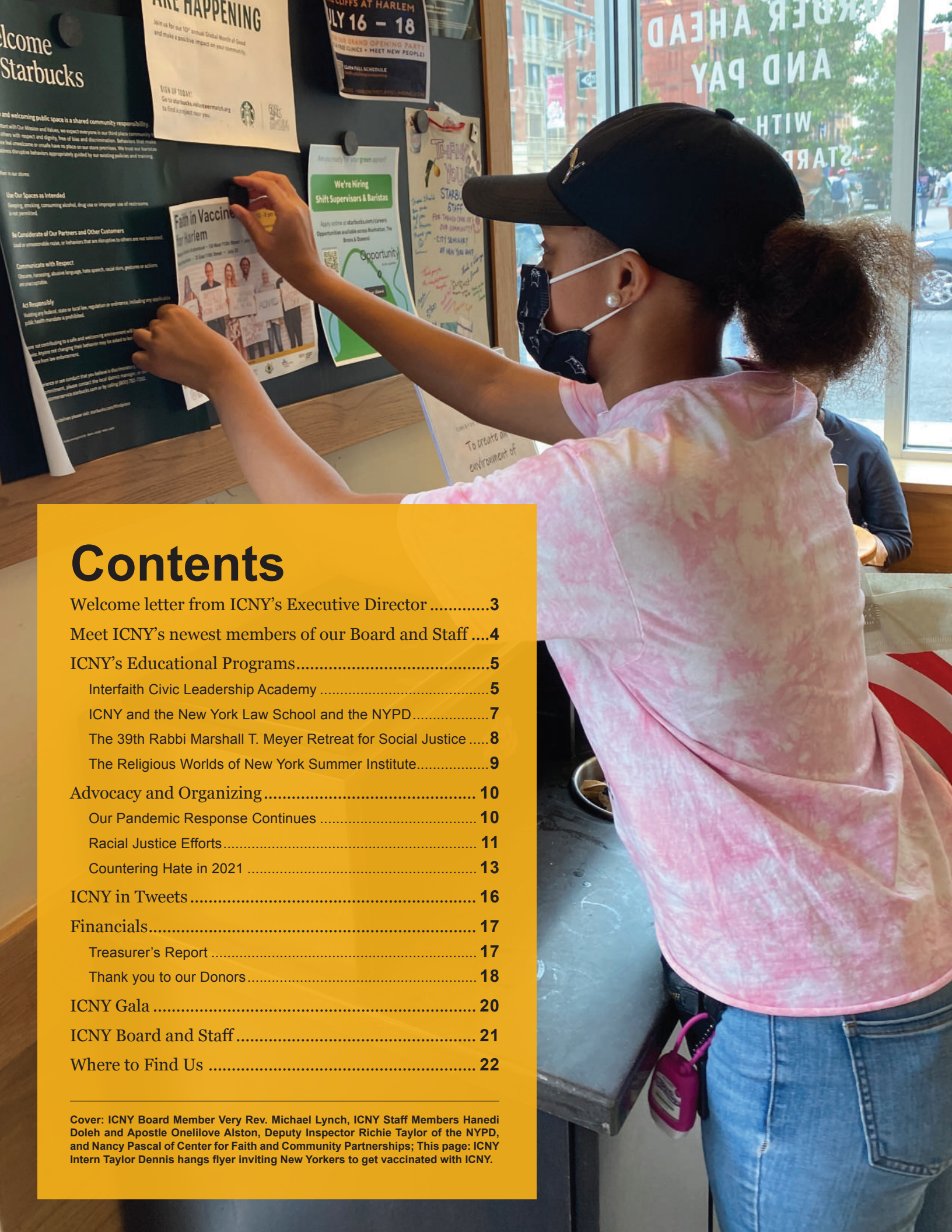


ICNY

Interfaith Center of New York



2021 Annual Report



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Cover: ICNY Board Member Very Rev. Michael Lynch, ICNY Staff Members Hanedi Doleh and Apostle Onellilove Alston, Deputy Inspector Richie Taylor of the NYPD, and Nancy Pascal of Center for Faith and Community Partnerships; This page: ICNY Intern Taylor Dennis hangs flyer inviting New Yorkers to get vaccinated with ICNY.

