

InterFaith Works Celebrates New Home With Grand Opening

More than 300 people attended InterFaith Works' Grand Opening Celebration on Jan. 15, 2015. The open house and ribbon cutting were held on the birthday of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to recognize the role that InterFaith Works assumes in advocating for *beloved community* (please see sidebar on page 3). Following the program and ribbon cutting, guests joined tours led by InterFaith Works' staff members, as well as enjoyed food, refreshments and entertainment.

"Your commitment to a more peaceful world and global citizenship in its broadest sense affirms the universal concepts of human rights, peace, justice and dignity for all, regardless of race, religion and creed," Aminy Audi, CEO of Stickley, Audi & Co., said of InterFaith Works while addressing the guests. "It further builds bridges of tolerance and understanding, tearing down walls of hatred, isolation and inhumanity."

"By your commitment to assist refugees in beginning new lives, you help build pride and hope in thousands of lives affected by poverty, disaster and political unrest, and you demonstrate a profound commitment to values of equality and freedom as well as our common humanity."

Also participating in the grand opening program were: the Right Rev. Gladstone "Skip" Adams, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Central New York; Rabbi Daniel Jezer, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Beth

Sholom-Chevra Shas; Beth A. Broadway, InterFaith Works' president/CEO; Dennis Baldwin and Maryam Wasmund, co-chairs of InterFaith Works' *Building Community/Affirming Dignity* Capital Campaign; Shinge Sherry Chayat Rosh, Abbot, Zen Center of Syracuse; the Rev. Colette Matthews-Carter, Pastor, Zion Hill World Harvest Baptist Church; and Madalyn Smith, Coordinator, Rangrig Yeshe, Dzogchen Ati Ling Center.



The moment arrives, as the ceremonial ribbon is cut by (from left to right) Camille Tisdell, chair, InterFaith Works' board of directors; Maryam Wasmund, co-chair, *Building Community/Affirming Dignity* Capital Campaign; Dennis Baldwin, co-chair, capital campaign; Beth A. Broadway, InterFaith Works' CEO; and Aminy Audi, CEO of Stickley, Audi & Co.

The celebration was held in memory of the Rev. Dr. Jon Regier, one of the founders of InterFaith Works of Central New York.

Additional photographs of the Grand Opening Celebration appear on page 3.

We Invite You to Join

Thank you to all those who have donated to our \$1.8 million capital campaign, *Building Community/Affirming Dignity*, to purchase and renovate our new home at 1010 James St., Syracuse. A special thank you is extended to those who made naming gifts and to our major donors, including Aminy Audi, the Allyn Foundation, Central New York Community Foundation, Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi, and the Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation.

We are still accepting donations to the campaign, and gifts of any size are very much appreciated. For more information, please click on the green Donate Now button link on our website www.interfaithworkscny.org. You may also contact Development Director Denise Jochem-Robertson at (315) 449-3552, ext. 120, or email drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org.

Those who make gifts of \$1,000 or more are also recognized with a disk engraved with their name that is placed on our donor wall, located in the agency's Welcome Lobby. The Welcome Lobby was made possible through a gift from Aminy Audi.

The grand opening program, with a list of our donors to date, appears on our website, www.interfaithworkscny.org.



Beth A. Broadway

Coming Home, Creating Home

We have inherited a large house, a great “world house” in which we have to live together — black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu — a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

These are the words of Martin Luther King Jr., from his book, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* In October, InterFaith Works moved into its new home at 1010 James St., Syracuse, to continue our 39-year old tradition of helping our community figure out how to live together across all the lines of difference that Dr. King describes.

Many of us see that, while some things have changed for the better, we still have much to do to be able to say that we have completed the work of learning how to live together in the “world house” and to find our way to the *beloved community* that our faith traditions, our desire for equity and justice, and our common decency as humans call us to live.

