

IM

INTERFAITH
MINISTRIES
FOR GREATER HOUSTON

FY2018 – ANNUAL REPORT

*From Challenge to Opportunity
The Year of Hurricane Harvey*

Letter from IM Leadership

Weeks after the fiscal year began on July 1, 2017, Houston was devastated by Hurricane Harvey. IM closed for five days, but our staff worked remotely during and after the storm to check on our clients and facilities, raise funds, manage volunteers, and inform the community about where to get help. Meals on Wheels started delivering food on the sixth day after Harvey, enlisting the help of the National Guard to make deliveries in high water locations. Thanks to funding from the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund and a host of generous donors, we were able to provide our seniors with breakfasts, in addition to lunch, and medical supplies. About three dozen seniors received much-needed home repairs.

Our refugees suffered lost wages when high water prevented them from getting to work after the storm. For families living paycheck to paycheck, this was a dire situation. IM was able to help with emergency rent assistance. **Our Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships (IRCP) program disseminated valuable information in the faith community, distributed micro-grants to affected congregations, and hosted a post-Harvey workshop for faith leaders on how to manage mental trauma.** IRCP worked in the George R. Brown Convention Center, coordinating spiritual care for evacuees and helping to manage the enormous volunteer effort there.

In fall 2017, IM added a new member to its family- Volunteer Houston (VH). This established organization matches volunteers with non-profits across the community, building capacity and impacting thousands of lives. We worked side by side with VH in the Convention Center after Harvey and fully integrated VH under our umbrella that October.

VH was off and running in the days after Harvey, adding 55,000 new volunteers to its database. The local Points of Light affiliate in Houston, VH is poised to be our city's premier volunteer match service.

IRCP has greatly expanded, with a diverse array of new programming, and the coordination of the newly acquired VH program. Our IMpulse young professionals group brings a vibrant perspective to our work, and our new IMpower women's initiative gives women of all backgrounds space to learn from one another. The inaugural Gershenson Lecture, named after our President Emeritus Elliot Gershenson, welcomed the first Muslim chaplain of an American university as its keynote speaker.

Our Meals on Wheels program in Galveston County grew by leaps and bounds, allowing hundreds of county residents who had been on a waitlist to finally receive hot meals. The Hospital to Home program, through which we provide meals and wellness checks on a

short-term basis to recently discharged hospital patients, continued a successful partnership with Houston Methodist and gained a new partner in Memorial Hermann.

Even though the number of new refugee arrivals decreased sharply due to changing federal policy, our Refugee Services department continued to greet new neighbors, and provided longer-term, comprehensive services to existing refugees. Our new Women's Empowerment Group provided social interaction and life skills to newly arrived refugee women, forging friendships among new Americans.

Thanks to generous community support, IM exceeded its fund-raising goal by 8% and raised the funds needed to begin construction on the Brigitte and Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect. We could not have weathered the storms of FY18 without you, our friends. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Shaukat Zakaria
Chair, Board of Directors



Martin B. Cominsky
President & CEO

OUR MISSION

Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston (IM) brings people of diverse faith traditions together for dialogue, collaboration, and service, as a demonstration of our shared beliefs.

OUR VISION

IM envisions a community working and acting together in response to the needs of a Greater Houston to create a more respectful, connected, and caring society.

OUR VALUES

FOCUS: We work hard to achieve IM's mission, vision and strategic goals. We are motivated by the trust and expectations of our clients, partners and donors.

INTEGRITY: We do what we say and we keep our promises. We strive for excellence and hold ourselves to the highest standards while taking responsibility for our actions.

RESPECT: We value diversity of opinion, thought and beliefs. We treat everyone the way we want to be treated with kindness and dignity.

SERVICE: We help others with a spirit of compassion. We put the needs of those we serve above our own.

TRANSPARENCY: We are honest, open and truthful. We proactively and willingly share information with the community and each other.

Meals on Wheels



Meet Jerlee...

At 92 years of age, Jerlee's diverse resume includes titles like Master Gardener, X-Ray Technician, Sunday School Teacher, exemplary American Cancer Society Volunteer and much more. Her home is filled with plaques and certificates recognizing the impact she has made on her community.

Jerlee was born in the 1920s in Fort Bend County, on a creek that is now part of the George Ranch Historical Park.