Welcome from ICNY's Executive Director

For ICNY, 2021 has been a time of surprising growth.

Prompted by current needs in NYC, we emerged from the pandemic with many exciting new initiatives that call for action from diverse faith leaders.

For example, ICNY:

- Vaccinated over 100 individuals in vaccine-hesitant communities of faith with the help of **NYC Test & Trace, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer**, and multiple houses of worship.
- Held mayoral and DA candidate forums in advance of the summer primary elections.
- Created a racial justice compact to highlight priorities for the incoming local administration, including the need for an office dedicated to faith and community partnerships.

In 2021, ICNY also rekindled programs that had been changed, postponed, or conducted remotely due to the pandemic. We offer them now with new purpose and improvements. They include:

- Civics training for a new generation of New York's diverse religious leaders with our **Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy**.
- A renewed partnership with **New York Law School** to provide religious diversity training for law students and alumni.
- The return of our **Religious Worlds of NY Summer Institute** for teachers.
- A contract with the **NYPD** to update ICNY's police-facing religious diversity training video and make it accessible on the handheld devices of 36,000 officers.

I am delighted to share this year's report with you, and to announce some very exciting news: ICNY was recently selected to receive **The Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize**, administered biannually by **Hofstra University** to those who "have demonstrated extraordinary leadership, courage and a capacity for inspiring in others a willingness to embrace the vulnerability that is the key to true religious dialogue."

At this time ICNY would like to express our deepest gratitude to two retiring Board Members and extraordinary leaders: **Sister Aisha Al-Adawiya**, who served as Vice Chair at the Interfaith Center of New York since 2007, and **Matt Nimetz**, who served as chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee since 2016.

Furthermore, we are grateful to all our supporters, in particular **Barbara Slifka** and the **Joseph & Sylvia Slifka Foundation**, the **Robert Sterling Clark Foundation**, and **Trinity Church Wall Street**. Thank you for standing by us this past year and for continuing to believe in the difference that interfaith work at a grassroots level can make in our city and in our world.

Sincerely,



The Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer



The Reverend Dr. Chloe Breyer



Board and Staff Additions

Please help us in welcoming our newest board member and two additions to our 6-person staff.

ICNY Board Member: Hussein Rashid, PhD is founder of islamicate, L3C, a consultancy focusing on religious literacy. He is currently a freelance academic and his research focuses on Muslims and US popular culture. His work includes exploring Shi'i theology, the interaction between culture and religion, and the role of arts in conflict mediation. He has been active in interfaith work in New York City when it was just known as "hanging out with his friends." He has taught courses at Virginia Theological Seminary and Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. In New York, has offered classes at St. Bart's Episcopal Church, St. John the Divine, Town and Village Synagogue, and Central Synagogue. He served on the boards of Project Interfaith and Al-Rawiya. He is a Ariane de Rothschild Fellow for interfaith relations. He is currently the Executive Producer of American Muslims, a multimodal, multi-hour documentary project on Muslims in the US. He worked with the Children's Museum of Manhattan as a content expert on their exhibit "America to Zanzibar: Muslim Cultures Near and Far." He is an executive producer on the award-winning animated *New York Times* op-doc "The Secret History of Muslims in the US".



ICNY Racial Justice Organizing Fellow:

Apostle Onleilove Chika Alston has organized faith communities for over a decade. She is the Co-Founder of Daughters4Justice, a faith-based community organizing nonprofit for women clergy to radically change policing in New York City. She is also the founder of Prophetic Whirlwind Ministries, a ministry dedicated to uncovering the African roots of the Bible, combating gender violence, and supporting African Jews. In April 2019, her first book, *Prophetic Whirlwind: Uncovering the Black Biblical Destiny*, focusing on her research of African and African-American Jews was published. In her former role as the Organizer for Bronx Connect, Apostle Onleilove helped to build an organizing and advocacy program that included court-involved youth and their allies. She can be contacted at onleilove@interfaithcenter.org.



