

Introduction

Dear interfaith colleagues,

It is with great enthusiasm that we present to you *Youth and Interfaith Dialogue: A Directory of GTA Organizations!*

This compilation of organizations – all of them currently engaged in youth and interfaith work in the Greater Toronto Area – was created as a networking tool to facilitate and empower communication between local interfaith initiatives. In addition to the main directory, you will find educational resources, potential global partners, and other useful information. Through this document, and through ongoing field research, we hope to reach out to initiatives we have not yet encountered.

This directory is an effort of Scarborough Missions Interfaith Department. Through this youth listing we hope to contribute to the creation of a sustainable network, fostering interreligious collaboration amongst youth in our city and around the world. Please feel free to forward this directory to colleagues and to post it on websites and social media. To add your organization to this GTA youth directory, or to learn more about developments in the field of youth & interfaith, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you!

Hector Acero Ferrer, Interfaith Intern
Scarborough Missions Interfaith Department
hectoracero@gmail.com



GTA Organizations Committed to Interfaith Youth Work

Brampton Multicultural Youth Council

Contact Person: Aditi Shah – President

Email: bmycweb@gmail.com

Website: www.bmyc.ca

Telephone: (647) 455-0887

Twitter: [@BMYC4diversity](https://twitter.com/BMYC4diversity)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BramptonMulticulturalYouthCouncilbmyc>

Description:

“The Brampton Multicultural Youth Council is a youth-led initiative for youth. Our mission is to connect youth to a world of different cultures. We do this by hosting a variety of interactive events and workshops throughout the year, as well as on social media. We strive to unite the community in order to celebrate our diversity, and in the process, help make a difference. In our events, we expose youth to “hidden cultures” around the world and we explore ideas such as cultural identity, cultural gaps, stereotypes and perception. We hope that understanding the diversity that exists around us will be a step in the direction of making stronger societies to which everyone can belong.”

Children’s Charter for Compassion:

Contact Person: Erin Henry

Email: info@childrenscharterforcompassion.com

Phone Number: (647) 242-1327

Website: www.childrenscharterforcompassion.com

Twitter: [@childscharter](https://twitter.com/childscharter)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Childrens-Charter-for-Compassion/>

Description:

The Children’s Charter for Compassion is a Toronto-based organization founded by Erin Henry. Its primary goal is to provide a means for children and those around them to understand how to treat each other with compassion in a language that is simple and easy to understand. Following these guidelines, this project focuses on schools, activity books for children, and video and media resources. By implementing The Golden Rule, *do unto others as you will have done to yourself*, “world peace can be achieved. It begins with our children.”

Encounter World Religions Centre

Contact Person: Brian Carwana – Director

Email: encounter@worldreligions.ca or brian@worldreligions.ca

Website: <http://www.worldreligions.ca>

Address: 390 Speedvale Ave E., Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1E 1N5

Telephone: 519.822.0099

Fax: 519.822.1236

Twitter: [@encounterworld](https://twitter.com/encounterworld)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/encounterworld>

Description:

The Encounter World Religions Centre creates opportunities for academic and experiential encounters with world religions. Each year, thousands of students in the GTA participate in these programs. Popular with Secondary Schools, “**Sacred Symbols**” is an interactive presentation introducing the sights and sounds of the world’s religions through authentic ritual objects, musical instruments and dress. Another favorite with students and teachers, the “**Houses of Worship Tour**”, provides guided tours of synagogues, temples, churches, mosques, gurdwaras and meditation centres. Students have an opportunity to speak with practitioners and religious leaders, ask questions, and observe rituals. Encounter also offers professional development opportunities for teachers and adult educators.

Faith House Toronto

Contact Person: Sarah Mkhaiel

Website: www.facebook.com/fhtoronto

Email: faithhousetoronto@scmcanada.org

Address: 383 Clinton Street, Toronto (ON)

Phone number: (416) 463-7622

Description:

Faith House Toronto brings together young adults from various spiritual, religious, secular, and otherwise philosophical backgrounds to live together in a house. Each fall, this community welcomes new housemates to work on social justice initiatives from an interfaith perspective. This multi-faith residential space is supported by the Inspirit Foundation and the University of Toronto’s Multi-Faith Centre and Ecumenical Chaplaincy.

