



FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES

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Interfaith Leadership Institute

Faith-Based Leadership Training and Community Partnerships

“More than a prayer and a promise”

Description: The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA) proposes to create a city-wide initiative designed to increase the ability of the next generation of engaged New York City faith leaders to be positive community change agents in collaboration with the City Council as well as other community leaders and organizations. Entitled the “Interfaith Leadership Institute”, this new program will train interfaith leaders across New York City to:

- Conduct thorough community needs assessments
- Identify crucial community issues
- Make use of government and private resources already in place to serve persons in need
- Develop strategic partnerships with social service providers and elected officials
- Join in civic leadership opportunities to bring about positive change in their communities

The Interfaith Leadership Institute is designed to reach all Council Districts across the five boroughs to strengthen faith-based leadership and community engagement within each district. This initiative aims to improve social service delivery and will not include proselytization.

Amount: \$425,000

Need to Strengthen Faith Leaders and Faith-Based Organizations Across New York City:

Throughout the five boroughs of our city, there are communities where large percentages of residents are living below the poverty level and where social conditions are significantly detrimental to one’s overall well-being. With 83% of New Yorkers identifying as religious and with even higher percentages in communities with high concentrations of poverty, leaders of all faiths should be natural partners with public and nonprofit service providers. However, far too many are not trained sufficiently to perform this role. Faith leaders can and should play significant roles in addressing challenging community issues and providing community members with a voice, but many are under-resourced and under-supported. They often operate in isolation and disconnected from civic leadership, city officials, and community based organizations. Faith leaders need and want to offer New Yorkers more than a prayer and a promise.

Goals: The Interfaith Leadership Institute will equip diverse 102 faith leaders with the skills to:

- Reach out effectively to local officials and discuss issues affecting their community
- Research and bring in social services and resources to meet the needs of community residents
- Develop strong partnerships with local community based organizations to strengthen families and communities
- Mobilize community members to register to vote and be active voters

Scope of Work: The Interfaith Leadership Institute is designed with two (2) primary components: 1) Leadership Training and 2) Community Partnerships.

1) Leadership Training: 102 faith leaders (two from each Council District) will be divided into five cohorts of about 20 faith leaders each to receive training and support during a one-year period.

- Each Council Member will be asked to recommend several who are seasoned faith leaders and several who represent the emerging next generation of faith leadership. FPWA will select one from each grouping to be the two participants from that district.
- Each cohort will meet in six training retreats over the year, each focused on a specific social issue affecting their communities. Each cohort's participants will be geographically linked in an effort to promote synergy and effective partnership opportunities.
- FPWA staff and consultants will facilitate the trainings. Faith leaders will receive resource guides and toolkits during the trainings as well as coaching and on-going support after the trainings.
- The faith leaders will have the opportunity to join in confronting some of the biggest challenges facing our city, including but not limited to human trafficking, jobs for the formerly incarcerated, neighborhood safety, food access, and economic stability.
- Training sessions will also address positive civic engagement and democracy in action.

2) Community Partnerships: Developing partnerships between faith institutions and community based organizations will bring more needed resources into the targeted neighborhoods and help to reduce poverty. Faith leaders will learn best practices in organizational management and collaboration in order to leverage resources for neighborhood residents and address community issues. Examples of these faith-community partnerships include the following:

- "Harvest Station" information kiosks based in faith-based organizations to provide information on services and resources being offered by the community based organizations in the Council District
- "Ministries of Care" to address issues affecting children, youth, and families in targeted Council Districts, including the Department of Education and foster care agencies

Track Record: With the support of Councilmember Donovan Richards in FY16, FPWA trained many faith leaders from his district in the Leadership Training in the fall of 2015 (46 faith leaders in South Queens and 110 total in New York City). We look forward to partnering with the City Council in FY17 in order to expand our successful model to all Council Districts throughout the City, reaching leaders of diverse faiths and developing Community Partnerships in each district.

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