Volunteer Houston has made an incredible difference in the lives of people throughout our city. To celebrate that milestone, an unforgettable anniversary dinner will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, November 13 at the Hilton Americas-Houston.

Remarks for the evening will be given by Robert M. Gates, who served as the 22nd Secretary of Defense, the former president of Texas A & M University, and served as the director of the CIA.

Indrani Goradia, founder of Indrani’s Light Foundation, will provide a dynamic keynote address and interactive experience.

Tables for this memorable event are available from $2,500 to $15,000, with individual tickets at $200. Special thanks to our lead sponsors to date, including The Levant Foundation, Farid & Dr. Asha Virani, Indrani & Hemant Goradia, Rebecca & Jeffrey Tapick, and Community Impact Newspapers.

For more information or to reserve your place, visit www.imgh.org or contact Brandi Ledet at (713) 533-4925 or bledet@imgh.org.

For 45 years, Volunteer Houston has made an incredible difference in the lives of people throughout our city. To celebrate that milestone, an unforgettable anniversary dinner will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, November 13 at the Hilton Americas-Houston.

Volunteer Houston, the local Points of Light affiliate, has been the leading volunteer center in the Texas Gulf Coast Region since 1974 and officially became part of Interfaith Ministries in 2017.

For All Humanity Luncheon will be a powerful afternoon of “Empowering Women” as it raises funds to benefit Refugee Resettlement and other important services of Interfaith Ministries.

The 2019 For All Humanity Luncheon will be held at the Junior League of Houston. This year’s honoree is Islamic Relief USA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing humanitarian aid in the U.S. and around the world. As part of their work, Islamic Relief USA has provided generous support to Refugee Services at Interfaith Ministries, serving as lead sponsor for the Women’s Empowerment Group and providing relief for refugees impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

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MEALS ON WHEELS THANKSGIVING

Thank you to The Kroger Company for being the Golden Turkey presenting sponsor and to Energy Transfer for being the Silver Turkey sponsor of Interfaith Ministries’ Meals on Wheels Thanksgiving. This is an annual community-wide event hosted on Thanksgiving morning, Nov. 28, to help feed homebound seniors in the Greater Houston area and Galveston County. There are sponsorship and volunteer opportunities to deliver meals to homebound seniors in need on the holiday. This is always a very popular event for families, friends and community groups.

We will also be collecting pet food for our Animeals program at the event! Volunteers are encouraged to bring dog or cat food for the pets of our Meals on Wheels seniors, too.

Visit our website at imgh.org/thanksgiving to learn more and to sign up.

Thank you to CenterPoint, all 4,300+ Meals on Wheels seniors will receive a supply of non-perishable emergency meals to use in case ice keeps our drivers from making their regular deliveries. Even in sunny Houston, we typically have one or two days each year when roads turn icy and driving is treacherous. Emergency winter meals give our seniors peace of mind, knowing they will not go hungry if the temperatures freeze.

MEET MS. BETTIE BOSTON…

Ms. Boston, 81 years old and a mother of 10, lives independently in Texas City and is serviced from our Galveston County Meals on Wheels office. She has worked in the home health industry for many years taking care of the sick and dying.

When asked about Meals on Wheels Ms. Boston said, “Everyone at Meals on Wheels is very sweet and they are the best people you can come in contact with.”

WALMART BRINGS HOLIDAY CHEER TO HOMEBOUND SENIORS!

Walmart has stepped up as the lead sponsor of our Meals on Wheels Holiday Gift project this year! Thanks to Walmart and other community support, all Meals on Wheels seniors will receive a holiday gift bag filled with warm socks or gloves, toiletries, and games. Each year, our seniors look forward to receiving this extra treat in December. For some, it will be the only holiday gift they receive.

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The season of fall in Houston is often more a hope than a reality. Leaves may change color, school starts and there is a hint less humidity in the air, but triple digit days in September can make one feel as if summer may never end. Seasons blur into one another in our fair city.

Interfaith Ministries serves people in all seasons of life. Meals on Wheels and Animeals serve seniors in their golden years, providing a meal and more to elders and their pets so they can age with dignity in their own homes. Our refugees are in a season of transition, fleeing danger in their homelands to begin anew in the United States. With our help, they quickly become self-sufficient members of the community. Our Interfaith Relations and Community Partnerships program offers opportunities for dialogue and education to young and old alike, from youth who are in the springtime of their lives to those of us are further along on life’s journey. And Volunteer Houston connects people with their passions, matching volunteers with nonprofits that address community needs. Their work impacts everyone from infants to the elderly.

