



OFFICE OF FAITH & NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

May 2026 Newsletter

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

Healing Together: Mental Health Awareness Month



This May, the New York State Office of Faith & Nonprofit Development Services recognizes Mental Health Awareness Month by highlighting the vital role faith leaders, nonprofit organizations, and community partners play in reducing stigma, expanding access to support, and promoting healing across New York State. This issue features faith leaders working at the intersection of spirituality and mental wellness, a special OFNDS webinar with NAMI FaithNet on becoming a stigma-free faith community, mental health-focused nonprofits serving communities across New York's regions, and key grant opportunities and resources like the Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes Grant to strengthen faith-based and nonprofit organizations. Together, we continue advancing compassion, connection, and community-centered care.



Governor Hochul Announces Up to \$70 Million Available to Help Protect Community-Based Organizations Vulnerable to Hate Crimes and Attacks

APRIL 15, 2026 | Albany, NY

FY27 Executive Budget Proposal Includes \$35 Million to Boost the \$35 Million Currently Available to Protect Nonprofit, Community-Based Organizations During Heightened Global Tensions with Ongoing Conflict in the Middle East

- Since Taking Office, Governor Hochul has Awarded More Than \$131.5 Million in Record Funding for More than 1,700 Security Projects Through the Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes Grant Program
- Following Governor Hochul's Investments and Local Enforcement, Hate Crimes Reported to Police Departments and Sheriffs' Offices Declined 26 Percent During the First 11 Months of 2025 vs. 2024. NYPD Reports Increase in Confirmed Hate Crimes During First Quarter of 2026
- Record Funding Builds on Governor Hochul's Commitment to Public Safety, Preventing Hate and Bias Crimes and Safeguarding the State Against Terrorism
- Governor Kathy Hochul today announced that nonprofit, community-based organizations at risk of hate crimes and attacks can now apply for record-level funding – up to \$70 million – through the state's Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes program. The FY27 Executive Budget includes \$35 million to build upon the \$35 million currently available from the FY26 Enacted Budget in response to heightened threats facing organizations vulnerable to hate crimes and terror-driven violence amid ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

**To Apply to the Securing Communities Against
Hate Crimes Grant:**

[CLICK HERE](#)

Deadline: Noon (DST) Wednesday, July 8, 2026



GRANT INFORMATION

All of our grant information and grant application assistance information can be accessed by visiting our website.

Please click [HERE](#) for more OR visit <https://dos.ny.gov/ofnds>

Book a 1:1 with our Grant Program Manager Xamayla Rose to enroll in SFS:

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

Grant Highlight:

New York State African American Heritage Grant Program

The New York State African American Heritage Grant Program (NYSAAH) provides grants to assist nonprofit organizations and local governments in documenting, interpreting, and preserving places and stories of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in New York. The program is administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's [Division for Historic Preservation](#), in partnership with the [New York State Commission on African American History](#) and the [New York State Department of State](#).

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Faith Leaders Spotlight: Focusing on Mental Health



Pastor Mike Waldron

Pastor of (FCBC) First Corinthians Baptist Church

The HOPE (Healing On Purpose and Evolving) Center is the manifestation of Senior Pastor Michael A. Walrond’s vision, to effectively support the vast mental health needs of the parishioners of First Corinthian Baptist Church, and the Harlem community at large.

Q: What first led you to see mental health as an essential part of your faith leadership and ministry?

A: “My understanding of the importance of mental health in faith leadership came through my own personal journey. Living with CVID (Common Variable Immune Deficiency), an incurable condition, brought seasons of anxiety and depression that deeply affected me emotionally and spiritually. Seeking therapy helped me navigate those challenges and taught me that caring for your mental health is not separate from faith—it is part of healing and wholeness. That experience made me realize that mental health advocacy had to become part of my ministry, because too many people suffer in silence, believing they have to carry their pain alone.”

Q: What would you like faith leaders across New York State to understand about their role in reducing stigma and supporting mental health in their communities?

A: “I would want faith leaders across New York State to understand that part of our role is to have a deep hunger to see people freaked and whole. Too many suffer in silence because they fear being judged or misunderstood. When faith leaders speak openly about mental health, we help break stigma and create space for healing. Seeking therapy or support is not a lack of faith—it is an act of courage and care. The church should be a place where people feel safe enough to seek help, not ashamed that they need it.”

Q: How can faith communities, nonprofits, and government work together more effectively to support mental health and wellness across New York State?

A: “Faith communities, nonprofits, and government must stop working in silos and start working in partnership. Faith communities provide trust, nonprofits provide resources and expertise, and government provides scale and support. When those three come together, we can create real pathways to healing. Mental health is not just a medical issue—it is a human issue. And it will take all of us, working together with compassion and intention, to make wellness accessible, stigma-free, and rooted in dignity for every person across New York State.”