"We had such a happy family," Jerlee recalls. "Three boys and three girls. We were very poor, but we were rich. My mother was a woman of wisdom and she could take anything and make a meal. She would sew, she would quilt, she would cook, and I never went hungry."

The youngest of six children, Jerlee developed a love of gardening at a young age by watching and working alongside her mother. In 1944, during World War II, Jerlee dropped out of high school to take a wartime job in a cotton shed. She married at 18 years of age and had a son, but when he was old enough to attend school, she went back to Central High School in Galveston, finished her studies and graduated.

In 1947 she moved from Galveston to Texas City. She joined the newly organized Progressive Baptist Church in 1948, and over the years served as an usher, Sunday School teacher, and chaperone for youth trips around the United States. Texas City has been her home for more than 70 years now—and you'll still find her serving as an usher at Progressive Baptist Church, where she is the only living, active member from the church's founding days.



In her 30s, Jerlee met the love of her life—Lawrence Owens. He had served in the Army during World War II, and went on to have a 40-year career with Union Carbide. The couple dreamed of building a home, and with the help of Lawrence's employer, they did. Little by little they built their home—and the gardens that went with it.

In 1982, Jerlee completed her studies to be a certified Master Gardener. Since then she has been recognized numerous times for her work, including a Lifetime Achievement Award presented in 2016 by the Galveston County Master Gardener Program.

But Jerlee's life has seen difficult days as well. Her only son died in 1983 at the age of 39, six months after being diagnosed with cancer. Many years later, Lawrence had a stroke and then a heart attack; shortly after that, Jerlee needed surgeries on her knee and her spine. "That's when they started us on Meals on Wheels," Jerlee says, "and thank the Lord they did."

Lawrence passed away in 2012, just two days after their 50th anniversary. "We were together a long time," Jerlee says. "Wasn't too long, though. I miss the old boy."

Jerlee lives alone now, and moving around her home can be difficult since she has two types of arthritis as well as fibromyalgia. So she is very grateful for the support provided by Meals on Wheels.

"I have to care for myself, and sometimes I'm just worn out," she says, explaining that she monitors her own vital signs for the medications she takes. "Since I get Meals on Wheels... I can stay in my home and have warm meals, or just put it in the microwave. That means a lot."

MEALS ON WHEELS (MOW)

- Over 1.5 million meals served
- An average of 4,000 seniors fed during the year, including on Thanksgiving Day
- Over 4,000 emergency packs of shelf-stable food and water delivered prior to Hurricane Season and again in winter
- 6,500 assessments conducted, with information and referrals provided
- 104% increase in number of clients served in Galveston County
- 4 counties served in total – Harris, Galveston, Montgomery, Liberty
- 95% of seniors say MOW maintains or improves their health
- 93% of seniors say MOW helps them remain independent



ANIMEALS ON WHEELS (AMOW)

- 1,300 pets served- 450 cats and 850 dogs
- 112,554 pounds of pet food delivered
- 128 animals received preventative vet care
- 27 pets were micro-chipped



Meet Richard and Mary Lou...

Working as a heavy equipment mechanic at Fort Bragg in the 1970s, Richard Wright developed a double hernia in his stomach, which required immediate surgery and a colostomy bag. Today, he struggles with a permanent disability and, as a result, is a grateful Meals on Wheels client. "I love it," he says of the program. "I get a hot meal every day and it's always on time."

Tragedy struck a second time in 2017 when Hurricane Harvey flooded his home in an Humble trailer park and he was forced to live in a nearby elementary school until the water subsided. At the school, his beloved Dachshund named Rocky contracted the Parvovirus and died.

With his home in tatters and his best friend gone, Richard has worked hard to rebuild his life in a FEMA trailer. He adopted a Terrier puppy named Mary Lou and enrolled her in the aniMeals program, which delivers dry dog food, treats and toys once a month. Taking advantage of aniMeals' partnership with the local Emancipet program, Richard recently had Mary Lou spayed at no charge to help reduce the homeless pet population in his neighborhood. Through a partnership with the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation, Mary Lou received vaccines as well.

In addition to the nutritious meals brought to Richard and Mary Lou, Richard's volunteer driver looks after him as well. Knowing he is a bit unsteady on his feet and uses a walker, her church group built a ramp to his trailer's door so he could enter with ease.