As community needs shift through the decades, so has Interfaith Ministries’ focus throughout its half century of service. One season remains constant, however – the season of hope. When we see hunger and loneliness in a homebound senior, we also see the hope of nourishment and a friendly visit in their eyes when they open the door to one of our drivers. When we see fear and exhaustion in the eyes of a newly arrived refugee family, we also see the glimmer of hope that brought them on their long journey to Houston in search of a better life. When we see people of all faith backgrounds, and no faith at all, coming to an interfaith event for the first time, we see a little uncertainty, but also hope of finding common ground. We see the needs of area nonprofits and the hope of volunteers wanting to make a difference.

As we enter fall, we also enter political campaign season – generally a time of heated debate, and perhaps even more so this year. It is easy to focus on our differences and divisions, and to feel pessimistic about the future. Yet, hope remains just beneath the surface. We share far more in common that we think. Interfaith work has shown me that most people want to do good, to help those in need, and to make their community a better place. Let’s not forget that as one season morphs into the next. Hope is perpetual. It just needs cultivation throughout the year. I am proud that Interfaith Ministries is a place of hope and help for so many.

Thank you.

Martin B. Cominsky
President & CEO

What an honor it is to be part of IM as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary. During my tenure as president and CEO, and now President Emeritus, I’ve seen IM become one of Houston’s premiere institutions. It’s a great blessing and a challenge.

There are over 20,000 non-profits here in Houston. Each one has a unique mission and at their best does great work. What distinguishes one from the other?

In my mind it is intentionality. Aside from serving distinct populations (as IM does with Meals on Wheels), does an organization shape the fabric of its community? I believe that is what makes IM special.

You see, bringing people who represent many faiths and cultures, and those with no particular faith as well, to feed thousands of homebound seniors, welcoming refugees and others, connecting faith communities and managing Houston’s vast volunteer networks is more than the individual parts – it is the ACT of being an agent of collaboration that gives IM its power and strength.

In these divisive times, Houston is blessed to have IM as a source of unity. I take pride knowing that IM is a place for every Houstonian and acts as a symbol that it is possible to hold very different views and still respect each individual’s right to those views.

IM is a beacon of hope. Thousands of people every day are served by caring staff and volunteers. But, even more, millions look to IM to be a model of civility and compassion. In my lifetime, I’ve never known a time when we need the IMs of the world more.

Elliot Gershenson
President Emeritus
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 ways to serve the needs of the Greater Houston area.

Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston has been awarded a $200,000 grant by the Texas Veteran’s Commission. The grant will be used to support our Operation Homebound Veterans program. A service of Interfaith Ministries’ Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston & Galveston County, Operation Homebound Veterans delivers nutritious meals to more than 350 veterans and their dependents each weekday, along with wellness checks, hurricane and winter storm kits, nutrition information, referrals for additional needs, and cards or greetings for Veteran’s Day and other holidays. Grants were presented by Daniel P. Moran, Commission Vice Chairman of the Texas Veterans Commission, and Kevin Barber, Commission Secretary of the Texas Veterans Commission.

The Texas Veterans Commission advocates for and provides superior service to veterans that significantly improves the quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families and survivors.

We were honored to be of one of seven grantees across the country to receive funding from the Administration for Community Living (ACL). The grant program sought innovative projects that will enhance the quality, effectiveness, and outcomes of nutrition services programs provided by the national aging services network. Through this program, ACL aims to identify innovative and promising practices that can be scaled across the country and to increase the use of evidence-informed practices within nutrition programs. Our three-year grant, totaling $1 million with a local match, will allow us to use innovative technologies to enhance the Meals on Wheels program. It will connect seniors to vital healthcare services and provide a new framework to enhance collaborative partnerships that reduce seniors’ reliance on hospital care.”

Thanks to our CEO, Martin B. Cominsky, for his creative idea for the grant and our Grants Writer, Philip Hauck, for putting that vision into a persuasive proposal! IM hopes its work with Memorial Hermann, the UT School of Public Health and Rice University will result in improved health for seniors on Meals on Wheels, and reduce hospital returns for chronic diseases.

(Left to right) Daniel Moran, TVC Vice Chairman; Ali Al Sudani, IM Chief of Staff/Senior VP Programs; Martin B. Cominsky, IM President and CEO; Elizabeth Schibley, IM Senior Services Director of Administration; Philip Hauck, IM Grants Writer
GET THE DATE FOR ANIMEALS BRUNCH

Please save the date for the Animeals Brunch on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Hotel Za Za in Houston. Our Brunch honorees are Linda Marshall (posthumously) and Fred Marshall, long-time AniMeals supports. Stay tuned for more details and a whole new look this year!

