



Network of Religious Communities

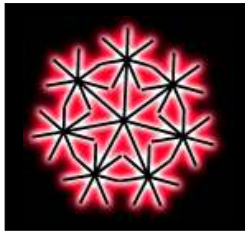
works
for
humanity

A Case for Giving



"We are people of many religious traditions. We are different, but our humanity is deeper than our divisions. We work together for humanity."

DR. G. STANFORD BRATTON
*Executive Director
Network of Religious Communities*



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1272 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo NY 14209
[716] 882.4793
www.religiousnet.org
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The Network of Religious Communities is a not-for-profit leadership forum that represents more than 100 years of community-based communication, collaboration and collective service.

The Network of Religious Communities is a unique organization of organizations working seamlessly together for peace, justice and the common good in Greater Buffalo and all of Western New York. We are nationally and internationally recognized as a model for active collaboration and productive cooperation among congregations, denominations and faith-based groups. Our membership collective represents Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Unitarian faiths.

Our Beginnings

The NRC was established in 1999 from the consolidation of the Buffalo Area Council of Churches and Buffalo Area Metropolitan Ministries (BAMM).

The Buffalo Area Council of Churches was founded in 1857 to respond to the social and economic needs of the children and families in Western New York. In the early 1970s the organization established The Food Shelf and a complementary social services component to respond to hunger issues in the region.

Buffalo Area Metropolitan Ministries was an interfaith organization founded in 1972. BAMM worked with faith leaders to address desegregation issues in Buffalo Public Schools, helped to welcome Hindu faith leaders to the region, and organized one of the earliest national interfaith conferences, which was coordinated by Mary Greatbatch.



The NRC carries forward “works for humanity” begun by the two organizations from which it evolved.

A Brief History of Service

The NRC was recognized by the US Department of State for building bridges of understanding and cooperation in Western New York after the national disaster of September 11, 2001.

In 2006 the Network organized a disaster response to an October ice/snow storm that endangered lives, destroyed property and disrupted power in Buffalo and Western New York for more than a week.

In 2007 the Network organized an interfaith service for the Dalai Lama that was attended by 7000 people during his historic visit to the University at Buffalo.

In 2009 the Network helped organize the interfaith response to the Flight 3407 airplane crash in Clarence, NY, including ministering to the grief-stricken families and coordinating a community-wide Interfaith Prayer Service.

Our Case for Support

The work of the Network defines direction and identifies resolution that advance multi cultural understanding and protect basic human rights and freedoms.



The Network of Religious Communities facilitates proactive response to critical social issues as they relate to human diversity and optimal quality of life.

Our mission is to increase cooperation and collaboration around a common table of diverse religious organizations and their congregations. Our vision is for the greatest good of the entire community in which we live and serve, with particular advocacy for the economically and socially disenfranchised. We are directed by basic tenets of humanity that are common to the respective faith beliefs of our membership collective.

We carry out our mission through a diverse complement of “works for humanity.”

Dialogue and Understanding

We partner with the University at Buffalo and Niagara University to provide Spirituality and End of Life training for future doctors and nurses.



Advancing Medical Competency

The NRC partners with the School of Medicine and School of Nursing at SUNY-University at Buffalo, and the Niagara University School of Nursing to present workshops that provide information on faith-based mores and values. Presented by our leadership, these interactive seminars promote open discussion that helps third-year medical students and future charge nurses better understand the connections among religion, cultural diversity and the delivery of optimal patient care.

Medical residents from Catholic Health System complete a volunteer rotation in the NRC Food Pantry, where they gain firsthand experience with basic human need as it pertains to the culturally diverse and economically disenfranchised.

Promoting Multicultural Communication and Partnership

The NRC produces radio and television broadcasts that inform the Western New York community about regional religious traditions and provide a place for the discussion of health care issues and local, national and world affairs. These programs help people gain a broader knowledge of human diversity and help to facilitate multicultural approaches to social issues of common concern.

Our vision is for a community where all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods that are produced in safe ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.