"I'm blessed," he says about being a Meals on Wheels and aniMeals client. "I'm lucky to be alive."



Refugee Services



Meet Dayana...

Living in Homs, Syria with her husband and young son, Dayana Halawo loved her life. She belonged to a neighborhood cooking group, shopped at the market with her mother and was preparing for the birth of a second child.

A civil war in her country was farthest from her mind, but as the fighting came closer, Dayana and her family experienced what is now a common casualty in Syria: their house was bombed and destroyed. Fortunately, they were out that day, but the traumatic event forced them to flee with only the clothes on their backs. They left behind their family-owned cosmetics store and friends, and literally ran from a series of unexpected wars and violence for the next five years.

Just prior to crossing the Syrian border, corrupt authorities detained them and threatened to behead Mohammed, her husband, until the family could prove they were innocent people and trying to find safety. Under tremendous stress, Dayana gave birth to a daughter.

The family fled to Lebanon and then to Jordan, where refugees are not allowed to work and their children are not allowed to attend public school. News of better jobs in Cairo took the family to Egypt, a country where they felt safe until the Arab Spring brought about another round of violence. Fleeing another war, the family returned to Jordan and waited in precarious conditions for a country to welcome them as refugees.

After landing on U.S. soil in 2016, Dayana sobbed uncontrollably from both sadness and relief. She left her parents behind in war-ravaged Homs, but her children were now safe.

When IM's Refugee Services drove them to their apartment in southwest Houston, Dayana stood in the doorway in disbelief. "There were couches and beds in the apartment!" she cried. "We spent years in Jordan sleeping on the floor."

After she and her family got settled, Dayana wanted to give back to the Houston community. When Hurricane Harvey decimated the city in August 2017, Dayana saw an opportunity. "Everything was destroyed, but it was by water, not war," she said. "I knew I could safely help people."

Dayana volunteered to pick up food from a local Middle Eastern restaurant and distribute it to families in shelters. At a particularly overcrowded shelter, families asked her if she knew of other places to go. "Come to my apartment," she offered.

For weeks, Dayana's family welcomed two families into their home where they lived in cramped conditions until FEMA could provide suitable housing for their guests.

"I didn't know them," Dayana said. "But I had to help them. So many people have helped me."

REFUGEE SERVICES (RS)

- 345 new refugees resettled from 20 countries
- 1,070 refugees received support services
- 805 refugees received referrals to partner agencies
- 508 refugees were placed in jobs
- 89 refugees with health conditions received case management
- 56 refugee women overcame social isolation through our new Women's Empowerment Group
- Over 90% of our refugees were self-sufficient within 6 months of arrival



Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships

INTERFAITH RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (IRCP)

- 220 guests attended inaugural Gershenson Lecture, named after President Emeritus Elliot Gershenson, and promoting the ideals of respect and understanding
- 47 faith leaders serving on Multi Faith Council, representing 17 faith traditions
- 285 participants in Dinner Dialogues
- 190 young people engaged in dialogue and service through ILEAD
- 75 young professionals joined new IMpulse group
- IMpower women's group in formation
- Over 1,900 adults and youth impacted by all interfaith programming—over 3 times the amount in the prior year



Meet the Three Amigos...

Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza, Rabbi Samuel Karff and the Rev. William A. Lawson – or the “Three Amigos,” as they are affectionately called – embody the values of Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships. The respected and powerful trio of faith leaders were profiled by reporter Jayme Fraser in an article entitled “Trio quietly guides Houston’s conscience and policy” in the September 30, 2013 edition of the Houston Chronicle.

The article details how the three friends have been working with one another, for the common good, for over three decades. They have championed a variety of causes, from tearing down shantytowns under bridges to halting the “school to prison pipeline” that treats juvenile misbehavior as a crime, from fighting against anti-Semitism to condemning the bombing of a local mosque. The three are viewed by civic leaders as powerful partners in addressing our community’s challenges. IM continues to draw inspiration from their work of collective compassion for the dignity of all Houstonians.

“Archbishop Fiorenza marched from Selma to Montgomery and oversaw the construction of Houston’s new cathedral,” the Houston Chronicle article stated. The Rev. Lawson invited Martin Luther King Jr. into his parish when many black clergy scorned him... Karff piloted the nation’s oldest rabbinical organization and helped build Chicago’s landmark Conference on Religion and Race. Together, they do much more.”

