



OFFICE OF FAITH & NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

April 2025 Newsletter

Greetings and welcome back! Please use this newsletter for information on upcoming events, funding opportunities, and resources to ensure your organizations can thrive.

Reverend Doyeon Park – President Buddhist Council of New York

Q. What led you to become a faith-based leader?

My faith journey began with a deep aspiration to discover inner freedom and lasting peace. Inspired by the teachings of Won Buddhism, which emphasize cultivating wisdom and compassion in the midst of everyday life, I entered monastic training in 1998. That step was rooted in my sincere desire to better understand myself and the world around me, while also contributing to the well-being of others.

Through my practice, I have come to a profound realization of the interconnectedness of all beings. This understanding has naturally led me to **engage** deeply in interfaith dialogue and cooperation, seeking to nurture mutual respect and understanding across diverse traditions. It is this vision—a world where people of all backgrounds recognize our shared humanity and walk the path of peace together—that continues to inspire and shape my work as a faith-based leader.



Q: Looking ahead, what are your aspirations for the interfaith community in New York State, and how do you see the NYS Interfaith Council contributing to the realization of these goals?

It is heartening to see that the Governor's office recognizes and values the role of interfaith and multifaith collaboration. This acknowledgment affirms the importance of our collective work and inspires hope for what we can build together.

Looking ahead, I aspire for the interfaith community in New York State to become a source of lasting hope and peace—not only within our faith circles but also for the wider community. We live in a time when many are facing uncertainty, division, and hardship. I believe that when people of diverse faiths come together in understanding and solidarity, we can offer a powerful message: that unity is possible, and that compassion and dignity can be the foundation of our shared future.

Q: Are you focused on any particular issue area right now?

My focus—now and for the rest of my life—is to support individuals and communities in finding inner peace and connecting to their infinite capacity for wisdom and compassion. In a world where many feel overwhelmed and disconnected, I seek to create spaces where people can reconnect with their hearts, rediscover their inner resilience, and recognize their interconnectedness with others. As a Buddhist, I believe that this inner transformation is the foundation for building bridges across differences. I hope to nurture both inner and collective peace, trusting that it will ripple outward—cultivating more compassionate relationships and contributing to a more harmonious, just, and inclusive society.

Q. What are you most proud of in terms of the work you and your organization have done?

I am most proud of our unwavering commitment to nurturing peace—both within ourselves and in the world—while embracing people of all faiths and backgrounds. We strive to create spaces where individuals and communities can come together across differences, fostering genuine understanding, mutual respect, and a sense of belonging. From local neighborhoods to the United Nations, our work seeks to bridge divides and realize the profound interconnectedness of all.



Free Hate Crime Prevention Workshop

M CN

Muslim Community Network



Dear Community Members,

In these trying times, **Muslim Community Network (MCN)** is offering **free Hate Crime Prevention workshops** to help **equip our communities with the tools to stay safe and informed**. Upon request, we can also provide **physical safety training** as part of the workshop.

If you are interested in **scheduling a workshop for your community**, please fill out our request form below:

 **Request Form:**

 [Hate Crime Prevention Workshop Request](#)



Funding Opportunity



2025 Grants Application Process

**Mother Cabrini Health Foundation will open our 2025 application process on:
Monday, March 31.**

Letters of Inquiry (LOI) accepted from Monday, March 31 - Thursday, April 24

The Five Programs:

- [Access to Healthcare](#)
- [Basic Needs](#)
- [Healthcare Workforce](#)
- [Mental and Behavioral Health](#)
- [General Fund](#)

Organizations that align with our mission to advance the health and well-being of vulnerable New Yorkers are welcome to apply through the Program that best aligns with their goals.

Timeline:

LOI Submissions: March 31 – April 24, 2025

Invitations for full proposals: June 2025

Grant decision: October 2025 and December 2025

To learn more about our Programs and our application process, [please visit our website](#) where you'll find program descriptions and answers to frequently asked questions

Thank you for your interest in the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation's grantmaking program.



TDF Membership for Clergy

- We believe all New Yorkers deserve to experience the best theatre in NYC **at an affordable price**. Thankfully, religious leaders are eligible to sign up for a [TDF Membership](#) so they can purchase tickets to shows on Broadway and beyond up to 70% off.
- **What do TDF Members get?**
- 🎫 Tickets to theatre, dance, and opera performances for just \$11 to \$60
- 🎭 Tickets can be purchased online in advance
- 💰 The Membership costs \$42 annually but the savings are huge—the fee pays for itself after your first Broadway ticket purchase!
- 🙏 Not everyone is eligible to join TDF, but clergy, religious leaders, and those serving in faith-based organizations are!