ICNY Operations Manager: Daniel Mirsky is a recent graduate of Binghamton University's accelerated program for a Master's Degree in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management and has recently joined the ICNY staff as of October 2021. Daniel has been involved in public-serving startup programs and projects over his years in Academia for a number of issues close to his heart. From launching a peer-to-peer tutoring program in a NYC public school (which was later used as a model for other NYC public schools), to establishing and managing an alumni network for the municipality of White Plains' Youth Bureau, to being on the forefront of the pandemic as a tester and site manager for a newly established Covid-19 testing organization. Daniel has also been involved as a director in a volunteer capacity for a New York based nonprofit serving the Jewish Community in the Southern Tier of New York State. He looks forward to hearing from you at Daniel@interfaithcenter.org or at 212-870-3510.



ICNY'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy



ICLA cohorts and #FaithJusticeHero awardees Vyaas Motilall and Vijah Ramjattan bring together faith leaders and volunteers from both the Madrassi and Sanathan Dharma communities of NYC for a beach clean-up in Jamaica Bay, an area often used for Hindu ritual.

Throughout New York, clergy members, lay leaders and faith-based activists from every faith tradition are working to create positive change for their communities and the city as a whole. But all too often they find themselves working alone, without a strong network of interfaith ties, or knowledge of the city's civic institutions.

The Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy (ICLA) program tackles this head on thanks to the support of **the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation**. Working with expert trainers from leading nonprofits, ICNY has renewed its intensive leadership development program: a six-month series of evening workshops and site visits, culminating in seed grants for independent community projects.

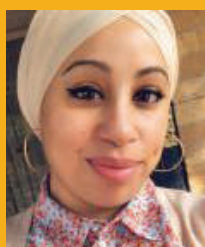
Recent projects include:

- A week-long experience of online dialogue, reflection, and empowerment for diverse women of faith, including victims and survivors of domestic violence as facilitated by a lay-leader in the Hebrew Israelite community.
- A collaborative project by the founder of a Queens-based Hindu community organization and the spiritual leader of a Bronx Hindu temple to bring together diverse NYC Hindus for an intra-faith dialogue exploring eco-friendly worship practices, as well as two beach clean-ups in areas used for Hindu ritual at Jamaica Bay and the Whitestone Bridge.



Interfaith Matters PODCAST

ICNY | Interfaith Center of New York



Earlier this year ICNY's own **Hanadi Doleh, Director for Community Partnerships**, spoke with three graduates of the Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy about some of the most useful (and sometimes unexpected) aspects of the academy, and what many NYC faith-based activists can stand to gain from participating.

Head to <https://interfaithcenter.org/podcast> to hear this and other recent episodes from "Interfaith Matters", an original podcast series from the Interfaith Center of New York that has explored the intersection of faith and social justice since 2016.

ICNY'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

New York Law School

ICNY is delighted to announce that our work with New York Law School will continue in the coming year, thanks to the generous support of Diane and Arthur Abbey.

The Interfaith Center of New York and New York Law School are working to help attorneys understand the religious beliefs and values of the clients they serve, and to help religiously diverse New Yorkers navigate the legal challenges that impact their everyday lives.

Recent programs include an Immigrants Rights Legal Clinic, a Harlem Tenants' Rights Clinic, and a professional development workshop for the New York City Law Department entitled "Religious Diversity in the Workplace and the Law." Through programs like these, we are working to ensure equal access to justice for New Yorkers of all faith backgrounds.



NYPD

In 2016 ICNY created a video entitled, "Policing In Today's Multifaith New York" to educate incoming cadets on the religious diversity of New York City and to dispel commonplace misunderstandings about diverse religious communities and their practices. Recently the department has migrated its training to handheld devices to ensure that this and other important resources can be easily accessed and referenced when needed. For that reason, the Deputy Commissioner of Equity and Inclusion reached out to ICNY to request that we turn our 2016 training video into several 3-4 minute sessions on each tradition originally covered in the video. Our hope is that these videos will be a resource to every officer either entering a house of worship or interacting with the people they serve.



The 39th Rabbi Marshall T Meyer Retreat for Social Justice



One of New York City's principal venues for interfaith dialogue on social justice issues, ICNY's semi-annual Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat for Social Justice is a professional development and capacity-building opportunity for local religious leaders. These retreats allow faith leaders to learn about social issues, create multifaith networks for mutual support, and meet civic leaders and social activists.

