



1010 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203

P:315.449.3552 F:315.449.3103

www.interfaithworkscny.org

VOL. 17 / ISSUE 1

## *Inextricably Bound Together* InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner

Save the date: May 2, 2017

*“A person is only a person in the context of other persons: my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours.”* – Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Just as human beings are made whole through their relationships, organizations thrive through the support of others. At its Annual InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner, to be held on Tuesday, May 2, InterFaith Works will honor local businesses, human service organizations and government agencies that have partnered with us to further our mission and vision, and that are deeply committed to our community overall.

Our honorees have traveled by our side as we have addressed the needs of and have empowered people who are vulnerable, low income and targets of oppression.

Please plan to join us on May 2 as we honor those with whom we are gratefully and inextricably bound. The event will be held at the SRC Arena & Events Center on the Onondaga Community College campus, beginning with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and followed by dinner and the awards ceremony at 6:30 p.m.

For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact InterFaith Works' Development Office at 315-449-3552, ext. 120 or email [drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org](mailto:drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org).

### 2017 InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner honorees:

- Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program
- Centro
- Christopher Community Inc.
- Crouse Hospital
- Syracuse City School District
- Syracuse Police Department
- Tops Friendly Markets
- Wegmans

## It's Not Too Late!

Thank you to the generous donors who have supported our work through the Annual Appeal. As of Jan. 11, nearly 190 people have donated \$89,400, and 16 percent of our gifts have come from new donors. We are now at 89 percent of our goal!

If you haven't yet made your donation, would you please help us raise the funds needed to provide the financial foundation for all of our much-needed programs? Thousands of people each year are directly impacted by our work and your generosity.

If you have already donated, we are very appreciative. If you haven't already done so, we invite you to join us as we empower people who are vulnerable and targets of oppression due to racial,

ethnic, religious, political or socioeconomic circumstances. As Bonke Rugira, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who recently graduated as valedictorian of Fowler High School said: "Your support helped my family and me in a time of need. And we, in turn, can now help others."



Bonke Rugira celebrates his graduation from Fowler High School with his uncle.

To watch a video about Bonke's journey, visit [www.interfaithworkscny.org/get-involved/donate](http://www.interfaithworkscny.org/get-involved/donate).

Making a donation to the Annual Appeal is easy. You may:

- go to [www.interfaithworkscny.org](http://www.interfaithworkscny.org) and click on the MAKE A DONATION box on the homepage
- mail your donation in the envelope within this newsletter
- return the donation form at the bottom of the Annual Appeal letter you received by mail or
- call the Development Office at 315-449-3552, ext. 120.

The need for InterFaith Works seems to be increasing each day. We invite you to help us build bridges of understanding that affirm the dignity of each person and every faith community to create a more equitable and loving community.

Thank you!

# Generosity Embodied

## A Visit With Bonnie Totten-Adkins



Beth A. Broadway

Our agency received two generous gifts in 2016, both from Bonnie Totten-Adkins, from an address in Vermont. She was not known to me, and I was curious what inspired her big-heartedness to this Central New York agency. It set me on a path that led to a woman who was here at the founding of our agency! Bonnie not only personally embraced the resettlement of refugees, but also organized church exchanges between Fayetteville and Syracuse churches in order to build bridges between blacks and whites in the years leading up to the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Bonnie was with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with her counterparts from People's AME Zion Church.

I visited with Bonnie and her husband, the Rev. Lee Adkins, in Vermont in October to learn more about both of their extensive lives-of-service. In the 60s and 70s, Bonnie and her then husband, the Rev. Howard Totten, raised three children in Fayetteville while working as people of faith through Church World Service (CWS). One day, she got a call from CWS, asking her to help settle a Laotian family. This was years before InterFaith Works initiated the Center for New Americans and its refugee resettlement work. The family was made up of 14 women and children; all the men had been killed. University United Methodist Church offered to donate a home that had been donated to them. The house was in tough shape, and the family was on its way to the U.S. So, in what I have come to call "Bonnie's Way," she simply moved those 14 people into her little three-bedroom home while the house was being made ready. She remembers this time with glee – how they made food together, figured out how to put all the kids to bed on couches and floor mattresses, and made excursions to the grocery store.