InterFaith Works is thrilled to be doing this work. Our waiting room is full of the world – people who were born in Syracuse, people who were born in various parts of Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, the American South, and other places. Our six meeting rooms are full of voices that speak Spanish, Myah-Myah, Arabic, Nepali and more. People are meeting to address the ongoing needs for racial equity, for interfaith understanding, for help with resettlement, and many, many others.

Committees are brainstorming the future of InterFaith Works, like how to finish up our \$1.8 million capital campaign, how to plot the expansion of our services in the El-Hindi Center for Dialogue, how to better serve senior citizens across the community, and how to secure the rights of everyone to fair and equitable housing, treatment and services.

It is breathtaking to me to see the beauty of the building, which we so carefully renovated with an eye toward spending each dollar well. It has turned out to be one of the best things we could have done for our clients, our staff and the community. The building hums. It’s the home that we dreamed of and worked for, and we hope that you will come often to help us do the work that has been given to us to do. Thank you for helping us realize this incredible dream. Please join us as we make it a true “world house.”

Sincerely,

Beth A. Broadway
President/CEO

P.S. If you have not yet made a gift to our *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal, your generosity will be most gratefully received. There is a giving envelope in this newsletter. Please return your gift to us with your prayer for the world house that we are creating. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Denise Jochem-Robertson, our development director, at drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org or call her at (315) 449-3552, ext. 120. On behalf of all those we serve, thank you.

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2015 • ROUND TABLE OF FAITH LEADERS

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 Mr. Alan Thornton
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 The Rev. Victor Wilson

Emeritus Members:

Rabbi Daniel Jezer
 Mr. James B. Wiggins, PhD

Grand Opening

continued from page 1

What Is Beloved Community?

Beloved community is a global vision in which all people share in the wealth of the earth, and racism, discrimination, bigotry and prejudice are replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In *beloved community*, conflicts are resolved peacefully and adversaries are reconciled through a mutual, determined commitment to nonviolence. Through its mission, vision and programs, InterFaith Works of Central New York aspires to continue to be one of the driving forces for the creation of *beloved community* in Central New York and to serve as an inspiration to other communities who wish to do the same.



During the ceremony, two-term member of InterFaith Works' Board of Directors, Charlie Beach, is presented with an engraved letter opener in appreciation of his leadership and major role in the acquisition of our new home. Beach, whose term concluded in January, served two years as president of the board during his tenure.



There is standing room only in the lobby of InterFaith Works, during the agency's Grand Opening Celebration held on Jan. 15. More guests were able to watch a broadcast of the ceremony in the adjacent Room of Common Ground, which was funded through a gift of the Allyn Foundation.



InterFaith Works' new Center for Dialogue is named for Elizabeth and Ahmad El-Hindi, who stand in front of the plaque that recognizes their gift to the *Building Community/Affirming Dignity* Capital Campaign.



"There are three kinds of giving: grudge giving, duty giving and thanksgiving," explains Aminy Audi, CEO of Stickley, Audi & Co., paraphrasing Robert Rodenmayer. "Grudge giving says, 'I have to.' Duty giving says, 'I ought to.' Thanksgiving says, 'I want to.' Nothing much is conveyed in grudge giving, since 'the gift without the giver is bare.' Something more happens in duty giving, but there is no song in it. Thanksgiving is an open gate into the love of God and, I'll add, humankind."



Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church named the Center for Dialogue's director's office in memory of the Rev. Dr. Jon Regier, one of the founders of InterFaith Works of Central New York who died in September 2014. The Rev. Dr. Peter Shidemantle, pastor of Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church, and Midge Regier, one of the Rev. Regier's children, cut the office's ribbon.



Major donors to the *Building Community/Affirming Dignity* Capital Campaign are recognized on a donor wall displayed prominently in InterFaith Works' Welcome Lobby. For more information about the campaign, please see "We Invite You to Join" on page 1.

Photos: Chuck Wainwright

Help Us Build Bridges of Dignity, Understanding and Hope

As a member of the InterFaith Works family, you likely received a letter in December asking for your support of our *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal.