Each conference tackles the timeliest issue facing New Yorkers. Clergy members, lay leaders, and faith-based activists have long been at the forefront of our society's response to gun violence, particularly in marginalized communities. But faith leaders are taking on new roles in the current crisis by working as violence interrupters, serving as street chaplains, and leading advocacy campaigns for gun control. That is why 2021's conference was created to highlight concrete steps faith leaders can take to continue to combat gun violence in their local communities and beyond.

To join us in 2022, visit www.interfaithcenter.org/mmrprogram.

Above, graphic based on "Stop Gun Violence" by Lyla Paakkanen for Creative Action Network

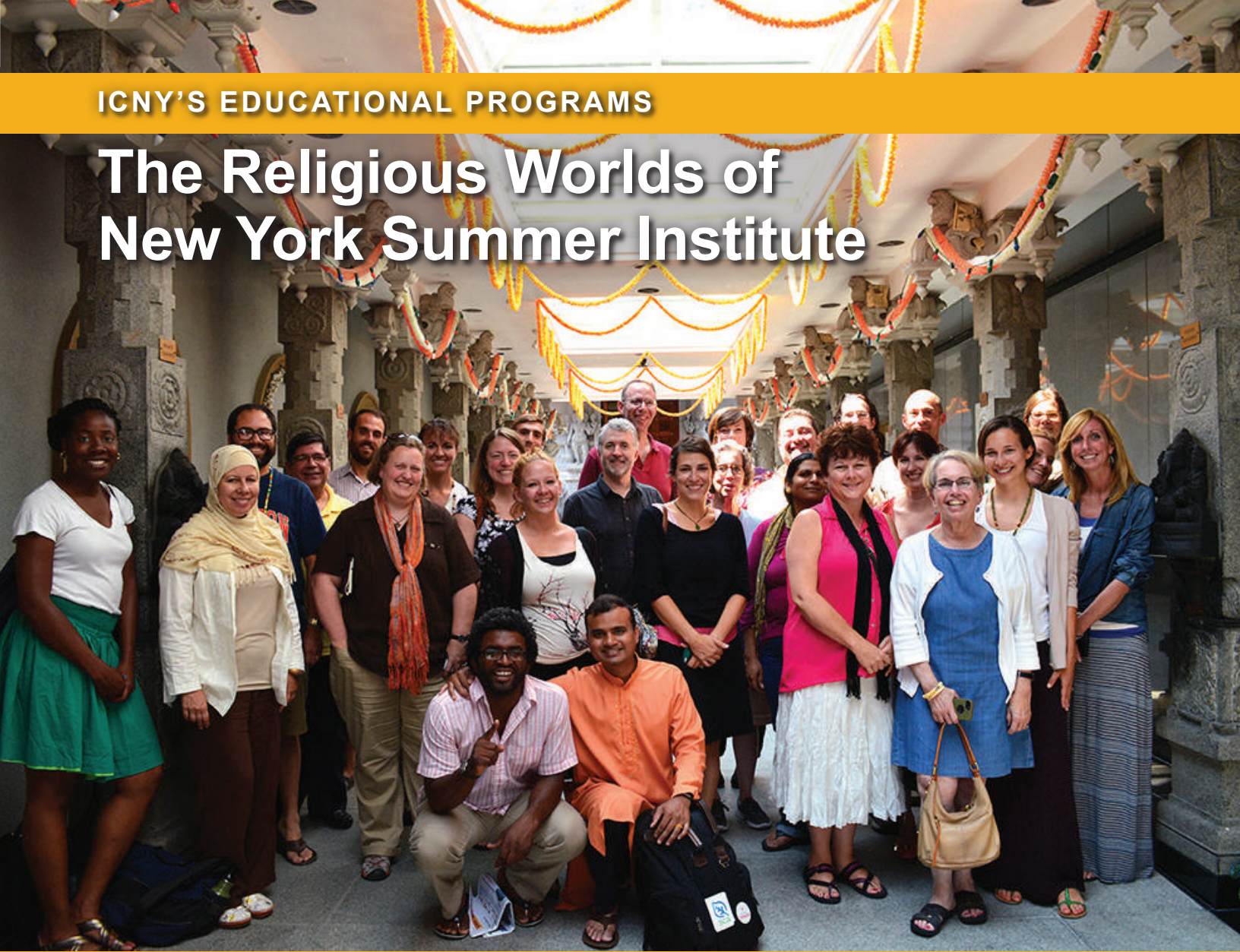
MMR Sponsors:



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The Religious Worlds of New York Summer Institute



We are delighted to announce the sixth meeting of ICNY's **Religious Worlds of New York** Summer Institute for teachers. The institute will meet in person in July 2022 on the campus of Union Theological Seminary thanks to support from the **National Endowment for the Humanities**.