In the 1980s, during Houston’s oil bust, the three clergymen came together again to help the growing number of homeless in our city. Along with other religious leaders, they created a vision that became the Campaign for the Homeless. Today, that vision is a vibrant organization called the Coalition for the Homeless.

The Three Amigos’ legacy will live on at IM through Pillars of Light on our Brigitte and Bashar Plaza of Respect. Their spirit is reflected in the interfaith work IM does year-round, from Dinner Dialogues to our Faith in the City series highlighting different faiths, to interfaith young professionals and women’s organizations, service projects, and our annual Gershenson Lecture promoting the ideals of respect and understanding.



Volunteer Houston

Arun Gir is Executive Director of iEducateUSA. The Houston-based non-profit places college students as mentors in elementary classrooms to help close achievement gaps. And this year, Volunteer Houston became an important part of carrying out its mission.

The most decisive factor between a high school dropout and a college graduate is early academic achievement. Yet in Houston, only half of public school students pass fifth grade at the state-recommended level.

So in 2013, iEducate was created. The organization places college students—80% of whom are STEM majors—in underperforming 3rd through 5th grade classrooms to provide inspiration and targeted support every hour of every school day. College students are paid as a form of tuition assistance.

As a young organization, iEducate had been hesitant to use volunteers because it was difficult to predict their levels of commitment or skills. But then Arun met someone from Volunteer Houston.

Since welcoming Volunteer Houston into its family, IM has been very intentional about connecting personally with partner organizations and volunteers, strategically matching organizational needs with volunteer strengths.

“I was very intrigued by that idea,” says Arun. So he worked with Volunteer Houston to build a team of volunteers who could conduct interviews of college students, identifying young mentors who could successfully engage, teach, and serve as a role model for elementary students. Today, iEducate’s entire team of interviewers is made up of volunteers from Volunteer Houston.

“Volunteer Houston has been able to build a community of very committed volunteers,” says Arun. “At the end of the day, because the volunteers are entirely responsible for the selection and interviews, they are the most important component of the model. They are the strongest link in the chain.”



VOLUNTEER HOUSTON (VH)

- Joined IM in October 2017
- The local Points of Light affiliate
- Publicly relaunched in April 2018
- Partnered with Gallery Furniture on the #SantaFeStars campaign, to show support for Santa Fe High School after a mass shooting
- 30,904 new volunteers registered in the VH database – an increase of 63% from prior year
- 16,993 volunteers were matched with nonprofits- an increase of 20% from prior year
- Over \$1.2 million worth of volunteer time was given back to the community





Brigitte & Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect

The Brigitte & Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect will be the capstone of the IM campus. This striking outdoor space will add to the beautification of Houston's Midtown area while providing a place for meditation, community events and interfaith education. It will also honor three iconic faith leaders- Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza, Rabbi Samuel Karff and the Reverend William A. Lawson.

We are grateful to our lead project donors: Brigitte and Bashar Kalai, Patti and Richard Everett, Shell Oil Company, Joyce and Ambassador Arthur Schechter, Roslyn and Barry Margolis, Charlene Chuang, Shahnaz and Malik Waliy, and the George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation. Special thanks to our architects, Gensler and PBK, for their pro bono services.



Brigitte and Bashar Kalai with Martin Cominsky



Patti and Richard Everett



IM Resource Center

IM has a unique opportunity to purchase property next to our current Meals on Wheels Distribution Center that provides much-needed storage, office, and training space. This would allow us to reconfigure the existing W.T. and Louise J. Moran Building to maximize meal preparation space, increase our capacity to add more seniors to the program and to better serve existing clients with supplemental services.

Once the new property is acquired and renovated for use, we expect to add 500 clients in the first full year, with long-term growth year by year. This would be a total of 125,000 more lunches delivered in the first year alone. The campus reconfiguration, resulting in more volunteer space and food storage, would also allow us to increase the number of clients who receive breakfast in addition to lunch. Currently, about 1,100 of our most frail and isolated seniors receive breakfast. With the new building, we could serve an additional 500 seniors breakfast in the first year alone, resulting in 182,000 more breakfasts served.