Greening Sacred Spaces

Contact Person: Christina Read

Website: www.greeningsacredspaces.net (follow link for Halton – Peel Chapter)

Email: cread@greeningsacredspaces.net

Work Phone: 905-466-3939

Personal Phone: 905-815-6185 ext. 2

Description:

Greening Sacred Spaces (GSS) is a practical interfaith program developed to assist and inspire diverse faith communities to take collective action in creating environmentally sustainable communities. The Halton-Peel Chapter offers interfaith eco-spiritual workshops and activities to motivate youth groups, schools, and young adults to improve their understanding of the connection between faith, community, and the environment. Through their multiple activities, GSS gathers, encourages, and mobilizes youth from diverse backgrounds to protect and care for the environment.



Heart to Heart

Contact Person: Dalia Krusner – Executive Director

Email: heart2heart@campshomria.ca

Website: www.heart-to-heart.ca

Address: 4700 Bathurst St. Suite 2, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M2R 1W8

Telephone: 416.736.1339

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/HeartToHeartCampShomria>

Description:

Heart to Heart brings a group of twenty Israeli teenagers to Canada every summer. Half of these participants identify as Palestinian Israeli and half as Jewish Israeli. Upon arriving in Canada, the group spends two and a half weeks living together at Camp Shomria, an overnight summer camp near Ottawa. Daily activities include team-building workshops, camping trips, and facilitated dialogue about the narratives, politics, and power dynamics that participants face in their daily lives at home in Israel. The group also visits Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and spends four days living with Canadian host families while touring Toronto. Heart to Heart is intent on building a generation of leaders who will recognize the importance of creating a truly just and shared society and possess the skills they need to make it a reality. The Heart to Heart team also works throughout the year with youth and adult audiences in the GTA to facilitate dialogue sessions and interactive workshops based on the methods used with its youth participants.



Intercultural Dialogue Institute GTA

Contact Person: M.Fatih Yegul

Email: gta@idialogue.ca

Phone Number: 416-260-5885

Address: 481 University Ave., Suite 711, Toronto, ON M5G 2E9

Website: <http://gta.idialogue.ca>

Twitter: [@IDIGTA](https://twitter.com/IDIGTA)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/IDIToronto>

Description:

Intercultural Dialogue Institute (IDI) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to advance social cohesion through personal interaction by promoting respect and mutual understanding among people of all cultures and faiths through dialogue and partnership. IDI aims to promote enduring interfaith and intercultural cooperation, tolerance and dialogue by sharing our differences and similarities in an effort to enhance civil society, to promote the development of human values, and to advance diversity and multiculturalism in the society. The GTA chapter of IDI (IDI GTA) carries out its youth activities through its youth platform. One program features art & essay contests for high school students www.artessay.ca To learn about programs offered by IDI's university chapters at York and U of T, consult this information:**IDI York**

University: <https://yorku.collegiatelink.net/organization/IDIYork>

Contact Person: Ali Koca (president), yorku@idialogue.ca

IDI University of Toronto: <https://www.facebook.com/IDI.uoft/info>

Contact Person: Isa Topbas (president), uoft@idialogue.ca

Kids4Peace (Canada)

Website: <http://kids4peace.ca>

Contact person: Rev. Joseph Horrigan S.J.

Email: jphjph@web.ca

Telephone: (416) 806-6965, (416) 929-0763

Description:

Kids4Peace (International) is an interfaith peace education organization dedicated to encouraging children of different cultures and faith traditions to explore their differences and similarities, and to learn understanding, tolerance and respect, while fostering sustainable friendships across the lines of conflict. On a number of occasions in recent years, Kids4Peace (Canada) has brought four Jewish, four Muslim, and four Christian eleven year-old children from the Galilee region of Israel to a two-week summer camp experience in Ontario to create new friendships and to help build the human foundations for peace in their troubled region. In the camp, they are joined by a corresponding number of Canadian children from the three faiths. All participants – staff, families and children – share a commitment to peace. They also share a belief that an educational experience of respect and understanding for cultural and religious diversity should begin with the very young. For the daily schedule of a 10-day camp held in Ontario in 2012, click here: <http://www.scarboromissions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/kids4peace.pdf>



Multi-Faith Centre for Spirituality and Practice (@ the University of Toronto)

Website: <http://www.multifaith.utoronto.ca/index.htm>

Contact Person: Richard Chambers, Director

Email: richard.chambers@utoronto.ca

Telephone: (416) 946-3119

Contact Person 2: Zita Prashad

Email: space.multifaith@utoronto.ca

Telephone: (416) 946-3120

Address: Room 313, 569 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2J7

Description

The Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Toronto accommodates a variety of spiritual and faith-based practices and encourages interfaith dialogue, spiritual development and community-building for all students. With a state-of-the-art facility and ongoing interfaith and diversity programming, the Multi-Faith Centre has become a safe space in which youth of diverse religious and secular backgrounds can ask questions, reflect on, and learn about the issues related to the search for meaning in the multicultural environment of Canada. The Centre also offers annual internships to university students.

