

ILAD to Honor Major Philanthropic Organizations on May 6

Contribution & Commitment to Community

The Allyn Foundation, Central New York Community Foundation, Inc., The Gifford Foundation, The Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York, Inc., The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation, The John Ben Snow Foundation and the United Way of Central New York will be honored at this year's InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner (ILAD) to be held on Wednesday, May 6, at the SRC Arena and Events Center. These major philanthropic organizations are being honored for their contribution and commitment to the quality of life in Central New York.

A reception at 5:30 p.m. will kick off the event, with dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. Peggy Ogden and Tim Atseff are serving as honorary co-chairs.

For ILAD sponsorship and ticket information, please contact Denise Jochem-Robertson, development director, at drobotson@interfaithworksny.org or (315) 449-3552, ext. 120.

ILAD would not be possible without the support of our major sponsors.* Thank you to the following:

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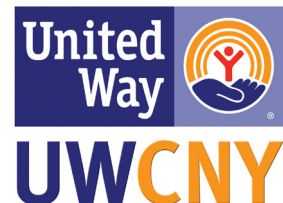


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A Life-Changing Trip



Beth A. Broadway

And yet....

Here was this opportunity to travel with people I love and respect, to learn about the roots of so much of the work that we do here at this agency, and to experience the land that is the birthplace of all the Abrahamic traditions and is the international center for other religions. I hold a sacred place in my heart for the Jewish people and their right to a homeland, a place of safety in the wake of generations of enslavement, scapegoating, pogroms, and ultimately, the Holocaust. As a Christian, to be in the garden of Gethsemane and to walk the shore of Galilee called me. And so, I went.

There is no way for me to describe in these few words the importance and meaning of this trip. With the trip leaders, Rabbi Dan Fellman and the Rev. Bill Redfield, InterFaith Works will offer an evening this spring to delve into the political, religious and cultural understanding and challenges that arose during the trip. Suffice it to say that this little nation, about the size of New Jersey, born of multiple contradictions and diversities, in the heart of conflicts that affect the whole world, has a world to teach us.

Here are just a few images:

The people of this land have worked in stone for thousands of years. The ancient markets are lined with the limestone of the Roman Empire; the sandstone palaces and coliseums of King Herod have also stood the test of time. Modern stone workers create murals of incredible beauty and detail.

The Kibbutzim movement, one of the founding undertakings of Israel, is alive and active. Its initial purposes—to inhabit and settle this land, to establish a Jewish economy, and to prepare a military organization—provides a continuing idealistic, socialist way of life that produces agricultural, tourism and high-quality factory products.

The Western Wall (also known as the Wailing Wall) was in a cloud of rain on Ash Wednesday morning, with women praying in the eastern section. I tucked my prayer into the cracks of the wall next to a young Orthodox woman who was bowing in quick succession as she read her Torah. The hum all around me sounded like a bee hive.

“One dollar, one dollar. Druze. I am Druze. Beads from my village,” droned the man at the ornate railing overlooking the 19 terraces of the Baha’i faith’s Shrine of the Bab, one of the most beautiful garden spots on the planet. At first I ignored him and his gaudy, mismatched beads, which were most likely strung by the youngsters in his family. But suddenly, my heart opened to this poor man who only wanted a few shekels to keep going another day. I bought two and wear them with pride.

At the site of Caesarea Philippi, formerly the Temple of Pan, we saw the ruins of both the Goddess worship and the Roman Empire intertwined. It was so beautiful: the spot Jesus and Peter sat together to plot the future of Judaism as they saw it. It is said that Jesus anointed Peter as his “rock” right there on these rocks.

Many thanks to the InterFaith Board of Directors and other donors who made it possible for me to go.

Sincerely,

Beth A. Broadway
President/CEO

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Emeritus Members:

Rabbi Daniel Jezer
 Mr. James B. Wiggins, PhD

We Are Grateful to Our Capital Campaign Donors

InterFaith Works currently is raising funds as part of a \$1.8 million capital campaign, *Building Community/Affirming Dignity*, to purchase and renovate its new headquarters at 1010 James St., Syracuse. InterFaith Works' new home houses all of its programs under one roof, making our services much easier to access for our clients as well as creating internal operational efficiencies and cost savings.