The added Meals on Wheels storage would also allow us to offer more variety to our lunch menu, to better serve seniors with special needs- such as diabetics. It would allow us to store more emergency, non-perishable food to be used in the event of a hurricane, winter weather, etc. It will include larger freezer space, allowing us to store more frozen weekend meals. More frozen meals would allow us to move seniors off the wait list sooner if a hot meal route is not immediately available to them.

One of MOW’s programs, Hospital to Home, delivers meals on a short-term basis to recently discharged hospital patients. The daily meals, accompanied by a wellness check, decrease costly hospital re-admissions. We are proud to partner with Houston Methodist, Memorial Hermann, and soon the Harris Health System in this endeavor. The new property will allow us to achieve better efficiency and capacity in this program to better serve these patients and to carry a better variety of meals to meet their unique medical needs.

The new property also will include a dedicated Volunteer Welcome Center, allowing us to recruit and train more volunteers.

A new Maternal Women’s Health program, with this new space, will be able to reach at-risk mothers. These young women will receive up to three meals per day once the program is fully operational. The new property will enable IM to store, assemble, and distribute even more maternal meals in the future – a task that would be impossible within our current limited space. The potential for this project could rise to as many as 25,000 mothers if just one community insurer were included in the ongoing client base.

Thank you to our lead project donors thus far: The Clark and Charlene Thompson Foundation, Karyn and Charles Crisp, EOG Resources, the Andrew Delaney Foundation and Frost Bank.

The overall goals of the property acquisition are:

- Expand IM’s meal delivery capability benefiting seniors, disabled adults, recently discharged hospital patients, and at-risk mothers through more freezer and inventory space.
- Expand volunteer participation in IM’s work through designated training and work space, thereby reducing service delivery costs and building capacity.

PROJECT BUDGET

Building Purchase	\$1,386,000
Building and Campus Renovations.....	\$1,148,600
Maintenance and Growth Fund	\$1,465,400
Total.....	\$4,000,000

Currently, IM is leasing the building from an angel investor and has until July 2020 to purchase it. As of the end of FY18, we had raised \$560,000 toward the \$1,386,000 purchase price.

THANK YOU TO OUR LEAD DONORS IN FY18!

July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018 (Donors fulfilling multi-year pledges are listed at their full pledge amounts.)



\$1 MILLION +

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\$500,000-999,999

The Ting Tsung & Wei Fong
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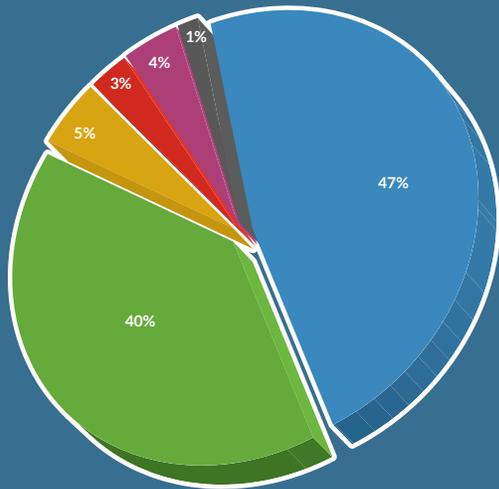
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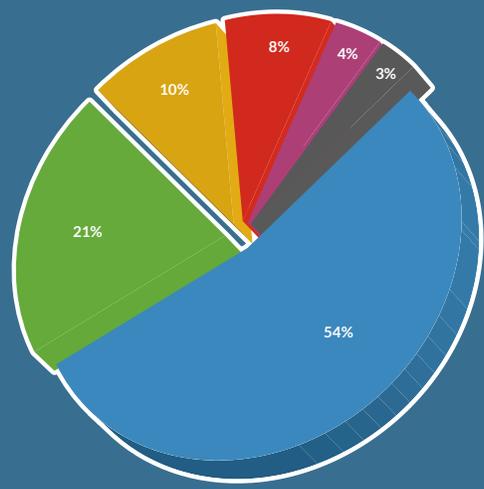
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REVENUE



Government Contracts	\$8,438,371
Contributions	\$7,094,050
United Way	\$840,239
Events	\$496,164
Program Fees	\$708,240
Other	\$265,991
TOTAL	\$17,843,055

EXPENSES



Senior Services	\$8,863,063
Refugee Services	\$3,382,479
Management/General	\$1,630,679
Fund Raising	\$1,357,768
IRCP	\$636,205
Building Operations	\$514,654
TOTAL	\$16,384,848

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