For info, contact Brandi at bledet@imgh.org

TXU HELPS SENIORS BEAT THE HEAT

TXU Energy partnered with Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston by providing a $10,000 donation to support a TXU Energy Beat the Heat fan drive. On Tuesday, July 16, Houstonians were invited to “beat the heat” by donating a new box fan to help Interfaith Ministries’ at-risk Meals on Wheels clients stay cool and avoid heat-related emergencies. During the event and throughout a three-day online campaign Interfaith Ministries raised more than $17,000.

LEAD DONORS (GIFTS OF $1,000+)
JUNE – SEPTEMBER 2019

- Humairia & Asif Akhtar
- The American Legion Post 594
- Andrew Delaney Foundation
- Anne Lamkin Kinder Foundation
- Axalta Coating Systems
- Bank of America
- Donna & Jim Bennett
- Dale Bodden
- Laura Borst
- BP America
- Bridgeway Capital Management
- Carlos Briones
- Irma & Louis Bujnoch
- Maria & Neil Bush
- CenterPoint Energy
- Chapelwood UMC
- Fouzia & Nizar Charania
- Patricia Chazen
- Chevron
- Charlene Chuang
- David Chubbik
- Congregation Beth Yeshurun
- Congregation Emanu El
- Eddy Packing Co.
- Edward & Helen Oppenheimer Foundation
- Patti & Richard Everett
- Tahir Faruqui
- Mary Fenton
- First Unitarian Universalist Church
- Benjamin Foster
- Lily & Charles Foster
- Ann & J. Kent Friedman
- Frost Bank
- G2X Energy
- Galveston Island Permanent Endowment Fund
- Alyson & Elliot Gershenson
- Indrani & Hemant Goradia
- GP TM Acquisition
- Marty Griffith
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- Mary Gwen & Ben Hulsey
- Islamic Relief USA
- Rochelle Jacobson
- Amna & Nadim Jafari
- Bimla & Swantantra Jain
- Dr. Karen Johnson
- Suzanne & Terry Johnson
- Rebecca & J. Michael Jusbasche
- Brigitte & Bashar Kalai
- Brenda & Randy Kashka
- Anila Khan
- Dr. Faraz A. Khan & Mrs. Hina Syed
- Dr. Sippil & Ajay Khurana
- Bill King
- The Kroger Company
- KUHF-FM
- The Levant Foundation
- Robert Lorio
- Rabbi David Lyon
- Maria & Joseph Magee
- Dr. Sushma & Devinder Mahajan
- Nancy & Neal Manne
- Marek Family
- Rosalyn & Barry Margolis
- Fred G. Marshall
- Shazma & Arshad Matin
- Mr. & Mrs. Paul McDermott
- John P. McGovern Foundation
- Meals on Wheels America
- Victoria Merwin
- Patrick Moran
- Shenila Naseem
- Marvin Nathan
- Lana & Les Packard
- Palmer Foundation
- Paul B. & Frances Lenora Terry Jr. Family Foundation
- Alice & Frederick Perrenot
- Susie Pomares
- Julia & James Porter
- Dawn & Richard Rawson
- John Redfield
- The Richard Stoddor Charitable Foundation
- Robert W. & Pearl Wallis Knox Foundation
- Catherine & Scott Roberts
- Ruth & Kenneth Arnold Family Fund
- Joyce & Arthur Schechter
- Shell Oil Company
- Shifa USA Foundation
- Salma & Riaz Siddiqi
- Joel Smith
- Jerry Speetser
- South Texas College of Law Houston
- SpireTek International
- St. Luke’s UMC
- St. Paul’s Methodist Foundation
- St. Philip’s Presbyterian Church
- Mary Lynn & Jonathan Stevens
- The Stewart A. & Marla B. Feldman Family Foundation
- Anuradha & Dr. Mani Subramanian
- Amy Sutton
- Paula Sutton
- TAIBA
- Nadia Tajalli & Dr. Shahin Tavakoli
- Rebecca & Jeffrey Tapick
- Elizabeth Tate
- Jack Threet
- Tracy & Elma Lee Lawrence Foundation
- Renee & James Trevathan
- United Way Galveston County Mainland
- United Way of Greater Houston
- Asha & Farid Virani
- Shahnaz & Malik Walianny
- Clayton Walker
- Walmart
- John Weiss
- Whalley Foundation
- William E. & Natoma Pyle Harvey Charitable Trust
- Mary & James Winn
- Jim Wood
- Jun Ying
- Abd Yousuf
- Nihala & Shaukt Zakaria
IMpower, IM's women's group, is hosting a special luncheon program on Dec. 4 at 11:30 a.m. at Interfaith Ministries featuring attorney Nicole Casarez and her investigative journalism students who investigated the capital case of Texas death row inmate Anthony Graves, and Pamela Colloff, a senior reporter at ProPublica and a staff writer at The New York Times Magazine.

Thank you to our lead sponsors, Neal Manne and Nancy McGregor Manne.