The Summer Institute helps teachers teach creatively and effectively about the everyday lives of diverse faith communities. It brings teachers from throughout the United States to New York City, where they work with leading scholars of religion, meet with diverse religious leaders, visit local houses of worship, explore the religious life of the city, and develop their own curriculum projects. Past participants call the Institute "A tremendous experience that will enrich the teaching that takes place in classrooms across the country for decades to come."

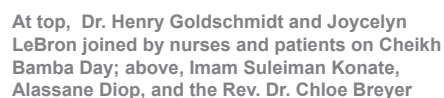
We hope you'll share this opportunity with K-12 teachers in your own community, and invite them to apply. Applications are due by March 1, 2022. For details, please visit <https://religiousworldsnyc.org>.

Above, Summer Institute site visit to the Hindu Temple Society of North America



Our Pandemic Response Continues

Special thanks to **Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer** for helping to make these vaccine clinics possible, and to the 100+ New Yorkers who opted to get vaccinated with the help of ICNY.





ADVOCACY AND ORGANIZING

Racial Justice Efforts

ICNY has long engaged a racially, economically, and religiously diverse base of New Yorkers. As our new Racial Justice Organizing Fellow since March of this year, Apostle Onleilove Alston has focused on a wide range of relevant advocacy coalitions, including but not limited to #Right2RemainSilent Coalition, Black Freedom Project Statewide Organizing Coalition, #CloseRikers Coalition, Jewish Community Relations Council Criminal Justice Coalition, and the Justice4Women Covid Taskforce.

To identify the city's most pressing issues in advance of the 2021 elections, we engaged in countless meetings with diverse faith leaders, community organizers, advocates, and members of the Mayoral administration. We then hosted online webinars on rank choice voting, face-to-face Mayoral candidate forums, Youth interfaith candidate forums, and racially just civic engagement forums, co-hosted by the New York Office of Civic Engagement. We also hosted two Manhattan District Attorney candidate forums with diverse religious leaders.

Voices from Underserved & Over-Policed Communities:
Manhattan DA Candidates Forum

April 8 | 6 pm - 7:30 pm

Online forum to ensure that the next Manhattan District Attorney hears the voices of low-income people, justice-involved individuals, communities of color, and diverse faith leaders.

REGISTER:
interfaithcenter.org/manhattan-da

Sponsored by:



Closing Rikers Island
Where Are We Now?

A conversation with The Honorable Jonathan Lippman, Chair of The Independent Commission on NYC Criminal Justice & Incarceration

A Webinar For Faith Leaders On Closing Rikers Island Jails

DATE & TIME:
Thursday, November 4, 2021, 11:00am-12:15pm

LOCATION:
Zoom

REGISTRATION:
<https://bit.ly/LippmanWebinar>

SPONSORED BY:

Above right, online Manhattan District Attorney Candidate Forum

What follows is a timeline of some highlights of ICNY's racial justice work from the summer of 2021 in preparation for local elections and the months directly after. To learn more, find us on social media and follow the hashtag #ICNYRacialJustice.

