

MOSAIC

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INTERFAITH MINISTRIES FOR GREATER HOUSTON
SUMMER 2019

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INTERFAITH
MINISTRIES
FOR GREATER HOUSTON

50th ANNIVERSARY



2019 TAPESTRY GALA

Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston celebrated 50 years of dialogue, collaboration and service at its annual Tapestry Gala on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 held at The Post Oak Hotel at Uptown Houston. Interfaith Ministries hosted nearly 600 supporters who raised \$650,000 for Meals on Wheels and Animeals, Refugee Services, Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships, and Volunteer Houston.

Gala emcee and KHOU Great Day Houston Host Deborah Duncan welcomed guests including Gala honorees Brigitte and Bashar Kalai; Spirit of Respect recipient Rabbi Roy Walter; Palladium Weaver sponsor Shell Oil Company; President Emeritus Elliot Gershenson and his wife Alyson Gershenson; and Gala co-chairs Shaista and Shahzad Bashir, Bimla and Swatantra Jain, Dr. Sushma and Devinder Mahajan, Lorraine and Ed Wulfe, and Nihala and Shaukat Zakaria to a special evening featuring music and memories spanning five decades while celebrating Interfaith Ministries' past and future.

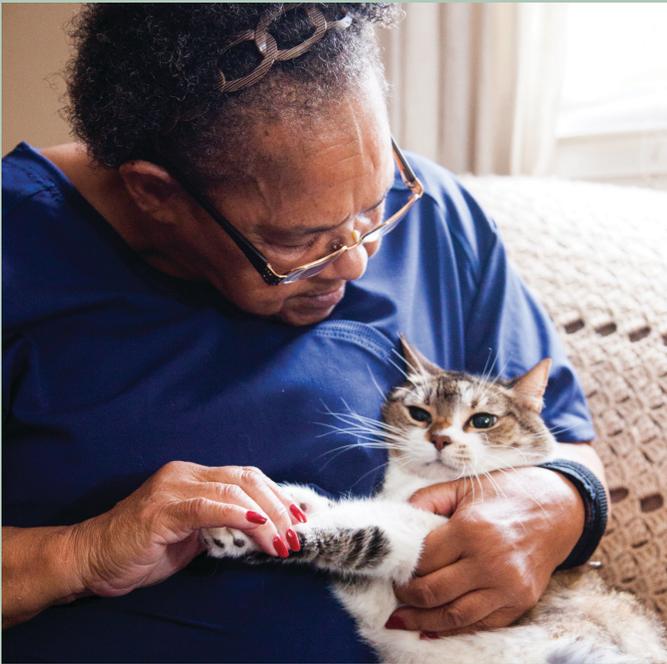


Bashar & Brigitte Kalai and Rabbi Roy Walter



Lorraine & Ed Wulfe

MEALS ON WHEELS & ANIMEALS



MEET SYLVIA & MS. KITTY

Ms. Sylvia Gilbert, a Meals on Wheels client for nine years, and her cat, Ms. Kitty, an Animeals client, are very thankful for the support they receive from Interfaith Ministries and our donors and volunteers. It is because of this support, Sylvia has been able to remain in the family home built by her father. She describes her Meals on Wheels driver as “fantastic!”



INTERFAITH MINISTRIES EDUCATES THE COMMUNITY



Ali Al Sudani, Senior Vice President for Programs and Chief of Staff at Interfaith Ministries, will be sharing his insights at a lecture on Oct. 23 entitled, “A Culture of Care: Welcoming and Supporting Refugees and Immigrants” as a part of Rice University’s Glasscock School of Continuing Studies’ fall 2019 course, Universal City: Immigration and the Future of Houston and the U.S.



The Rev. Gregory Han, Director of Interfaith Relations and Education at Interfaith Ministries, will teach a new course this fall at The Women’s Institute of Houston, “The World’s Next Door: Religions in Houston”.

For more information and registration details visit www.wih.org.



FROM THE CEO:

Summer is a carefree time for many. Kids are out of school, families take fun vacations, and even the Houston traffic eases up a bit. At Interfaith Ministries, summer is as busy as the rest of the year! Our work never takes a vacation, because the community we serve always needs our support.

Our **Meals on Wheels** and **Animeals** drivers continue to deliver meals and more to over 4,400 homebound seniors, and more than 1,200 of their pets. In May and June, we delivered to seniors a week's worth of shelf-stable food and water in preparation for Hurricane Season, through Operation IMPact. We are very grateful to all the Operation IMPact sponsors, especially our title event sponsor – the **Islamic Society of Greater Houston**.

Our seniors often struggle with the summer heat. Some do not have air conditioning in their homes. We provide fans and other items to help them. Thanks to a partnership with **TXU Energy**, we are helping our clients Beat the Heat in July.