May 2026 OFNDS WEBINAR: NAMI and Faithnet: How to Become a Stigma-Free Faith Community

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM

REGISTRATION LINK: [Register Here for FREE](#)

This presentation introduces NAMI FaithNet, an initiative of NAMI that empowers faith communities to support individuals and families affected by mental health conditions while actively reducing stigma within congregations.

It highlights practical steps for faith communities to become Stigma-Free Faith Communities - environments where mental health is openly discussed, compassion is prioritized, and individuals have access to meaningful support and resources.



Nathan McLaughlin

Executive Director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Nathan McLaughlin joined NAMI in 2025 as the Executive Director after many years in the human services and arts sectors, having spent more than 15 years in the spiritually based Camphill communities living and working with people of all abilities. The work done at NAMI is close to Nathan's heart, rooted in his own family life and biography; the mission aligns closely with his belief in the power of community and in connecting with others. Most recently, he worked in healthcare access and saw firsthand the challenges of navigating systems, as well as how mental health support and resources can transform a person's life. He currently serves on the board of the CREATE Council on the Arts and the Columbia County Community Services Board.



Christine Baxter

Dedicated Volunteer for NAMI Capital Region New York, FaithNet Coordinator and Senior Adult Mental Health Advisor

Christine Baxter is a dedicated volunteer with NAMI Capital Region New York, serving as the FaithNet Coordinator and Senior Adult Mental Health Advisor. A peer in recovery with more than thirty years of lived experience, she works to strengthen connections between faith communities and mental health resources through education, outreach, and advocacy. Christine holds degrees from Drew Theological Seminary and the University at Albany, SUNY, and helps coordinate ecumenical worship initiatives through the Capital Area Council of Churches, fostering collaboration among diverse faith communities in the Albany region. Through NAMI, she has collaborated for the past four years with the NAMI Central Suffolk Long Island FaithNet Committee to support interfaith mental health education and help organize their annual Clergy Retreat. With more than forty years of experience supporting older adults as a caregiver, advocate, and minister, she is particularly committed to addressing the mental health impacts of isolation, ageism, and economic hardship, and regularly presents NAMI programs - including Bridges to Hope, NAMI 101, NAMI Provider Education, and NAMI Smarts—throughout the Northeast.



Highlighting Nonprofits Specializing in Mental Health of New York



Region: Mohawk Valley

ICAN is a home and community-based network that works to restore social, emotional and behavioral health and well-being to over 3,000 individuals daily. Care is individualized, family-driven and happens in homes, schools and communities. With a 600+ staff of care managers, social workers and more they are able to meet individuals where they are, increasing their rate of success.

Phone: 315-792-9039 | Email: marketing@ican.family



Region: Central New York

For over 75 years, AccessCNY has helped people of all ages and abilities live their best life. Whether an individual has an intellectual disability, physical disability or mental health diagnosis, AccessCNY helps them reach their full potential. AccessCNY advocates so everyone has a voice, and everyone is heard. We're creating a community where everyone belongs.

Contact: Matt Seubert, Chief Development Officer
Phone: 315-410-3383 | Email: matt.seubert@accesscny.org



Region: Southern Tier

Helio Health is a leading provider of evidence-based substance use and mental health treatment with sites in the Central New York, Finger Lakes, Southern Tier, Mohawk Valley, and Capitol regions. Our comprehensive programs include a 24/7 crisis center, in-community, outpatient, inpatient, and residential/housing supports. Additionally, the Helio Health Training Institute equips professionals with the skills and certifications needed to deliver quality behavioral health care. We're committed to guiding every individual on their journey to recovery, delivering hope, healing, and a path forward for communities across the region.

Phone: 315-471-1564



NORTHEAST PARENT & CHILD SOCIETY
PARSONS CHILD & FAMILY CENTER
UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

Region: Capital Region

Northern Rivers Family of Services, comprised of Northeast Parent & Child Society, Parsons Child & Family Center, and Unlimited Potential, serves more than 19,000 children, adults, and families in 46 counties who struggle with abuse, neglect, trauma, mental health, educational difficulties, and service navigation through an innovative continuum of home-, clinic-, school-, and community-based services.

Phone: 518-426-2600 | Email: communications@northernrivers.org



Region: Western New York

MHA is a team of experienced mental health advocates who provide resources, programs, and hope for our community. We promote mental health and well-being for people of all ages and demographics throughout Western New York. Through programs like BEST, CASA, and our newly relaunched Trusted Chat Line, MHA continues to make a way for everyone to be heard and be helped.

Phone: 716-886-1242 | Email: info@mhawny.org



Highlighting Nonprofits Specializing in Mental Health of New York



Region: Finger Lakes

The Mental Health Association of Rochester is a community-based non-profit empowering individuals through peer-based support, education, and connection. We promote mental wellbeing through culturally responsive services that help individuals and families thrive. Guided by empathy, empowerment, and hope, we believe your story matters and that recovery is possible for all.