To date, more than \$1.2 million has been raised toward our goal. We thank the following companies, faith communities and foundations who have donated to our campaign*:

Aloha Foundation
Brown & Brown Empire State
Central New York Community Foundation Inc. (*naming gift: Room of Diversity*)
Community Bank, NA
GE Foundation
The Jewish Federation of Central New York
National Grid
Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church (*naming gift: Center for Dialogue Director's Office*)
The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation (*naming gift: Doorway to Dignity*)
Sikh Foundation of Syracuse (*naming gift: Hospitality Kitchen*)
Rotary Club of Syracuse
St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Church
St. Michael's Lutheran Church
*Since Jan. 1, 2014

For more information about our campaign or to make a gift, please contact Denise Jochem-Robertson, development director, at (315) 449-3552, ext. 120, or email drobotson@interfaithworkscny.org. A number of naming gifts are still available.



The Capital Campaign donor recognition wall is located in the Welcome Lobby at InterFaith Works.

Woods Joins InterFaith Works as Volunteer Coordinator

InterFaith Works Senior Services Program welcomed its new volunteer coordinator, Peggy Woods, in March. Woods succeeds Barbara Blok, who retired after 23 years of service to the agency.

As volunteer coordinator, Woods is responsible for coordinating the work of 60 senior companions who provide support to 180 frail seniors living in Onondaga, Madison and Cayuga counties.

Before joining InterFaith Works, Woods served most recently as director of the Women's Opportunity Center, which helps lead low-income women out of poverty by providing them individualized career counseling and training as well as by removing barriers to employment.

Woods holds a master of science degree in business management from SUNY Institute of Technology, Utica.

Welcome New Board Members

Board Member Cited as Expert in His Field

Congratulations to InterFaith Works' Board of Directors member Dr. Keith Alford who was listed in the Social Work Degree Guide's "30 Most Influential Social Workers Alive Today." Dr. Alford



Dr. Keith Alford

was listed ninth among those honored by the magazine, which provides information and guidance on social work education and careers. The honorees were cited as "experts who instigate awareness and advocate for those affected by social disadvantage, such as poverty, abuse, illness, disability or social injustice." Other honorees include educators, activists, authors and public servants.

Dr. Alford is an associate professor in Syracuse University's Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics. He holds a doctorate degree from The Ohio State University and is a licensed independent social worker. In addition to serving on InterFaith Works' Board of Directors, Dr. Alford is active as a facilitator with InterFaith Works' Community Wide Dialogue on Race.

We welcome the following individuals who joined InterFaith Works' Board of Directors in January. They will serve a two-year term.

Mehtab Bajwa, MD

Dr. Mehtab Bajwa is an anesthesiologist with American Anesthesiology of Syracuse, PC. He earned his doctor of medicine degree in 1999 from Ross University of Medicine, N. Brunswick, NJ, and is certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology. He practices at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, Syracuse, NY.



Mehtab Bajwa, MD

Emily Bowe

Associate content manager/public relations at Eric Mower & Associates, Emily Bowe is responsible for business-to-business public relations activities for a number of industries, including broadcast, document imaging, energy and business operations. Her previous experience includes serving as a public relations specialist at Polaris Library Systems, Liverpool, NY, and as a content management director at Dot Studio in Columbia, Md. She holds a bachelor's degree in communications and fine arts from Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.



Emily Bowe

Dr. James K. Duah-Agyeman

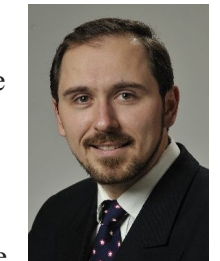
Dr. James K. Duah-Agyeman is director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs at Syracuse University. The office supports and promotes the academic achievement, multicultural competence, social development, civic engagement and retention of students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. He also serves as SU's chief diversity officer for the Division of Student Affairs. He holds a PhD in mathematics education from Syracuse University and is an adjunct assistant professor of Cultural Foundations of Education, where he teaches the Intergroup Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity course.



Dr. James K. Duah-Agyeman

Mirza Tihic

Mirza Tihic is assistant director of the Office for Veterans and Military Affairs at Syracuse University where he is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy related to the education, research and employment of veterans, military connected students and military family members. He previously served as director of program support services and as director of employment programs at Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families. He holds master's degrees in business administration and neuroscience from Syracuse University as well as a bachelor's degree in mathematics. He currently is pursuing his doctorate degree in Syracuse University's Cultural Foundations of Education Program.



Mirza Tihic

Eunice D. Williams

Eunice D. Williams is the vice president/chief diversity officer at Onondaga Community College, where she is responsible for providing leadership and support for the college's Diversity Council, working with college groups and administrators in the formulation and review of programs and policies pertaining to the needs of diverse and underrepresented populations, as well as advising college constituencies on multicultural/diversity issues, trends and program activities. She is an active member of a number of local and national boards, including the YWCA of Syracuse and Onondaga County, CNY Arts (Cultural Resources Council), CNY Vision and the Interreligious Food Consortium. Williams earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from the State University of New York/University at Buffalo and her master's degree in counseling education at Syracuse University, where she has also completed graduate coursework toward a doctorate degree in higher/postsecondary education.