Animeals pets who need vet services recently received a lift thanks to a new partnership with Lyft, which will transport the animals to and from the vet. PetSmart Charities also helps us get pets to the vet.

The number of new refugees arriving in Houston has started to increase again, and our **Refugee Services** program has continued to expand support services to make sure that refugee families successfully acculturate to American life. Our Women's Empowerment Group has been in the news, showcasing the work we are doing to help refugee women make friends, gain valuable life skills such as swimming, and earn income for their families. Through the Eid for Refugees project, volunteers assembled welcome kits to help refugees set up their new households. Thank you to the **Robin Hood Fund** for its generous gift to this project.

World Refugee Day was observed in June, with a week of activities across the city that included Interfaith

Ministries. We were proud to partner with the Houston Symphony through the Resilient Sounds concert that told refugee stories through music, the Leisure Tower project funded by the **Levant Foundation** that involved young refugees in creating art, and in a variety of educational and cultural events. On October 15, our annual For All Humanity Luncheon will focus on women's empowerment and raise funds for Refugee Services. **Islamic Relief USA** will be awarded the 2019 Refugee Services Humanitarians of the Year.

The **Brigitte and Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect** hosted its first public event in late May, a showing of the film, "Won't You Be My Neighbor" in partnership with the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center. The Plaza has also hosted prayer vigils, community gatherings, and tours. **Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships** is offering monthly Faith in our City classes and tours throughout the summer and planning a full roster of activities for the fall. IMPulse, our young professionals' group, continues to meet for networking and service projects, and our IMPower women's group is planning a luncheon in early December.

Volunteer Houston continues to connect volunteers with area nonprofits, increasing impact and making a difference across the community. Volunteer Houston will be celebrating its 45th anniversary on November 13 at a dinner featuring Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense and former President of Texas A&M University, as keynote speaker.

Just a few months ago, we were celebrating our 50th anniversary at the Tapestry Gala. Now, we are looking to the future... embarking on our next half century of service. There is so much work to be done. The hungry must be fed. The stranger must be welcomed. We must respect our neighbors. Volunteers can make a difference. This is the work of Interfaith Ministries and we are honored to do it. Thank you for being part of this work.

Thank you.


Martin B. Cominsky
President & CEO

FUNDING OUR MISSION...

Thank you to our generous donors for funding our mission. With your support, Interfaith Ministries continues to be a strong and thriving service organization. Your gifts are put into action in many different ways to serve the needs of the Greater Houston area.



BANNER OF RESPECT INSTALLATION

The Banner of Respect is the horizontal metal banner, sponsored by Shell, gracing the top perimeter of the Interfaith Ministries building at 3303 Main in Midtown and features the word “respect” in 13 languages carved from the metal and illuminated from within. It overlooks the new Brigitte and Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect and is visible as part of the Midtown skyline.



Adorable felines Ina and Guy

STOCK THE SHELVES

The Stock The Shelves Match Campaign exceeded the \$10,000 fundraising goal by raising \$11,490. The challenge grant donors, Linda and Fred Marshall, generously offered a match for the past several years. We appreciate our donors for supporting Animeals! Thank you to our spokescats, Ina and Guy Marshall!

EID FOR REFUGEES

During the Eid for Refugees project, volunteers assembled welcome kits to help refugee families set up their new households. The group broke the fast at an Iftar immediately following the service project. Thank you to the Robin Hood Fund for its generous gift to this project.





MEALS ON WHEELS - OPERATION IMPACT

Meals on Wheels recently hosted Operation Impact to deliver emergency food and water to homebound seniors and disabled adults in Houston and Galveston Counties. We are very grateful to all the Operation IMPact sponsors, especially our title event sponsor – the Islamic Society of Greater Houston.



Thank you to the Houston Junior Forum, for making a \$5,000 grant to our Meals on Wheels program.



Thank you to Eileen and Steve Snider for sponsoring two new trucks for Meals on Wheels!

LEAD DONORS MARCH-MAY 2019 (GIFTS OF \$1,000+)