For more information contact Jodi Bernstein at jbernstein@imgh.org.

Center for Houston's Future will present its research highlighting how immigrants have helped fuel the region’s growth and how immigration will be critical to our economic future. A film called “The Rational Middle” will be featured. The event is at Interfaith Ministries on Oct 14 at 6 p.m.

For more information, contact Gevetta Phillips at gphillips@imgh.org.

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Volunteer Houston recently worked with Dow through our Corporate Volunteer Program, to create a customized volunteer experience with local service projects throughout Houston for Dow's EMERGE 2019 Day of Service on Friday, September 13. More than 400 Dow employees volunteered at 10 sites.

“Partnering with Volunteer Houston and leveraging their expertise and local connections has enabled us to seamlessly engage our employees to uncover their passion, transform it into purpose and make a difference through volunteer service across the city.”

- Alveda Williams,
Dow corporate director of Inclusion and HR director for Talent.
Felix, his wife Gentille and their two small children were forced to flee their homeland of Democratic Republic of Congo due to war and instability. They fled first to live in a refugee camp in Burundi. The family was cleared by the U.S. State Department to resettle in Houston in May 2019. Now in Houston, Felix and Gentile are working at a manufacturing company, making air conditioning units. This grateful family is one of hundreds who come to Houston each year, having escaped violence in their homelands. Interfaith Ministries is proud to resettle refugees like Felix and Gentille as they begin new lives in our city.

The Houston Refugee Consortium held a news conference on October 1 to voice strong opposition to the Administration’s plan to drastically cut refugee admissions to the U.S. in the coming fiscal year.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, “Houston is a welcoming city, and as the mayor I want our refugee neighbors to know that this is our home and we support them in every way. Cutting refugee numbers to these levels will have a negative impact on our local economies, and especially for employers that have traditionally welcomed refugees.”

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo sent a statement of support that said, “We have a moral duty to lead the world in helping people fleeing war and persecution. I know that we have the capacity to welcome more refugees because Harris County serves as a model for the United States.”

Mayor Turner delivers strong remarks at the news conference in favor of raising the refugee resettlement cap.

A FAMILY FROM THE CONGO COMES TO HOUSTON

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How You Can Help

It is time to ask both the White House and Congress to reinstate refugee admissions to a more humane level. Members of Congress can show their support by co-sponsoring the GRACE Act (H.R.2146, S.1088), which would set the minimum annual refugee admissions goal to the previous level.

Everyone can help by contacting your members of Congress and asking them to restore refugee admissions to the minimum annual average of 95,000 annually. Contact information is available online at [www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative). Or contact Texas Senators John Cornyn at 202-224-2934 or Ted Cruz at 202-224-5922.

Refugee Women Bake Treats, Break Down Barriers

For over a year, our Refugee Women’s Empowerment Group has been holding regular bake sales at Antidote Coffee in the Heights. The sales are the culmination of the group’s desire to learn new skills and bring in additional income for their families. The women have attracted quite a following, enticing Houstonians with sweet treats from their home countries of Syria and Iraq. The bake sales not only help the refugee women earn extra money, but also help them make friends in their new city. Stop by Antidote Coffee at 729 Studewood on any Saturday from 9-11am to have a taste!
UPCOMING 2019 EVENTS:

OCTOBER 15:
FOR ALL HUMANITY LUNCHEON, 11:30 A.M.,
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON, 1811 BRIAR OAKS LANE.

OCTOBER 26:
FAITH IN OUR CITY—VISIT TO THE BAHÁ’Í CENTER,
1 TO 3 P.M.

NOVEMBER 7:
DINNER DIALOGUE: GETTING INVOLVED. REGISTER AT
IMGH.ORG/THEDIALOGUEPROJECT.

NOVEMBER 12:
FAITH IN OUR CITY—LUNCH & LEARN;
NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHRISTIANITY, 12:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 13:
VOLUNTEER HOUSTON 45TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER,
6 TO 9 P.M. AT THE HILTON AMERICAS,
1600 LAMAR STREET.

NOVEMBER 28:
MEALS ON WHEELS: THANKSGIVING DRIVERS ARE
NEEDED TO DELIVER MEALS TO SENIORS FROM
9 A.M TO NOON. REGISTER AT IMGH.ORG/THANKSGIVING

DECEMBER 4:
IMPOWER LUNCHEON, “MEDIA, JUSTICE AND
RIGHTING WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS,”
11:30 A.M. TO 1 P.M., GREAT HALL AT IM

FEBRUARY 8, 2020
ANIMATE BRUNCH
11:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M. AT HOTEL ZA ZA IN HOUSTON

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.IMGH.ORG
OR CALL 713-533-4900