Eunice D. Williams

Getting Ready for the Duck Race!

InterFaith Works is convening the 13th annual Duck Race to End Racism on Saturday, June 6, from noon to 4 p.m. at Syracuse's Inner Harbor.

Please mark your calendars now to participate in this fun family event that attracts about 3,000 people who celebrate the diversity of Central New York.

If you'd like to volunteer or would be interested in sponsoring this event and putting a duck in the water, please contact Derrick Dorsey, dialogue projects and training manager, at (315) 449-3552, ext.107, or email ddorsey@interfaithworkscny.org.

Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi
Center for Dialogue's



My Experience

By Lula Flucker,
Senior Companion

InterFaith Works' newsletter will regularly feature the stories of those associated with our agency. Lula Flucker has served as a senior companion for the InterFaith Works Senior Services Program for two years.

I have served two people as a senior companion, and I love it. Let me tell you about one of my clients. She is 93 years old. Although she has two sons, she is very much alone and really wants someone to talk to. Other people might get bored listening to her, but I don't mind if she repeats herself; I encourage her to talk about whatever she wants. I tell her I'm there for her. I tell her I want to listen. Someone told me I practice divine patience!

When my clients talk about the past, it doesn't bother me—that's the life they remember. But when she does that, I start talking about the present and about what's going on now. Seniors also need to know that.

I learned to love seniors because of my grandparents. I was close to them and their friends. Both of them were upbeat, and it hurt to see them getting old. I keep thinking, "I'm going to get there, too." When I see the problems older people have, I look at myself and I wonder, "How am I going to be?" It scares me to think about that. Will I have people who will come in and talk to me? Will someone be there to help me? It's hard to think about that. I don't want to be alone. I want to be connected with the world.

Even though you are old, life is not over. You can't just close the book and say it's over. But it can be a sad time. My client says, "I'm old. Why should I comb my hair? Why should I get dressed?" I say, "No, you're a beautiful lady." She showed me pictures of when she was younger and I said, "Oh, you were a beautiful lady and you *still* are a beautiful person." I tell her we all change. It *hurts* me to see people not taking care of themselves or caring about the way they look. That's depression, and when I hear depression talking, I answer it back with affirmation and hope.

I have learned a lot by being a companion. Sometimes there are hard days, and I feel like I want to throw in the towel. Then I remind myself that my clients have gone through hard things. They feel like their independence has been taken away. They feel like they're nobody. So I make sure to let them make choices. I want to help them to feel a little bit free.

If you are interested in more information about InterFaith Works' Senior Companion Program, contact Aileen Jackowsky, senior services director, at (315) 449-3552, ext. 109 or email ajackowsky@interfaithworkscny.org.



Senior companion Lula Flucker says she spreads affirmation and hope to her clients.

Racial Justice Awards Presented

InterFaith Works presented its annual Racial Justice Awards at Syracuse Stage on Feb. 25, followed by a viewing of the play *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*. Each year, InterFaith Works recognizes adults and youth in Central New York whose work contributes to promoting social equity and ending racism. The award has been presented since 2006 as part of InterFaith Works' Center for Dialogue's Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism.



Photographed at the Racial Justice Awards ceremony (from left to right) are Beth A. Broadway, InterFaith Works' president/CEO; Francis McMillan Parks; Ranya Shannon; Lisa Alford; and InterFaith Works' Board Chair Camille Tisdell.

Congratulations to 2015 Racial Justice Award recipients Francis McMillan Parks (Lifetime Achievement category), Lisa Alford (adult category) and Ranya Shannon (youth category).

Deputy commissioner of the Onondaga County Department of Adult and Long Term Care Services, Alford is immediate past president and board member of the Syracuse Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA), a sorority that sponsors such events as "Silence Is NOT Golden," which discussed the stigma of mental health in minority communities. She is a committee member on the League of Women Voters and serves on the boards of the American Heart Association and Health Foundation for Western and Central New York.

McMillan Parks is an educator who, prior to her retirement, served as director of Students Offering Service and African American Programs at Syracuse University's Hendricks Chapel. During her tenure at SU, she founded the Sojourner Storytelling Conference, held each February to celebrate stories of peace, justice and freedom. She currently serves on the Boards of the Community Folk Art Center and Erie Canal Museum.

Ranya Shannon, a senior at Nottingham High School, is an active participant in the Seeds of Peace summer camp, held in Otisfield, Maine. Through Seeds, she recently attended the three-day Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Seminar. She is involved in InterFaith Works' Community Wide Dialogue Program that helps bridge the gap between Syracuse's inner city and suburban high schools.