With our busy lives, it's easy to overlook a piece of mail or set it aside to take care of at another time. If you have made a gift to InterFaith Works' *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal, we'd like to thank you. If you haven't done so already, please consider a gift that will help fund the ongoing operational expenses of the important services that we provide.

It's important to note that the *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal differs from our *Building Community/Affirming Dignity* Capital Campaign. The capital campaign is raising funds to offset the cost of purchasing and renovating our new 1010 James St. home.



Photo: Chuck Wainwright

Your gift to the *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal will help to further the work of the Center for New Americans and Center for Dialogue, as well as senior companions through our Senior Services Program and chaplains through our Spiritual Care Program.

We are most grateful for your past support of InterFaith Works and respectfully request that you consider furthering our work through the annual appeal. You may use the giving envelope inserted in this newsletter to make your gift, and gifts of any size are very much appreciated. Be assured that your generosity will impact lives now and for generations, and we promise to be good stewards of your gifts.

Please contact InterFaith Works' Development Office at (315) 449-3552, ext. 120, or email Denise Jochem-Robertson at drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org, if we may answer any questions.

Thank you for your support of the important work we do each and every day.

Your gift to the *Building Bridges* Annual Appeal supports InterFaith Works' services, such as the Center for New Americans. The center settles more than 500 refugees from across the world each year and provides ongoing support to more than 800 families who have been in the U.S. for less than five years.

Join Us on May 6 2015 InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner Will Honor Local Philanthropic Organizations

InterFaith Works of Central New York will recognize major local philanthropic organizations for the impact they have on the quality of life in our community at the InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner (ILAD) to be held on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at the SRC Arena and Events Center, located on the Onondaga Community College campus.

The Allyn Foundation, Central New York Community Foundation, Gifford Foundation, Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation, John Ben Snow

Foundation and the United Way of Central New York will be honored for their contributions and commitment to our community. This is the first time in the history of Central New York that these organizations have been honored collectively.

Peggy Ogden and Tim Atseff are serving as co-chairs of the event, which will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a reception, followed by dinner, the awards presentation and entertainment.

For more information regarding sponsorships, advertising or tickets, please contact Denise Jochem-Robertson, development director, at drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org or call (315) 449-3552, ext. 120.



The Allyn Foundation



The Gifford Foundation

Fostering growth. Encouraging change.



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FOUNDATION, INC.

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My Life

By Adija Abubeker

InterFaith Works' newsletter will regularly feature the stories of those associated with our agency. The following story was submitted by Adija Abubeker, who came to the United States as a refugee in 2004 and now works as a client and data clerk in our Center for New Americans.



Adija Abubeker was 13 years old when she and her family came to America as refugees in 2004. She now works at InterFaith Works as a client data and file clerk.

My name is Adija Abubeker, and I was born in Ethiopia and raised in Nairobi, Kenya. I was born into a very wealthy family, but my family lost everything, including our land. My father went to jail for government issues in Ethiopia; they blamed him for things he didn't do. My father was jailed for over 10 years. We were not allowed to see him or visit him.

The Red Cross visited the prison in Ethiopia where my father was. Luckily, one man among the Red Cross saw how my father was treated in prison. He helped my father get out of jail and gave him documents to flee Ethiopia. One night while we were sleeping, my father came home in the middle of the night. We were very happy to see my father again after all those years yet sad at same time because we could no longer stay in Ethiopia. If the Ethiopian government found out my father was leaving, they would either take him back to jail or even kill him. So we left my country without anything in the middle of the night not knowing where we were going. We had no food, clothes or money with us. All we had were the clothes on our backs.

We crossed the Ethiopian border, going to Kenya by foot. While walking, we met a family friend. God, bless his heart; he gave us a ride to Nairobi, Kenya. It was there that we started our process to come to America. In Nairobi, we didn't have any family or friends to turn to. But thanks to God, my father is a very strong man who would do anything to keep us safe, healthy and happy.