Along with Bonnie's husband, Marty Nicholas, a member of the church who *still* works at InterFaith Works 34 years later, was Bonnie's partner on the resettlement project, handling the building repair side of the job. "With Bonnie you felt anything was possible," recalls Nicholas. "It was a matter of good organization and of letting volunteers know the needs of the family."



Bonnie Totten-Adkins (left) and the Rev. Lee Adkins at their home in Vermont.

The arrangement lasted three to four weeks, until the house was ready, but Bonnie's involvement with the family continues to this day. She attended the weddings of all the children, and her new husband officiated at a funeral service for one of the mothers, even though the family is far-flung across the U.S. Bonnie has traveled to Atlanta, Texas and California to be with this family of attorneys, teachers and other professionals.

During this period, Bonnie's attention to the civil rights movement was acute. She approached People's AME Zion Church to set up dinners between families of her church and theirs, organized both choir and pastoral pulpit exchanges for the churches, and even put on a play. When asked why she did this, she said, "It was the right thing to do."

*Bonnie Totten-Adkins visit continued at the bottom of page 3...*

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- Ms. Danya Wellmon
- The Rev. Regina Reese Young

**Emeritus Members:**

- Rabbi Daniel Jezer
- Dr. James B. Wiggins

## Senior Companion Program Celebrates its 30th Anniversary

InterFaith Works' Senior Companion Program celebrated its 30th anniversary on Sept. 14 at the annual Senior Companion Recognition Luncheon at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool.

Companions and guests enjoyed a fabulous lunch and 30th anniversary "birthday" cake.

Companions celebrating five, 10 and 15 years of service were recognized, and at the conclusion of the event, each companion was presented with a beautiful quilt hand-crafted by members of the Towpath Quilt Guild.



Receiving recognition awards for five years of service as senior companions are James Thompson (left) and Illona Lawson.



Standing in front of one of the many quilts donated by the Towpath Quilt Guild for the senior companions are Ann Lamprey (left) and Ann Rowland.

Many thanks to the supporting sponsors of the event and the Companion Program: the Corporation for National and Community Service, Alzheimer's Association, Camillus Ridge Terrace, Christopher Community, Fidelis, Food Bank of CNY, The Hearth, Jewish Family Services, Kinney Drug, Mark Products, PACE CNY, Senior Home Care Solutions, Smile Therapy, United Way of CNY, and Northside Tops.

Sen. David Valesky, Tracy Carman, and Terre Dennis (representing Rep. John Katko) also attended. In honor of the program's 30th anniversary, Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Miner proclaimed the day Senior Companion Day in Syracuse.

## Have You Remembered InterFaith Works in Your Will?

If you have remembered InterFaith Works in your will, please let us know. We'd like to say, "thank you."

A planned gift may be used to continue your support of InterFaith Works even after you're gone. There are a number of ways to make a planned gift, including:

- making a bequest in your will
- naming InterFaith Works as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy
- designating InterFaith Works as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or individual retirement account (IRA)

If you would like to learn more about making a planned gift, please contact InterFaith Works' Development Office at 315-449-3552, ext. 120 or email [drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org](mailto:drobertson@interfaithworkscny.org).

*Bonnie Totten-Adkins visit continued from page 2...*

After Howard's passing, Bonnie remarried, and she and Lee have continued their service work in Africa, and through their denominational activities. I feel as if I have met the mother of InterFaith Works, a person devoted to thinking globally but acting locally, a person who takes little personal credit for great accomplishments, a person whose life has been dedicated to the service of people who may have looked different on the outside, but whose hearts beat strong for faith and family just like everyone else. I am humbled to stand in a long line of Bonnies whose lives have impacted the growth and service of this agency and equitable justice within our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth A. Broadway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Beth A. Broadway  
President/CEO

