

Interreligious Leaders Dialogue Group

May 12, 2010

South Bay Islamic Association

Present (from sign-in lists): Tahir Anwar; Melanie Aron; Bruce Bramlett; Vicky Cheung; Andrew Condon; Mertze Dahlin; Everett DePangher; Jerry Drino; Maha Elgenaidi; Diane Fisher; Gerald Grundzen; Ann Hayes; Steve Herrera; Jian Hu; Berget Jelane; Alan H. Jones; Andrew Kille; Shirley Lin Kinoshita; June Klein; Rebecca Kuiken; Kate Lazarus; Joy-Ellen Lipsky; Rosamonde Miller; Clarissa Moore; Lee Neish; Ellen Grace O'Brian; Nancy Palmer-Jones; Ali Rangwala; Chuck Rawlings; Philip Boo Riley; Gerald Sakamoto; Fatih Sarigoz; Girish Shah; Kevin Smith; Karen Stiller; Samina Sundas; Michael Sung; Ayse Yesilyurt; Reshma Yunus

NOTES:

- We began with a **recognition of Bruce Bramlett** for his service to interfaith work in Silicon Valley over the past several years with SVFACES. Andrew Kille, Boo Riley, and Diane Fisher each spoke about Bruce's work, and Tahir Anwar presented an inscribed desk clock on behalf of the community
- Andrew Kille reported from the **Ad Hoc Committee** meeting on April 20, 2010. The committee basically recommended that we create a new interfaith organization that would take on the functions of the Partner City. (Notes from the meeting and background information are available at www.southbayinterfaith.org/files.htm)
- Rev. Ellen O'Brian, director of the Center for Spiritual Enlightenment and Vice-Chair of the **Parliament of the World's Religions** gave a brief history of the Parliament and of the meaning of the **Partner City designation** which has been given to Silicon Valley/ Santa Clara County. She mentioned the study that had been made by the Partner City Group as part of creating a profile of our area, and described the current project underway with Chief Davis of the San Jose Police to create a Multifaith Advisory Committee to work with the Department.
- **Proposal:** that the group present commission a small group to draft a proposal for a multi-faith organization in Santa Clara County, and to bring the proposal to the larger group within the next few months
- **Responses:**
 - Need to amend the time frame—might not be enough time to accomplish desired task
 - What about non-religiously identified groups such as the Humanists?
 - Nancy Palmer-Jones recommended a format called "Learning Journeys" that allows for input from the wider community into a planning process
 - The process of developing the organization might itself be a "best practice" that could eventually be shared with the Partner City network
 - We need continue having "Fasting and Feasting" type community events
 - The process of formation is as important as the project itself; task group might propose a *process* for creating the multifaith organization
 - Santa Clara County Human Relations Commission is a resource for linking to government—tasked with building a community that "cherishes diversity and seeks harmony." They offer mediation, conflict resolution, and community education
 - How might we "train the trainers"? Could we provide speakers for organizations that are new to interfaith cooperation?
 - We need to be able to address the hard issues as well; what are the civic and national issues that need to be addressed?

- **Proposal:** that those present vote to proceed with creating a multifaith group in the South Bay (without specifying details at this point). There was overwhelming support; nearly everyone raised their hand in confirmation
- **Planning Team:** discussion then turned to how the planning team should be created:
 - Need to have representation from the Partner City Group
 - There were recommendations both for and against having current directors of interfaith organizations on the team
 - Recommendation that the “Learning Journey” idea be incorporated into the process
 - The Planning Team is charged with developing the *process* as we go forward, and to bringing that proposal back to the larger group; the Team itself does not need to be representative of the diversity, but needs to keep the different groups in mind in formulating the process
 - **Members:** With the consent of the group, Bruce Bramlett exercised “autocratic privilege” and invited the following people to be on the Planning Team—all of whom accepted:
 - Diane Fisher, Ven. Jian Hu, Rev. Alan Jones, Rev. Andrew Kille, Joy-Ellen Lipsky, Clarissa Moore, Rev. Nancy Palmer-Jones, Rev. Chuck Rawlings, Prof. Boo Riley, Girish Shah, Samina Sundas.
 - Chuck Rawlings offered part-time staff support to help manage the process
 - Bruce will send out a questionnaire for people’s input about issues of the vision, governance, and membership of the organization
 - It is vital to be open and transparent about the creation of the organization
- **Next Meetings:**
 - **PLANNING TEAM: Tuesday, May 18, 2010, 8:00 am** at the Council of Churches, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1710 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose
 - **INTERRELIGIOUS LEADERS GROUP: Thursday, June 17, 2010, 11:45- 1:30.** Jewish Community Center, 14855 Oka Rd., Los Gatos.
- **Announcements:**
 - Samina Sundas announced the American Muslim Voice Annual gathering to be held July 18th at her home in Palo Alto. More information to come
 - Andrew Condon of Habitat for Humanity announced a multifaith Habitat project to begin in January/February 2011
 - Clarissa Moore of SVFACES asked us to remember the students and others at Live Oak High School in Morgan Hill, which has experienced great disruptions this past week