



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**InterFaith Works of CNY to Celebrate Refugee Success Stories at the
32nd Annual InterFaith Leadership Awards Dinner**

Syracuse, NY - The 2014 InterFaith Leadership Awards Dinner (ILAD) will honor the contributions and accomplishments of newcomers who have arrived in Syracuse as refugees. **The 32nd annual ILAD, "New Lives, New Leaders," will be held at the SRC Arena & Events Center on the Onondaga Community College campus, on Tuesday, May 6, 2014, 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.**

The dinner serves as InterFaith Works' (IFW) most prominent fundraising event of the year, attracting an average of 500 attendees from all sectors of our diverse community. Participants come together to celebrate and honor the accomplishments of extraordinary individuals whose dedication to service and career have made a deep and lasting impact on the Central New York community.

For the first time in IFW's history, the event will recognize direct beneficiaries of IFW's Refugee Resettlement Program. The **10 honorees** are now proud members of the Syracuse community, who arrived here as refugees from some of the most distressed regions in the world, and who have been resettled by the InterFaith Works Center for New Americans Refugee Resettlement Program. They have overcome unimaginable obstacles to escape violence or persecution in their home countries. Their stories embody the mission of InterFaith Works and the very essence of the ILAD. They have shown extraordinary perseverance and persistence in rebuilding their lives in the United States. Members of their own ethnic communities look to them for leadership and support. They have gained employment, learned English, started small businesses and purchased homes. In sum, they are contributing to the economic revitalization of the entire city of Syracuse, all while demonstrating an unyielding commitment to diversity, service and career. The event will not only raise awareness about the struggles of refugees around the globe, but will also showcase Syracuse as a model resettlement city.

From 2001 to 2012, Syracuse and Central New York as a community has resettled 7,210 refugees – thanks in large part to IFW partners and collaborators, donors, staff and volunteers. Key community service partners include Catholic Charities, the Syracuse City School District Refugee Assistance Program, local employers and many other local organizations, agencies and institutions – all working together to create a best practices city and standard for other communities across the country to follow. The dinner will not only recognize individual honorees, but also the institutions that have supported them on their path to self-sufficiency.

About IFW's Center for New Americans, Refugee Resettlement Program

Since 1981, IFW's Center for New Americans Refugee Resettlement Program has welcomed thousands of new Americans who arrive in Syracuse fleeing war, inter-ethnic violence or political persecution in their home countries. The program typically resettles 500-600 new refugees each year, and provides post-settlement services - including English language and literacy instruction, employment placement, and housing assistance - to an additional 1,200 families who have been in the U.S. for less than 5 years.

Contact Nora Heaphy for ticket and table purchases and sponsorship opportunities at (315) 449-3552, ext. 120, or email nheaphy@interfaithworkscny.org.

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