# 2017 Racial Justice Awards Will Be Held March 1

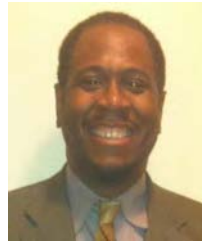
InterFaith Works is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2017 Racial Justice Awards, which will be presented at the 2017 Racial Justice Awards ceremony on Wednesday, March 1, at 5:30 p.m. at Syracuse Stage. The awards ceremony will be followed by Syracuse Stage's production of *Ain't Misbehavin'* at 7:30 p.m. The suggested ticket donation is between \$30 and \$150. Any gift above \$30 is tax-deductible. **Please reserve your tickets by Wednesday, Feb. 8**, by calling Gwen Sanders at 315-449-3552, ext. 119, or emailing [gsanders@interfaithworkscny.org](mailto:gsanders@interfaithworkscny.org).

## This year's honorees are:



Zau Jat N-Hkum

**Youth Award: Zau Jat N-Hkum.** N-Hkum is a senior at Institute of Technology (ITC) at Syracuse Central and is a leader in a number of school activities, including the formation of a Diversity Club at ITC, the Seeds of Peace, Teen Institute, and Citizen U. He served as a facilitator in the El-Hindi Center for Dialogue's Dialogue to End Racism between ITC and Central Square high schools, and joined in the four-mile march from the Onondaga Nation to Syracuse to support native rights related to Standing Rock. He speaks up to end bullying of all kinds, including homophobia, Islamophobia and racism. He feels passionately about the injustices he saw inflicted on his people (the Kachin from Burma and Myanmar) and wants to continue to find ways to stop injustice in his new home of Syracuse.



Hon. Jawwaad Rasheed

**Catalyst Award: Judge Jawwaad Rasheed.** Judge Rasheed is a family court judge in Oneida County, a board of trustee member for Syracuse Academy of Science, vice president of operations for the 100 Black Men and a senior member of Frontiers International. He is co-director of the Junior Frontiers of Mohawk Valley, which is an African-American civic organization with the goal of providing support to minority children. The percentage of Junior Frontiers' students attending college immediately after high school has increased from 55 percent in 2001 to 100 percent every year since 2004.



Laurel Ullyette

**Lifetime Achievement Award: Laurel Ullyette.** Zeal for parenthood, concern for orphaned children, and a commitment to help all families successfully adopt children led Ullyette and her husband to work in international and transracial adoption. Through New Beginnings, she provided casework and counseling to prospective and pre-adoptive parents and has been involved in nearly 100 successful adoptions. She served as the co-chair (with Dr. Cathy Leogrande of Le Moyne College) of the mayor's Social Justice Task Force in Auburn, NY, and then for more than five years as the driving force behind the Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism in Auburn. Former Auburn Mayor Melina Carnicelli described her as a "united flame," bringing people together to "do the heart work." Ullyette has worked tirelessly for the cause of social justice and diversity, often overcoming an indifferent (if not hostile) environment.



Brady Faith Center

**Organizational Award: Brady Faith Center.** The Brady Faith Center is a beacon of light, hope, friendship and support for many adults and children on Syracuse's South Side. The center's programs include: Brady's Women's Group; Brady Bread; Christmas Gift Giving Ministry; Drop-Inn Center; Pedal 2 Possibilities, which encourages participants to take control of their own fitness and well-being by committing to regular bike excursions; and Stone Soup Educational Garden, which empowers

people to garden on their own, thereby cutting down on food costs and improving the health of those in the neighborhood by offering fresh foods.

# One Person Cared Enough to Provide a 'Lucky Break'

You've most likely heard the proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." Well, at InterFaith Works, it takes a "village" of dedicated staff members, volunteers, student interns, donors, faith communities, along with members of InterFaith Works' Board of Directors, Round Table of Faith Leaders, and Advisory Councils, among others, for us to provide our much-needed services. So many people with so many personal reasons share their time, talent and treasure to ensure our mission is carried out throughout Central New York.

One of these people is Shiu-Kai Chin, PhD, professor in Syracuse University's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, who serves as chair elect of InterFaith Works' Board of Directors.