After traveling two days from Ethiopia to Kenya, we came to the United Nations with the documents the gentleman from the Red Cross had given to my father. While we were at the UN, my father met one of his old friends who had been in Kenya two years before us. This man had a house the size of one bedroom, and he told my father, "Since you have all these kids with you and no place to stay or family to go to, stay in this house until you learn how to survive."

We stayed in Kenya from 2000 to 2004. We came to Syracuse, NY, in April 2004. It was the one day that I will never forget. I was only 13 years old. I was very young, but I had so much on my mind. The first was what should I do to thank the man who saved my father's and my family's lives. We were settled down in Syracuse, NY. We had all we needed to start life new again. Everyone had their own room, too! I saw all of these big smiles on my family's faces, which I had not seen since we left Ethiopia.

From that moment I knew our life had changed. A month later, I found out that I would be starting school. I was very scared because I had never been to school before. I didn't even know how to write my own name let alone speak English. I told my father, "Daddy, I don't think I should start school at this age because I'm not like any other kids. They will laugh at me." My father held my hand and said, "Child, I have faith in you. I know you can do it."

While I was very nervous, I started school in the 7th grade at Grant Middle School. Thanks to all of my ESL teachers for helping me through everything and making me the woman I am today. After a couple of months of going to school, I could read and write like everyone else. I graduated from Nottingham High School in 2009 and got my associate degree from Bryant & Stratton College.

I am proudly a United States citizen. I still have the Red Cross gentleman on my mind: How do I thank him for all he did for us? The best answer is to do same for others, and all my family has been doing their best to help others. I say "thank you" to all Americans for bringing some strangers into your country and making their dreams come true and, most importantly, changing their lives.

I am grown woman now with two beautiful kids. I have a son whose name is Akraam Adan and who is 2 years old. I have a daughter whose name is Garo Adan and who is 10 months. Also, I met my fiancé, my partner, my everything and, most importantly, the father of my kids, seven years ago. His name is Adan Abdi and he is from Kenya.

Working at InterFaith is one of the best things that has happened to me since I moved to America. This opportunity has made my dream come true. I will go above and beyond to help anyone who is in need in any way that I can. That's the only way for me to appreciate what others have done for me to make me the woman I am today. Thank you all. May God bless America, the land of the brave.

AmazonSmile Provides a Convenient Way to Support InterFaith Works

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of all eligible purchases to InterFaith Works of Central New York when you shop at AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com). All you need to do is designate InterFaith Works of Central New York as your preferred charitable organization.

AmazonSmile offers the same prices, selection and shopping experience as Amazon.com, but with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the product purchase price to your favorite charity. Products that are eligible for donations are marked “Eligible for AmazonSmile donation” on their pages.

You may use the same account on both Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. The first time you visit AmazonSmile, you will be asked to select a charitable organization to receive donations before you begin shopping. AmazonSmile will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase made on AmazonSmile will result in a donation.

This is an easy way to support InterFaith Works of Central New York and is sure to bring a smile to those we serve.



Keep in Constant Contact

In addition to its newsletter, InterFaith Works produces an e-newsletter, called *InterFaith Words*, which is distributed twice a month via an email delivery program, Constant Contact. If you would like to stay up to date on happenings at the agency as well as our Faith Partners and other not-for-profit organizations, email Keith O'Brien, development coordinator, at kobrien@interfaithworks.org or call him at (315) 449-3552, ext. 114, to be put on the distribution list.

If you had previously received *InterFaith Words*, but have not received a copy recently, please contact us to make sure we have your current email address. Many activities are happening at InterFaith Works and in our community, and we want to help you stay informed.



Senior Services Seeks Program Companions

Are you 55 years or older?

Would you like to earn extra money?

Do you drive?

If you answered “yes,” are you interested in becoming a senior companion and helping elders maintain independent living?