Gathering Celebrates Interfaith Harmony

Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral were among those who participated in the 5th Annual World Interfaith Harmony Assembly held on Feb. 8 at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, Syracuse.

InterFaith Works of Central New York and Women Transcending Boundaries organized the event, which is held in recognition of World Interfaith Harmony Week. Celebrated since 2011, the week helps build ties among world religions and provides a focal point from which all people of good will can recognize that the common values they hold far outweigh the differences they have.



Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and members of St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral join in song and prayer.

At the local event, many faith traditions showcased their beliefs and celebrated through song, dance, traditional dress and poetry.

To the Beautiful Me



Deynaba Farah recites her poem *To the Beautiful Me* at the World Interfaith Harmony Assembly celebration in February.

The following poem was written by Deynaba Farah and read at the 5th Annual World Interfaith Harmony Assembly, held Feb. 8 at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, Syracuse. Farah is a 20-year-old student at Onondaga Community College, where she participates as a student representative to the Board of Trustees and is a member of the Muslim American Society.

Explaining her inspiration for her poem, *To the Beautiful Me*, she says: "I wrote this piece on a day that I wasn't feeling so beautiful. I didn't understand myself because I always told other women not to feel such a way. I would tell them that God created them beautiful and they should cherish that. They need to stop looking at what society defines as beautiful. I felt like a hypocrite when I was feeling this way, so I wrote the poem *To the Beautiful Me* to remind myself of my beauty, and to share my epiphany. I wrote this piece because I know I am not the only one going through these emotions. I wrote this piece to let people who know me very well, and think I am beautiful, that I didn't feel so. Often, I write my poems putting myself in someone else's shoes; but, this is the one poem that is about me."

To the Beautiful Me Deynaba Farah

I was so busy telling everyone that they were beautiful
I wasn't sure if I was
I realized when I looked at the mirror that I didn't see what I wanted to see
I didn't see clear skin, curvy hips
I didn't see slim
All I saw was fat and ugly.
Then I thought to myself
How can I tell others they are beautiful if I don't think I am beautiful
Because beauty starts with me.
Then I realized that I wanted to see what I saw on TV, in magazines and on billboards
And I didn't look like those girls at all
I was becoming the victim of how society wants women to look
I mean, what is beauty and who has the right to tell someone what it is
The truth is no one can.
Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder
Isn't that how it goes?
I am tired of trying to look like someone I am not
I am tired of striving to be what men want to see
I am tired of society looking at us like a piece of meat
I am tired of society telling us that all we have to offer is our body and nothing more
I am tired
And ladies, if you all aren't, I am.
You see we women are politicians
Doctors, businesswomen, computer scientists, engineers
There just aren't enough of us
But that doesn't mean there can't be more.
Ladies, we need to stop worrying about how we look
And worry about our intellect
Ladies, we need to stop worrying about our dress
And wear anything and make it work
Ladies, we need to stop worrying about our high heels
And take steps to become CEOs of great companies
Ladies, we need to stop worrying about how TV displays us
And become movie stars that still have dignity.
You see all these things that we complain about we can change
For it is not easy or fast
It takes time, and courage
For that is the beauty of it.
So, when you do look at the mirror
You will see women, full of compassion,
With determination to change what women are thought of
But, most importantly, you will see beauty because you
Simply are.
So, the next time I looked at the mirror I saw
A woman who wanted to change
Not her size or skin texture
But society, by loving myself just the way I am.

Our Mission

InterFaith Works of Central New York, through education, service and dialogue, affirms the dignity of each person and every faith community and works to create relationships and understanding among us.

Our Vision

InterFaith Works builds bridges of understanding to affirm the dignity of all people in Central New York. Working with the different faith communities and the diversity of the region's people, we address deeply embedded social divisions. Informed and influenced by the values and ethics of the faith traditions, we work with the community to find common ground on its issues. Using the tools of interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue, we create life-changing experiences that lead to actions for the creation of a more equitable and loving community.

Our Programs

Founded in 1976, InterFaith Works addresses deeply embedded social divisions leading to community action and policy change. Empowering people in need, including refugees, the elderly and institutionalized, InterFaith Works' service and educational programs include the Center for New Americans, Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi Center for Dialogue, as well as Senior Services and Spiritual Care Programs.



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Save the date!

Wednesday, May 6, 2015
InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner
SRC Arena and Events Center
5:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 6, 2015
Duck Race to End Racism
Syracuse Inner Harbor
Noon-4 p.m.

Saturday, June 20, 2015
World Refugee Day Celebration
Schiller Park
8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD



Affirm Dignity



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