"It is my privilege to be a part of InterFaith Works," he says. "In a way, all I am doing is paying forward what people have done for my family.

"My dad might well have been undocumented when he arrived in the U.S. in 1930," explains Dr. Chin. "He became a U.S. citizen after serving in the U.S. Army in World War II."

At this time, when the resettlement of refugees and the status of immigrants are often called into question, Dr. Chin shared a 1969 newspaper article written about his father, Wah F. Chin. Titled, "A Lucky Break Is Needed," the story tells how the life of one young immigrant was forever changed because of the compassion of one person.

We reprint the article, which appeared in The Desert Sun, on May 14, 1969, as a reminder that "villages" are nothing more than a group of individual people who dare to care about others.

## *A Lucky Break Is Needed*

By Richard E. Goldstein

Wah F. Chin will readily testify that America, as advertised, is a land of opportunity. But he also knows that it helps to have a lucky break and a special

assist if you're going to translate the American Dream into reality.

Chin, 48, is president of a seafood processing firm with headquarters in New York and plants in Trinidad, Florida and Delaware. But at the low point of the Depression in the United States, he was a poor, lonely immigrant youngster, living with his father when he could, and working and sleeping in restaurants and laundries when he couldn't.

*"In a way, all I am doing is paying forward what people have done for my family."*

- Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin

He joined his father in New York at the age of 9 after a two-month boat and train voyage from his native Canton, in southern China. His most vivid memory of the trip was a railroad journey from Vancouver, British Columbia, to Montreal. "I was train-sick all the way," he recalls.

Chin was handling a five-gallon container of tea one Saturday night in a Brooklyn restaurant when he slipped and the tea scalded his chest. He remembers the reaction of the manager who watched his agony. "Stupid, you ruined my tea," he was told.

His injury was detected by a teacher and Chin, then 11 years old, was taken to a school nurse and then to the assistant principal's office. The administrator, a spinster named Bettina Hepburn Munn, had such sympathy for the youngster that she took him into her home.

That was Chin's big break. "She was a mother to me," he says. "She raised me and provided for my education." Under Miss Munn's guidance, Chin attended the Fieldston School, a private preparatory school in New York, and went on to Columbia University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree.

After college, Chin served in Army intelligence in China at the tail end of World War II and then, returning to the United States, and to Miss Munn's home, he entered business.

He left Miss Munn's home in 1950, when he was married, and his "mother" died shortly thereafter. But by then he was well on his way to success.

Chin had founded an import-export business, trading mainly with China, in 1946. Though it failed when the Communists took over China, he launched another enterprise and in 1950 started the company that eventually became Proteus Foods.

He has a successful business, a family (his 15-year-old son Shiu-Kai attends Fieldston), and is a deacon and elder in the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York.

America has been good to Wah Chin, but he reserves his special thanks to the lady who befriended him. "I was lucky," says Chin. "If I didn't meet that lady, I'd probably still be a laundryman."



Bettina Hepburn Munn (center) took Wah Chin (far left) under her wing when he was 11 years old and forever changed his life.

## Klivak Appointed Director of Senior Services

Lori Klivak has joined InterFaith Works as its director of senior services. She is responsible for the program's overall operation, including planning; partnership, program and fiscal development; as well as community and volunteer relations.

InterFaith Works' senior services provides a companion program for the frail elderly in Onondaga, Cayuga and Madison counties, with the goal of helping them to remain healthy and living independently.

A lifelong resident of Syracuse, Klivak previously served as assistant director of the Program on Latin America and the Caribbean at Syracuse University, where she also earned a doctorate in cultural anthropology. For her dissertation, Klivak spent 15 months in Oaxaca, Mexico, conducting research on community-based development, with a focus on engagement, identity and the moral dimensions of development. She also holds a master's degree in cultural anthropology from CUNY Hunter College and a bachelor's degree in classical studies from Colgate University.