- Advanced Applications
- Muhammad Ahmad
- Sanjay Ahuja
- Murad Ajani
- Julie and Drew Alexander
- Alkek and Williams Foundation
- Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries
- Truman and Becky Arnold Charitable Fund
- Charlotte and Jamil Azzam Foundation
- Bret Baccus
- Dr. Roberto J. Bayardo
- Seema and Gurmit Bhatia
- Nancy and Jerry Blurton
- Susan and Dan Boggio
- Barbara and Mark Brookner
- The Brown Foundation, Inc.
- Irma and Louis Bujnoch
- Mr. and Mrs. Michel Chammas
- Fouzia and Nizar Charania
- Chevron
- Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Timothy Chuang
- Club 24
- Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
- Katherine Coerver
- Bonnie Colhour
- Comerica Bank
- Terry and Martin B. Cominsky
- Gus Comiskey Jr.
- Congregation Beth Israel
- Congregation Emanu El
- Beth and Peter Cook
- Crate & Barrel
- Rania and Jamal Daniel
- Laurel and Michael A. D'Antoni
- Dr. Piyuse R. Das
- Mr. and Mrs. Kevin L. Deal
- Eileen Diehl
- Jean Dieudonne
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- Wayne Duddleston Foundation
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- Lily and Charles Foster
- Friedman Foundation
- Frost Bank
- Galveston Island Permanent Endowment Fund
- Anita and Stuart Gaylor
- Debbie and Kyle Gibson
- Joan Giese
- Amy Granoff
- Greater Texas Federal Credit Union
- George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation
- Huma and Tariq Hashmy
- Melinda and Jeff Hildebrand
- Hindus of Greater Houston
- Houston Area Continuity of Care Assoc., Inc
- Houston Chronicle
- Houston Junior Forum
- Houston Kennel Club Inc.
- Houston Methodist
- Mr. and Ms. Andrew Hung
- IMA
- International Buddhist Progress Society
- Islamic Relief USA
- Islamic Society of Greater Houston
- Suzanne and Samir Itani
- Harris Jacobs
- Rochelle Jacobson
- Amna and Nadim Jafri
- Bela Jain
- Ather Jamil
- Doty and Lawrence Kagan
- Brigitte and Bashar Kalai
- Nancy Kennedy
- Sylvia Kerrigan
- Susan and Warren Kolar
- Saranne Kosberg
- Diane and Steven Kropla
- Leonard Lan
- Barbara and Barry Lewis
- Rabbi David Lyon
- Barbara Mackey
- Dr. Alfred Maksoud
- Raj and Jugal Malani
- Mr. and Ms. Moez Mangalji
- Martin Preferred Foods
- Meals on Wheels America
- Memorial Hermann Health System
- Jane and Neal McKim
- The W.T. & Louise J. Moran Foundation
- David Morris
- Mustang Cat Charitable Foundation
- Nexen Petroleum U.S.A.
- Saeeda and Afzal Oomer
- Megan Pantuliano
- Robert Phillips
- Amy and Rob Pierce
- Dr. Steven Platts
- Janet Pozmantier
- Prime Communications
- Rebecca Proler
- Gloria and Joe Pryzant
- Vani Putigampu
- Sujata Ramakrishnan
- Beverly Robinson
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- Robert Sakowitz
- Salners Family Foundation
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- Omar Sawaf
- Dr. Raymond Sawaya
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- Alicia Smith
- Sandra Smith-Cooper
- St. Philip Presbyterian Church
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- Richard Steele
- Marilyn Stovall
- Dr. Prem Subramanian
- Geetha and Anand Subramanian
- Paula Sutton and Bill Gross
- Sysco Corporation
- Rebecca and Jeffery Tapick
- Dr. Shahin Tavackoli and Nadia Tajalli
- Jila Tavakoli and Sina Hemmati
- Texas Buddhist Association
- Shirley and Pervis Thomas
- Wilhelmina and Champion Traylor
- Isla Carroll Turner Friendship Trust
- United Way Galveston County Mainland
- United Way of Greater Houston
- Jane Wagner
- Shahnaz and Malik Waliany
- Genie and James Walters
- Laura and Dave Ward
- Carolyn and Richard Weiss
- The Wells Fargo Foundation
- Norma and Craig Welscher
- Lorie Westrick
- Deborah and Stephen Whitman
- John Wombwell
- Lorraine and Ed Wulfe
- Mohammed Yozbaki
- Nihala and Shaukat Zakaria
- The Zandstra Family

REFUGEE SERVICES

Interfaith Ministries' Refugee Services department works in conjunction with the U.S. State Department and Episcopal Migration Ministries to make refugees feel welcome in our community. The department works with local congregations, civic groups, educational institutions and other organizations to help them become self-sufficient, productive members of the community within six months of arrival.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

The Houston Refugee Consortium, a partnership of six organizations including The Alliance, Bilingual Education Institute, Catholic Charities of Galveston-Houston, Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston, Refugee Services of Texas, and YMCA International Services co-sponsored a colorful Artist Showcase on Thursday, June 20, that featured music, dance, and other performances by refugees from around the world at the Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston (MATCH).



SALEMU ALIMASI SHARES HIS STORY ON CAPITOL HILL FOR WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Salem Alimasi, former refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo and a caseworker at Interfaith Ministries joined members of Congress, refugees and faith leaders for the World Refugee Day Capitol Hill Press Conference calling for the renewal of American Leadership on refugee protection, held on Thursday, June 20 in the Russell Senate Office Building, in Washington, D.C. Salem shared his story of escape from war torn DRC. He now works as a caseworker helping other refugees make Houston their new home.