- ▶ **APRIL 8** ICNY held its first Manhattan DA Candidate Forum, entitled *Voices from Underserved & Over-Policed Communities*, created to ensure that the next Manhattan District Attorney had the chance to hear the voices of low-income people, justice involved individuals, communities of color, and diverse faith leaders.
- ▶ **MAY 2** ICNY organized and guided a youth planning team to participate in an online *Youth Interfaith Candidate Forum*, attended by six major Democratic candidates for Mayor and viewed by over 200 people between Zoom and YouTube.
- ▶ **JUNE 1** Together with the **Micah Institute**, we crafted *The Interfaith Racial & Economic Justice Compact For New York City*. The compact asks candidates and elected officials to commit to a handful of recommendations based around collective concerns within five major areas of government policy and city life, particularly those related to racial, economic, and immigrant justice. These included: making the Mayor's Office of Faith & Community Partnerships Permanent, appointing a re-entry Czar, implementing the Closure of Rikers, and combating Hate Crimes. Learn more about The Interfaith Racial & Economic Justice Compact For New York City at <https://interfaithcenter.org/compact>.
- ▶ **JUNE 10** We developed and co-hosted *Racially Just Civic Engagement for Faith Leaders*, an online event with the Mayor's Office of Faith & Community Partnerships, NYC Office of Civic Engagement, and NYC Racial Justice Commission.
- ▶ **JUNE 14** ICNY held a *Face2Faith Mayoral Candidate Roundtable* with mayoral candidates Kathryn Garcia and Ray McGuire together with Buddhist Council of New York, Latino Pastoral Action Center, Micah Institute, Muslim Community Network, New York Board of Rabbis, Sadhana Coalition of Progressive Hindus, Hindu Temple Society of North America, and Union Theological Seminary.
- ▶ **AUGUST 11** The Face2Faith Faith Leader Group, organized by Apostle Onleilove, met with The Mayor's Office of Faith & Community Partnerships to advocate that the office be made permanent.
- ▶ **SEPTEMBER** Many faith leaders agree that the expression of racism is still most pronounced in the way we incarcerate people. And nowhere is that more evident than the continued existence of Rikers Island Jail Complex, where human rights abuses have taken place for decades and where 14 people have died in the past year alone. ICNY has joined the Freedom Agenda, Trinity Church Wall Street, the NY Board of Rabbis, Bronx Connect, A More Just NYC, and the Jewish Coalition on Criminal Justice Reform to invite the city's faith leaders to sign a letter calling for the next Mayoral administration to continue its commitment to closing Rikers Island.



ADVOCACY AND ORGANIZING

Countering Hate in 2021



Monks for the Chogyesa Order of Korean Buddhism join the Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer at an anti-hate press conference in Union Square, following the deadly shooting in Atlanta in March, 2021.

Countering Hate in 2021, cont.



No community should be alone in protesting hatred and violence. It is only together that we can prevail over the forces that seek to otherwise divide us. That is why, when hate strikes, ICNY is there to bring people of faith together.

As dictated by our mission, ICNY continues to plan, attend, and participate in walks, press conferences, and other events in response to acts of hatred. For example, in response to the rise of anti-asian hate crimes last year, ICNY partnered with the **NY Buddhist Council** to lead an anti-hate peace walk in Chinatown in April.



Top, ICNY Board member Rabbi Joseph Potasnik and monks from the New York Buddhist Council stand in front of Eldridge Street Synagogue; Right, The Rt. Rev. Alan Shin, Suffragan Bishop of New York addresses the crowd and offers a prayer as part of the peace walk with ICNY and the New York Buddhist Council.

Countering Hate in 2021, cont.



In September, to honor the 20th Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, ICNY co-planned an Interfaith Peace Walk in partnership with religious leaders, houses of worship, and city agencies including **NYC Commission on Human Rights, NYC Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, NYC The Center for Faith and Community Partnerships, NYPD Community Affairs, The Salvation Army, The New York Board of Rabbis, New York Disaster Interfaith Services, and 9/11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows.**





9/11 Interfaith Walk
20 Years of NYC Faith Communities Building Peace

Join NYC faith leaders in visiting diverse houses of worship, to commemorate 20 years of unity and peace building.