Muslim–Catholic Student Dialogue

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/muslim.catholic.sd>

Contact Person: Vivian Kwok

Email: vkwok@archtoronto.org

Telephone: (416) 934-3400 ext. 527

Fax: (416) 934-3444

Address: Catholic Pastoral Centre, 1155 Yonge Street, Suite 100, Toronto, Ontario, M4T 1W2

Description:

The Muslim-Catholic Youth Dialogue promotes friendship and cooperation between Catholic and Muslim students, through shared community service activities and thought-provoking dialogues on topics relevant to both faiths. Past themes have included suffering, violence and marriage. These dialogue meetings, among university-age students and young adults of both faiths, is supported by the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto and the Canadian Council of Imams.



Participants in a Muslim-Catholic Student Dialogue meeting. Photo credit: Vivian Kwok.

North American Muslim Foundation Speech Competition

Contact Person: Shazia Khan, Program Coordinator

Email: shaziakhan@namf.ca

Phone Number: 416-299-1969 Ext. 26

Address: 4140 Finch Ave. E., Scarborough, ON

Description:

The North American Muslim Foundation (NAMF) is a Canadian charitable organization serving national and international communities irrespective of religion, nationality, or race. The NAMF Speech Competition aims to develop future leaders by providing youth with opportunities to enhance their public speaking and interpersonal skills. Over 100 schools in Ontario have been invited to participate in this competition, where issues relevant to Canadian society are discussed.



Open Dialogue (@ University of Toronto Scarborough Campus)

Contact Person: Esther Broomfield

Email: ebroomfield@utsc.utoronto.ca

Phone Number: (416) 208 – 2705

Contact Person 2: Lall Lomeharshan

Email: lomeharshan.lall@mail.utoronto.ca

Phone Number: (647) 780 – 8211

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/opendialogatutsc> (Open Dialogue Space)

Description:

Open Dialogue is a student initiative at the University of Toronto (Scarborough Campus) that ensures that the lines of communication between religious, non-religious, and other interest groups on campus remain open and productive. Here students with different worldviews pursue a common interest in wisdom, peace, and unity while respecting the knowledge that each person possesses in the collective search for truth and understanding. Open Dialogue groups meet regularly and over Facebook. Past discussion themes have included the relationship between science and religion, the relationship between genders and how this is affected by one's faith or worldview, how one's faith or worldview affects one's relationships and how to deal with mental health stigmas.

The Religious Diversity Youth Leadership Project

Website: <http://rps.chass.utoronto.ca/rdyl.htm>

Contact Person: Richard Chambers

Email: richard.chambers@utoronto.ca

Phone Number: (416) 946-3119

Description:

This project provides opportunities for young adults across the GTA to cultivate civic responsibility, community engagement and leadership as they dialogue about religious diversity and work against the forces of exclusion and marginalization in the multicultural Canadian context. Programs include seminars, community research workshops, youth leadership training in religious diversity and the placement of youth in community organizations.

Scarboro Missions Youth Interfaith Project

Contact Person: Hector Acero Ferrer, Interfaith Intern

Email: hectoracero@gmail.com

Phone Number: (416) 838 – 9315

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/scarborointerfaith>

Description:

Sponsored by the Interfaith Department of Scarboro Missions, this project promotes information-sharing and networking among youth and young adults who are engaged in interfaith work in the

GTA. Current programs include this directory, a Facebook page and efforts to bring young people of various faiths together for dialogue and community service. The project also works to promote collaboration among organizations committed to youth interfaith dialogue.