RESILIENT SOUNDS

Resilient Sounds was a collaboration between the Houston Symphony, Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston, Rice University, and the University of Houston pairing six student composers with refugees in Houston to tell their stories through the universal language of music. Each piece also features creative partners—vocalists, writers, dancers and filmmakers—to help bring the stories to life.

Resilient Sounds was performed at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 11, at White Oak Music Hall.



Photographer Melissa Taylor

LEISURE TOWER



Leisure Tower 1 is a unique art display that was created under the direction of Houston-based artist Selven Jarmon and funded by the Levant Foundation. The social sculpture piece consists of seven rocking chairs with beaded letters that spell out the word "Leisure." Letters for the backs of the rocking chairs were beaded by more than 60 refugee children

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT GROUP

The Interfaith Ministries Women's Empowerment Group has been in the news showcasing the work we are doing to help refugee women build a social base, acclimate to their new lives, gain valuable life skills, and earn income for their families.

"It's the first step in America': Swimming lessons offer fresh start for refugee women" story as printed on the front page of Houston Chronicle on May 20, 2019 and duplicated with permission."



INTERFAITH RELATIONS & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



PRESS CONFERENCE & PRAYER VIGIL

Interfaith Ministries held a press conference and prayer vigil on Thursday, May 2 on the Brigitte and Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect calling for the end of religious hatred. The vigil was not only in response to the senseless act of violence against worshippers in Sri Lanka, but also encompassed a multifaith statement of support against all religious hatred including other houses of worship recently targeted in: Poway, California; Christchurch, New Zealand; St. Landry Parish, Louisiana; Houston, Texas; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



LISTEN TO REV. GREG HAN'S PODCAST
found on IMGH.org/podcast



UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT FAITHS CREATES UNITY, PEACE

The 2019-2020 schedule of Dinner Dialogues and Faith In Our City Lunch & Learns and House of Worship Tours are posted on our website at: imgh.org/the-dialogue-project.

VOLUNTEER HOUSTON



45TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Volunteer Houston is hosting a 45th anniversary celebration on Nov. 13 featuring keynote speaker

Robert M. Gates, the 22nd Secretary of Defense, Former President of Texas A&M University and Former Director of the CIA. Sponsorships available.

Email Eleanor Gates, Director, Volunteer Houston, at egates@volunteerhouston.org.

HOUSTON IN ACTION

Volunteer Houston is a partner organization with Houston in Action and its other partners to plan and implement a comprehensive community-wide 2020 Census plan that focuses on counting undercounted communities.



CORPORATE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteer Houston works with companies to create customized volunteer experiences around causes that align with organizational values while meeting the needs of the community. Receive a turn key experience and leave all the planning to Volunteer Houston.

Contact Eleanor Gates egates@volunteerhouston.org for more details.

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SUMMER 2019 MOSAIC

**INTERFAITH
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FOR GREATER HOUSTON

3303 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002
713.533.4900

Shaukat Zakaria
IM Board Chair



Good things
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**ISLAMIC
RELIEF
USA**



HOUSTON
ENDOWMENT

UPCOMING 2019 EVENTS:

UPCOMING DATES FOR FAITH IN OUR CITY SERIES

JUDAISM

- **August 7:** Lunch & Learn from 12:00-1:00 pm
- **August 27:** Visit to Congregation Beth Yeshurun from 6:30-8:30 pm

JAINISM

- **September 12:** Lunch & Learn from 12:00-1:00 pm
- **September 21:** Visit to Jain Society (time TBD)

Luncheons are held at
INTERFAITH MINISTRIES

To register visit:
imgh.org/faith-in-our-city

DINNER DIALOGUE • BUILDING TRUST IN COMMUNITY

- **August 18, 2019** from 5:00-8:00 pm in Interfaith Ministries' Great Hall and Brigitte and Bashar Kalai Plaza of Respect.

IMPOWER

- **September 17:** IMpower and the Center for Houston's Future host discussion on "Examining The 'Rational Middle' of Immigration" at 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Interfaith Ministries. RSVPs required. Email gphillips@imgh.org.

FOR ALL HUMANITY LUNCHEON

- **October 15, 2019** from 11:30am - 1:30pm. Keynote Speaker: Indrani Goradia, National Speaker & Indrani's Light Founder. Benefiting Refugee Services and the work of Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. For more information, please contact Brandi Ledet at bledet@imgh.org or (713) 533-4925

VOLUNTEER HOUSTON 45TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

- **November 13:** Benefiting Volunteer Houston, featuring keynote speaker, Robert M. Gates, 22nd Secretary of Defense and Former President of Texas A&M University. Sponsorships available. Email **Eleanor Gates, director, Volunteer Houston, at** egates@volunteerhouston.org.