If so, we'd love to speak with you!

For more than 20 years, the Senior Companion Program has been addressing the physical and emotional needs of frail elderly people throughout Central New York. The agency recruits and trains senior companions who are matched with an elderly client to provide friendship and companionship, alert doctors and family members to potential problems, and provide general assistance on an as-needed basis. Senior companions are providing thousands of frail elders with the ongoing support they need to remain healthy and live independently in their own homes.

For more information, contact Aileen Jackowsky, senior services director, at (315) 459-3552, ext. 109, or email ajackowsky@interfaithworkscny.org.



2015 Racial Justice Awards Will Be Presented Feb. 25

InterFaith Works of Central New York's annual Racial Justice Awards ceremony will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2015, at the Syracuse Stage Sutton Pavilion at 5:30 p.m. Following the ceremony, attendees are invited to attend Syracuse Stage's presentation of the Tony Award-Winning South African classic *Sizwe Banzi Is Dead* at 7:30 p.m. in the adjoining Archbold Theater.

We are proud to honor this year's Racial Justice Awardees for their work to end racism and to promote social equity:

Francis McMillan Parks: Lifetime Achievement Award

Lisa Alford: Racial Justice Award (Adult)

Ranya Shannon: Racial Justice Award (Youth)

Since 2006, InterFaith Works, through its Center for Dialogue's Community Wide Dialogue program, has been honoring individuals who work to promote racial justice and social equity by presenting them with the Racial Justice Award. Winners are Central New York adults and youths whose passion and skills have produced change or have contributed toward change in ending racial injustice and promoting social equity. Past honorees include educators, community activists and business people.

Minimal suggested donation to attend the award presentation, performance and reception is \$30. For more information, contact Kathy Ferro at (315) 449-3552, ext. 119, or email her at kferro@interfaithworkscny.org.



Francis McMillan Parks



Lisa Alford



Ranya Shannon

Interfaith Dialogue Project Planning Commences

InterFaith Works of Central New York has begun to design a sustained interfaith dialogue for the Syracuse community in order to discover, discuss and learn from the diverse faith traditions among our neighbors.

Convened under the auspices of the Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi Center for Dialogue, the Interfaith Dialogue Design Team is considering how to incorporate the annual dinner dialogues and produce a dialogue curriculum that will instruct participants' discussions as well as guide them in identifying action steps for the dialogue groups to take. The Design Team is using as its model Everyday Democracy's *One Nation, Many Beliefs*.

The team is meeting monthly and hopes to conclude its work in February. Shortly thereafter, it will begin to pre-test the dialogue guide.

Thank you to the team, which includes Imam Khalil Abdulhabir, the Rev. Clifford Auth, Sharif Bey, the Rev. Nebraska Carter, Marc Clay, Dr. Miriam Elman, Kendra Hatfield-Timajchy, Jenifer Moss, the Rev. Dr. Peter Shidemantle, Robert Tornberg and Dr. James Wiggins. InterFaith Works staff participating in and supporting the committee include Beth A. Broadway, president/CEO; Daryl Files, volunteer and donor coordinator; Kathy Ferro, Center for Dialogue administrative assistant; and Peter Willner, director of the Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi Center for Dialogue. Volunteers Sarah Brown and Gregory McGlothlin-Barker are supporting the committee and its work.

For more information, contact Peter Willner, Center for Dialogue director, at (315) 449-3552, ext. 102, or pwillner@interfaithworkscny.org.

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, February 25, 2015
Racial Justice Awards
Syracuse Stage
5:30 p.m. Award Ceremony & Reception - Sutton Pavilion
7:30 p.m. *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* performance - Archbold Theater
Wednesday, May 6, 2015
InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner
SRC Arena and Events Center
5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Saturday, June 6, 2014
Duck Race to End Racism
Syracuse Inner Harbor
Noon-4 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD



Affirm Dignity



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