Lori Klivak

## Bicycle Donations Much More Than Just Wheels

The Match Grant Program at InterFaith Works' Center for New Americans assists newly arrived refugees in some unusual ways. The ultimate goal of the program is to help refugees become self-sustaining members of the Syracuse and Central New York communities. Among the many forms of service and guidance provided, the program assists by helping clients find employment, provides housing subsidies and living expense allocations, and organizes free financial literacy courses. The program strives to keep new refugees off of government-funded public or cash assistance. More than 80 percent of participants are employed within six months.

One of the ways in which the Match Grant Program helps is by giving program clients a bicycle once they are able to secure a job. Public transportation is not always available when needed, and ownership of personal transportation provides freedom and flexibility. Bicycle ownership also complements one of the other goals of the program by encouraging clients to become engaged in their community. Having access to a bicycle not only helps them get to work on time, but it also helps them become oriented to a new city.

InterFaith Works' volunteer Karen Grimm wanted to contribute in some way to the program, so she began asking her friends and family for donations. She noticed a common item many donors wanted to contribute were bicycles. She was able to initially secure 13 donated bicycles, and has developed a relationship with a local shop that fixes and reconditions the used bicycles. With each bike she donates, she also buys an accompanying lock. "It matters," says Grimm. "If someone's life can be changed with a bicycle, I'm going to do it."



Mohammed Albarkawi (above) and Muingi Runyemura (right) have benefitted from the Match Grant Program's bicycle initiative.



Muingi Runyemura is a New American who has benefitted from the Match Grant Program and the bicycle initiative. The mobility his bicycle provides has enhanced his resettlement experience and has allowed him to adjust to his new life more quickly: "I do not have a car yet. You cannot understand what the bicycle can do at this particular time. It is like a car for me and I accomplish a lot with it. It takes me to the store, and I can visit different folks. It helps me cement relationships and create more friendships. Taking time to visit someone and having face-to-face meetings with people is a key to success. This bicycle is facilitating this. I can go everywhere and keep on time."

For more information about the Match Grant Program, or to donate to the program, contact Match Grant Case Worker Abdul Saboor at 315-449-3552, ext. 220, or email [asaboor@interfaithworkscny.org](mailto:asaboor@interfaithworkscny.org).

# Four Elected to InterFaith Works' Board of Directors

Elected to the board for a three-year term, effective Jan. 1, 2017, are:

- Dr. Samuel Clemence
- Aaron Frishman, Esq.
- Anthony Ortega
- Joseph Pedrotti



Dr. Samuel Clemence

For more than 37 years, **Dr. Samuel Clemence** has taught in the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Syracuse University, and was selected as a Laura J. and L. Douglas Meredith Professor of Teaching Excellence in 1996. Two years ago, he added the distinction of interim dean of Hendricks Chapel, previously having served as a spiritual life group advisor for more than a decade and as an active member of the university's Spiritual Life Council. He is the board representative to InterFaith Works' Round Table of Faith Leaders. Dr. Clemence is a member of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, and lives in Syracuse with his wife, Carolyn. He is a long distance swimmer.



Aaron Frishman, Esq.

**Aaron Frishman's** career includes the areas of estate and tax planning, elder law, trust and estate administration and litigation, and guardianship matters. He is an attorney at Bousquet Holstein, and a member of Temple Concord. Frishman received his Bachelor of Arts from Hobart College in Geneva, NY, and his law degree from George Mason University School of Law. He has been active with local organizations, serving as a committee member for the local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and participating in the Young Jewish Professionals Leadership Program run through the Jewish Federation of Central New York. He is a graduate of Leadership Greater Syracuse and a recipient of the Forty Under 40 Award for Central New York. He was also named as a 2015 Rising Star in the 2015 Super Lawyers Magazine for Upstate New York. He lives in Jamesville with his wife, Lisa, and their son, Jack.



Anthony Ortega

**Anthony Ortega** has worked in the non-profit world for almost 30 years, building his skills in fundraising, program development, finance and operations. In his most recent position as the executive vice president of the MOST, he initiated new programming, raised almost \$8 million in capital funds, and managed a staff of 27 full-time and 72 part-time people. While at the United Way, he served as vice president of the campaign. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Pace University and is a member of Holy Cross Church in DeWitt. He is active in Leadership Greater Syracuse and the Armory Square Association. Ortega has been a long-time volunteer with InterFaith Works' Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism. He lives in Jamesville with his wife, Karen, with whom he has two children.