Thursday, Sept. 9
5:00 - 7:00 pm

For route and info visit
<https://bit.ly/911peacewalk>



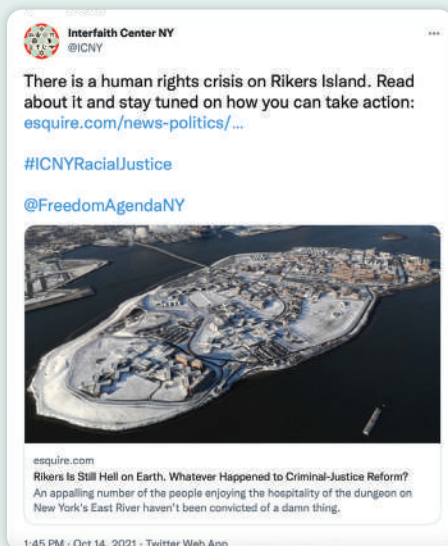


On Thursday, September 9th, Faith leaders, city officials, and hate-crime survivors walked together to visit 5 diverse houses of worship, stopping briefly at each house of worship for prayers and reflections offered by clergy. Top: Archbishop Timothy Dolan joined by Board Members Very Rev. Michael Lynch and Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, Steven Chananie (not pictured), Hussein Rashid, PhD (not pictured), and the Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer at St. Patrick's Cathedral; Near left: The interfaith peace walk began at St. Patrick's Cathedral then continued to Central Synagogue, The Islamic Society of Mid-Manhattan, Hope Church Midtown, and the Manhattan Sikh Center.

PHOTOS BY STEPHEN DITMER, DIRECTOR OF INTEGRATED MARKETING



ICNY in tweets





FINANCIALS

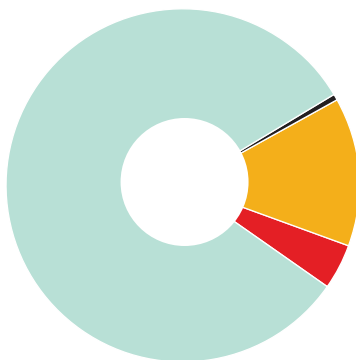
Treasurer's Report

After facing significant uncertainties over the past eighteen months, we are particularly grateful to our supporters for financially carrying us through Covid. Like many (but certainly not all) of our non-profit peers, we have found many donors both old and new were willing to give to ensure that important programming continued. For ICNY, the two fiscal years impacted by Covid both yielded budget surpluses. This is particularly extraordinary given several years of deficits through FY 2019.

The generous support allowed not only a continuation but an expansion of programming and the hiring of a Racial Justice Organizing Fellow. We continue to strive to find appropriate and timely new ways to advance ICNY's mission, be it through our longstanding programs like the Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat for Social Justice or our work to help bring vaccines to Harlem during the pandemic.

For 2022, our total expense budget will be ~25% higher than 2021 as we see important programming return and new initiatives launch. We very much look forward to regathering in person for our annual gala in June of 2022, and hope to see many of you at our various events before then.

Kevin Oro-Hahn, *Treasurer*



FISCAL YEAR 2021 REVENUE AND SUPPORT

■ Contributions and grants	762,015
■ Contract revenue	5,825
■ Program Fees, Special Events, etc.	126,289
■ In-kind contributions	38,762
TOTAL	932,891



FISCAL YEAR 2021 EXPENSES

■ Programs	332,506
■ Administrative	205,607
■ Fundraising	187,378
TOTAL	700,488

Thank you to our Donors!

\$250,000 AND ABOVE

Barbara Slifka and the Joseph and
Sylvia Slifka Foundation

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Trinity Church Wall Street

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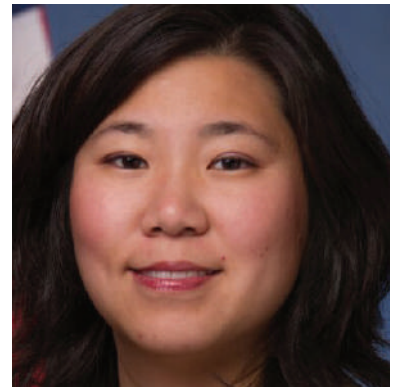
2021 Gala



On June 21st, ICNY honored **Professor Diana Eck** and **Congresswoman Grace Meng** with the James Parks Morton Interfaith Award. The online event also celebrated #FaithJusticeHero awardees **Vyaas Motilall** and **Vijah Ramjattan** for their partnership across faiths to help their fellow New Yorkers and the planet.

Thank you to our generous sponsor and also to former ICLA Fellow **Her Majesty the Kpodjito Queen Mother Dr. Dòwòti Désir**, who joined us virtually from Benin to offer the event's closing prayer.

To watch the 2021 gala, please visit [interfaithcenter.org/icny2021gala](https://www.interfaithcenter.org/icny2021gala).



2022 JAMES PARKS MORTON INTERFAITH AWARDS GALA
SAVE THE DATE! June 20, 2022 Join us next year in person when we return to the Tribeca Rooftop to celebrate our 25th year as a non-profit shaping the civic health of NYC.



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Community members gather to receive a vaccine.



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