The NRC Food Pantry

serves more than 14,000 people each year, and is a place where volunteers of all ages, faiths and cultural backgrounds come together to exercise their humanity. It provides emergency food five days a week to families living in Erie County who are referred by congregations and agencies. Its partners include the Food Bank of Western New York and the Erie County Department of Social Services.



Education and Outreach

The Network of Religious Communities is a leader in the fight against hunger in Greater Buffalo and Western New York.

NRC Food for All Program

Electronic Food Stamp Application Program is carried out in partnership with the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance of New York State and the Erie County Department of Social Services. Staff facilitates on-site online registration for families to receive food stamps for at churches, social service agencies and libraries.

Public Policy Committee lobbies for legislation to support the hungry and impoverished and hosts an annual NRC "Faith and Hunger Conference."

Outreach Component promotes awareness of federal nutrition programs that provide access to Food Stamps, Summer Food



Advocacy and Diplomacy

The Network of Religious Communities advocates for the political protection of religious freedoms and basic human rights. We coordinate lobbying for legislation that upholds social justice and moral responsibility in the interest of the greatest good for all humanity.

The NRC membership serves as the regional diplomatic welcoming committee for global religious dignitaries and other visitors, assuring that they receive every amenity and respect as it relates to the mores and values of their culture and faith beliefs.



**Your
Help is
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Shelter and Service

The Network of Religious Communities is housed in the historic mansion at 1272 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo, New York.

The building was donated in 1943 by Mrs. Clara Hoffman Laub to the former Buffalo Area Council of Churches. It houses the NRC administrative offices, Food for All Program and the Food Pantry, and provides space for events and activities that individually and collectively support and promote works for humanity.

The mansion also is home to

Church Women United

Interfaith Women

League of Women Voters

Religion and Human Rights Project

Interfaith Coalition on Energy

Interfaith Peace Network

The Buffalo Friends Meeting

Your Help is Needed...

The Network of Religious Communities is mounting a \$1 million campaign to ensure future growth of our mission.

The money will be used to renovate, improve and maintain our century-old historic headquarters, including

*Basement conference space with
handicapped-accessible restroom and kitchenette*

First floor meeting rooms

Installation of an elevator

Main entrance

Food Pantry

Necessary outer repairs

Our “Campaign for Humanity Works” offers Opportunities for Named Giving



Main Building [\$1,000,000]

Conference Center [\$300,000]

Renovation of basement space with multimedia capability, restrooms and a kitchenette to accommodate up to 75 people.

Production Studio / Media Center [\$50,000]

Installation of an on-site production studio and community-based technology resource.

Meeting Room [\$50,000]

Complete renovation of meeting space, including multimedia capability

Library [\$25,000]

Renovation of interior space to house a collection of art, letters, artifacts and texts on humanity and human diversity as they relate to organized religions in our region.

Food Pantry [\$25,000]

Renovation of the entrance, reception area and food storage facilities.

Green Garden [\$7,500]

Cultivation and landscape of a community garden space to support NRC advocacy for the elimination of hunger.



NRC Leadership

CO-PRESIDENTS

Rev. Mary Masters
Unity Church of Practical Christianity

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Neal
WNY Churches in Covenant

TREASURER

Dr Nasir Khan
Abmadiyya Muslim Community

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION

Rev. Merle Showers
Niagara Frontier District United Methodist Church

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE

Dr Vijay Chakravarthy
Hindu Cultural Society WNY

VICE PRESIDENT FOR OUTREACH

Deacon James Anderson
New Hope Baptist Church

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAMMING

Dr. Douglas Bunker
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Dr. G. Stanford Bratton

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Rev. Francis X. Mazur



The NRC remembers and recognizes the contributions of Ms. Helen Urban and Rev. Robert Grim.



Ms. Helen Urban (above right), first woman nutritionist in Western New York, and founder of the NRC Food Pantry and WNY Food Bank; and Rev. Robert Grim (right), Executive Director of the Council of Churches from 1976 to 1987 and active NRC board member since its founding.

If you are interested in learning about ways to support the NRC Humanity Works Campaign please contact:



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“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



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“Works for Humanity”

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