Joseph Pedrotti

**Joseph Pedrotti**, vice president for commercial banking at Community Bank, is a lifelong Central New York resident, having gone to school in Solvay, at Onondaga Community College, and then receiving his Bachelor of Arts in business administration from Columbia College. He has a long career in banking, serving at KeyBank, M&T, and now Community Bank. He served in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Schweinfurt, Germany, from 1977 to 1981. Pedrotti currently serves on the board of the Boy Scouts of America – Syracuse Chapter and on the United Way – Syracuse Chapter as a New Membership Committee member. He lives in Syracuse.

# Lutheran Community Honors 'Distinguished Disciples'

Hendricks Chapel's Lutheran Campus Ministry programs are planned and run by students with the support of the chaplain. There is an emphasis on developing spiritual growth through leadership and service opportunities and learning tied to the students' fields of study.

On Oct. 30, the Lutheran Community joined together for a Reformation celebration and to raise funds for the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Hendricks Chapel of Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF. InterFaith Works' President/CEO Beth A. Broadway, and the Rev. Jim and Joyce Bresnahan, were honored as "Distinguished Disciples" at the event held at the Genesee Grande Hotel in Syracuse. Bishop John S. Macholz, Upstate New York Synod, gave the keynote address, *Faith Formation: The Next Generation*. "I am very humbled to be recognized in this way," said Broadway.



InterFaith Works' President/CEO Beth A. Broadway addresses attendees at the Lutheran Community Reformation celebration.

## InterFaith Works' Board Member Jim Bowers Honored

Congratulations to InterFaith Works' board member Jim Bowers, who was honored by the New York Council of Nonprofits Inc. (NYCON) and the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants (NYSSCPA) with the 13th Annual Michael H. Urbach, CPA Community Builders Award on Oct. 6 at the Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, NY. The award recognizes exemplary achievements of a certified public accountant who serves in leadership positions on charitable organizations' boards of directors.

Bowers has served on the InterFaith Works board since 1986, including as board president from 2001 to 2004, and as past treasurer. He was essential to an emergency planning project; staff transitions; board recruitment; conducting fundraising efforts; new financial management systems, including reviewing and providing technical support; as well as increasing financial stability.

"Mr. Bowers is incredibly generous with his and his accounting firm's time and talent," said Broadway. "He and members of his firm, Bowers & Company, CPAs, go above and beyond to enhance life in Central New York. His professional success, coupled with his selfless dedication to community, is a model for all."



Celebrating with James Bowers (second from left) upon his receiving the Urbach Community Builders Award are (from left to right) his wife, Maureen Bowers; InterFaith Works' representatives, Charles Beach, former Board of Directors president; Patty Radell, deputy director/CFO; Beth A. Broadway, president/CEO; Denise Jochem-Robertson, director of development; and Bill Doolittle, Bowers & Company marketing director.

## Save the Date! World Interfaith Harmony Assembly

The 2017 World Interfaith Harmony Assembly, *LOVE is the ANSWER*, will be held on Monday, Feb. 6, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the University United Methodist Church, 1085 E. Genesee St., Syracuse. This event is free and open to the public. Join InterFaith Works and Women Transcending Boundaries as we spread a message of harmony and acceptance by showcasing and celebrating the many faith traditions in Central New York. A light reception at the church will follow the event.



## Save the date!

Monday, February 6, 2017  
World Interfaith Harmony Assembly  
University United Methodist Church  
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 1, 2017  
Racial Justice Awards Ceremony & *Ain't Misbehavin'*  
Syracuse Stage  
5:30-9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 2, 2017  
InterFaith Leadership Award Dinner  
SRC Arena & Events Center  
5:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 10, 2017  
Duck Race to End Racism  
Syracuse Inner Harbor  
Noon-4:00 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD



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