Phone: 585-325-3145 | Email: info@mharochester.org



Region: Long Island

Family Service League provides essential human services including mental health care, addiction treatment, housing support, education, and family services. We help individuals and families across Long Island overcome challenges, restore stability, and build healthier, more independent lives through compassionate, trauma-informed care and a comprehensive network of community-based programs.

Phone: 631-427-3700 | Email: restorehope@fsl-li.org



Region: North Country

By prioritizing access and convenience, Citizen Advocates is a key community institution and leading provider of integrated, community-based care, serving thousands of individuals and families annually across Upstate New York. The organization delivers high quality mental health, addiction treatment and disability services, along with essential supports that promote individual health through stable housing, job training, food security and transportation.

Contact: Joseph J. Riccio, Network Associate Vice President
Phone: 518-651-2760 | Email: joericcio@citizenadvocates.net



Region: Mid-Hudson

For over 71 years, Astor Services has provided high quality, comprehensive behavioral health and educational services to families across the Hudson Valley and the Bronx. Astor serves over 9,000 children, adults, and families annually through a plethora of OMH-licensed mental health, early childhood, prevention, and community-based programs.

Phone (Hudson Valley): 845-871-1000 |
Phone (Bronx): 718-231-3400



Odyssey House

Where recovery gets real

Region: New York City

Odyssey House provides comprehensive treatment for substance use disorder, supportive housing, and wraparound care for adults, seniors, and families. Through holistic, person-centered services including medical, psychiatric, and vocational support — they help people rebuild their lives. Odyssey House is a community grounded in dignity, resilience, and the belief that everyone deserves a chance to recover.

Phone: 212-361-1600 | Email: info@odysseyhouseenc.org



World Elder Abuse Awareness Month!



Preach It from the Pulpit: World Elder Abuse Awareness Month!

- Older adults who are victims of abuse are more likely to turn to a faith leader or spiritual community member when experiencing harm, mistreatment, or abuse than anyone else!
- We know this from our meetings and surveys of older people. As a faith leader, YOU are uniquely positioned to offer compassion, safety, and guidance to victims of physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial exploitation or neglect.
- **June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.** Lifespan, a regional nonprofit organization providing information, guidance and services for older adults and caregivers, invites you to take part in our statewide efforts to raise awareness about elder abuse throughout the month of June.
- We are providing discussion resources you may use during a service, gathering, teaching, or reflection. We encourage you to adapt these materials in ways that align with your community's own traditions, values, and styles of worship or teaching.
- Sample messages, reflection points, and informational bullet points are available at www.ncall.us and at www.interfaithpartners.org or by contacting Reverend Susan Frawley, Project Coordinator, Lifespan of Greater Rochester, at sfrawley@lifespanrochester.org
- You can play a powerful role in promoting awareness, compassion, and protection for older adults. We would appreciate it if you let Rev. Frawley know if you engage in Preach It from the Pulpit or if you need any additional information or assistance.



RESOURCES FROM OUR PARTNERS AT THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU

 Department of State
Office for New Americans

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



Resources are available to everyone, including immigrants:
dos.ny.gov/know-your-rights



New Americans Hotline:

 **1-800-566-7636**
MULTI-LINGUAL AND ANONYMOUS

NEW EXTENDED HOURS
Monday – Friday, 8 AM – 8 PM EST
Saturday – Sunday, 9 AM – 5 PM EST



To share information regarding federal government action in New York State:
ag.ny.gov/federal-actions-form



ASSISTANCE FOR IMMIGRANTS

FREE SERVICES:

- Legal Assistance
- Naturalization Support
- Community Workshops
- Developmental Disabilities Services
- Mental Health Support
- Learn English
- Job Training



dos.ny.gov/Office-New-Americans

 Department of State
Office for New Americans

For referrals to free immigration-related legal help and other programs, please call the **New Americans Hotline** at:

 **1-800-566-7636**
Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 8 PM EST
MULTI-LINGUAL AND ANONYMOUS
 Department of State
Office for New Americans

dos.ny.gov/Office-New-Americans

VISIT THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS' WEBSITE
AT <https://dos.ny.gov/office-new-americans>



Recent Highlights





Connect with us!

Important Interfaith Dates in May

- May 5: Judaism - Lag B'Omer
- May 14: Christianity: Ascension Day
- May 22-23: Judaism: Shavuot
- May 24: Buddhism: Buddha's Birthday
- May 24: Bahá'í: Declaration of the Báb
- May 24: Christianity: Pentecost
- May 27: Islam: Eid al-Adha
- May 29: Bahá'í: Ascension of Bahá'u'llah

Does your organization have public events coming up?

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

Need to be added to our database of Faith Leaders?

Please fill out [this](#) form.