Does your organization have public events coming up?

[Fill out our form](#) to have your event included in our next newsletter.

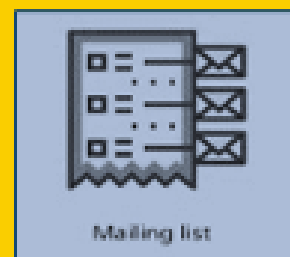
Connect with us!

Important Interfaith Dates in April

- April 10: Jain: Mahavir Jayanti
- April 12: Jehovah's Witnesses: Memorial of Jesus' Death
- April 13: Jewish: Passover
- April 14: Sikh: Vaisakhi
- April 20: Christian: Easter

To join our mailing list for faith-based and nonprofit organizations:

[CLICK HERE](#)





Autism and Neurodiversity Acceptance Month



**AUTISM
AWARENESS
MONTH**



April is Autism and Neurodiversity Acceptance Month, with the word “acceptance” recently having replaced the word “awareness.”

With more than 75 million people in the world who identify as living with autism, 35 thousand of whom live in New York State, we have certainly moved beyond the former “awareness” and expect that people with autism are accepted just as they are, with all the diverse traits that make people unique. As acting Commissioner of the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, celebrate the freedom to be yourself and to be acknowledged for who you are as a person, with or without a disability.

At OPWDD, we take opportunities like this month to further highlight the achievements, contributions and skills that people with autism bring to our communities. We have engaged in public campaigns to encourage people to “Look Beyond” someone’s developmental disability and see the person. Most recently, our “Dare to be YOU” campaign featured people doing what brings them joy and pride for who they are. The submissions were an incredible reminder of people’s spirit and eagerness to share of themselves. We heard from people who run their own businesses, are homeowners, and who are talented artists and fierce competitors.

But beyond the campaigns and this month’s observance, I think that “acceptance” is an action that translates to one of inclusion and belonging.

On April 2, in honor of World Autism and Neurodiversity Acceptance, you will see some of New York’s most famous buildings lit in signature blue. We will also be flying New York State’s Neurodiversity Flag designed by Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Board member, Josh Mirsky, as a symbol of the strength and value of people with autism.

Let these visual reminders lead to more. More invitations to join in. More opportunities to learn. More discussion about how we see each other and what we really want others to understand. More visibility.

Sincerely,

Willow Baer, Acting Commissioner



Grant Information – Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Federal Grants

Department of Health and Human Services

[Drug-Free Communities \(DFC\) Support Program](#)

Deadline: May 11, 2025

The purpose of the DFC Support Program is to establish and strengthen collaboration to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent youth substance use. By statute, the DFC Support Program has two goals: 1) Establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, public and private non-profit agencies, as well as federal, state, local, and tribal governments to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth (individuals 18 years of age and younger). 2) Reduce substance abuse among youth and, over time, reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

State Grants

New York State Department of Agriculture

[FreshConnect CSA for SNAP Program 2025](#)

Deadline: July 8, 2025

The Department invites eligible entities to apply for funds through the FreshConnect CSA SNAP Grant Program, which will allow SNAP participants to access the popular Community Supported Agriculture model by partially subsidizing the cost of weekly share purchases.

Office of Mental Health

[Transitional Housing for Individuals who are Justice Involved](#)

Deadline: May 1, 2025

This funding opportunity is for the development and operation of up to ten transitional treatment apartment housing programs throughout the State. The programs will support individuals with a serious mental illness who are:

- currently involved in the criminal justice system
- pending release or recently released from incarceration
- and/or subject to community supervision (i.e., probation, parole, court mandate)

Council on Developmental Disabilities

[Advocacy Training and Statewide Network](#)

Deadline: April 18, 2025

The New York State Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD) is seeking to fund one grantee in the amount of up to \$250,000 per year for three years to develop a comprehensive advocacy training for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The training will have separate tracks for self-advocates and parents/family members/caregivers. The grantee will also create a statewide advocacy network.



Grants Information Cont.

Office of Mental Health

Community Residence – Single Room Occupancy (CR-SRO) with Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Services for Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness and Justice Involvement

Deadline: 2PM, May 1, 2025

The Office of Mental Health continues to invest in community-based services that address unmet needs. OMH is announcing the availability of funds for a single agency to develop:

- One 25-unit Community Residence - Single Room Occupancy, AND
- One 68-capacity Forensic Assertive Community Treatment team
- Both the residence and ACT team must be in the New York City Region.

The target population includes people with serious mental illness who are or have been involved with the criminal justice system.