Scouts Canada – Greater Toronto Council

Contact Person: Grace Lee

Email: grace.lee@scouts.ca

Phone Number: 1 (888) 855 – 3336

Website: greatertoronto.scouts.ca

Twitter: [@torontoscouts](https://twitter.com/torontoscouts)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TorontoScouts/>



Description:

Scouts Canada engages youth, involving them throughout their formative years in a non-formal educational process. Scouts have a lot of fun discovering new things and experiences they wouldn't have elsewhere. Along the way they develop into capable, confident and well-rounded individuals, better prepared for success in the world. Scouting offers a world where you can discover the best in yourself and the best in others. In Toronto, there are many different Scouting groups whose memberships are broken down by location, religion, or other cultural affiliation. Most groups are co-ed and are accepting new members. Scouts has a long tradition of welcoming members of all religions, cultures and ethnicities.

Student Christian Movement of Canada

Contact Person: Sarah Mkhaiel

Website: scmcanada.org

Email: info@scmcanada.org

Address: 200-310 Dupont Street, Toronto (ON)

Phone number: (416) 463-7622



Description:

The Student Christian Movement (SCM) of Canada is a grassroots network led by youth and students who are passionate about social justice and community action. This ecumenical movement emphasizes diversity and welcomes everyone, regardless of belief, sexual orientation, faith tradition, and age. SCM has initiated Faith House Toronto, a multi-faith residential community whose members work on social justice projects from an interfaith perspective.

Ummah United

Contact Person: Sidra Anjum, President

Phone Number: 647-527-7442

Email: sidra.786@hotmail.com

Description:

Ummah United is a group of university students in Toronto that brings together youth in an active learning experience about religion, philosophy, and spirituality. The group organizes workshops and does research in efforts to build a bridge of understanding and co-operation between various communities, while providing an educational platform for people to share and discuss faith-related topics. In 2014, Ummah United organized an inter-faith conference that examined the beliefs and practices common to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

University of Toronto Campus Chaplains Association

Point of Contact: Multifaith Centre Website

Website: <http://www.multifaith.utoronto.ca/Campus-Chaplains-Association.htm#A>

Description:

“We are a multi-faith organization reflecting the multi-ethnic/multi-faith complexion of the University of Toronto. We help make the connections between an intellectual understanding of spirituality and living the reality of faith. We are there at critical moments to facilitate rites of passage – weddings, funerals, memorial services. We offer spiritual support from a holistic perspective. We are not bound by being part of the academic reporting system of the university. We are committed to helping people (students, staff and faculty) grow to wholeness through a search for meaning in life, an exploration of spiritualities and an examination of moral and ethical issues.” On the UofT Campus Chaplains Association website (see above), there is a listing of the chaplain representatives of numerous faith traditions, including their email addresses and phone numbers.

World Religions Workshops for High School Students @ Scarborough Missions

Website: www.scarboromissions.ca

Contact Person: Kathy Murtha

Email: kathymurtha83@gmail.com

Telephone: 416-261-7135 ext 215

Address: Scarborough Missions, 2685 Kingston Road, Scarborough, ON M1M 1M4

Description:

Using play, creativity, the arts, music, media, movement and meditation, these workshops expose high school students to the wisdom, culture and symbols of the world’s religions. Each year, 5,000 students from the GTA participate in this day-long program. One of the many goals of these workshops is to engender character education, exposing students to the transformational wisdom of the various religions and to the Golden Rule. This educational model has been adapted for use with various youth and intergenerational audiences in the larger community. Members of the public are welcome to observe. To view a video of the workshop, click

here: http://www.scarboromissions.ca/golden-rule/golden-rule-videos#movie_featuring_youth

Toronto Area Interfaith Council (TAIC)

Website: <http://www.torontointerfaithcouncil.ca>
Email: info@torontointerfaithcouncil.ca
Telephone: 416-464-4691
Address: 1155 Yonge Street, Suite 304, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1W2
Description: TAIC is an organization of representatives of numerous faith communities and groups in the Toronto area. TAIC is dedicated to affirming the importance of ethics, spirituality and faith in daily life and to the promotion of understanding, harmony, respect and acceptance among the faith communities of the Toronto area. TAIC functions in association with individuals and organizations devoted to Multifaith activities.

An Interfaith History of the Greater Toronto Area

Description: This two-part document, created by interfaith activist Leslie Mezei, chronicles Toronto's interfaith history from 1893 to the present. This historical record allows the reader to not only trace the steps of the interfaith movement in the GTA but to identify the organizations, groups, governments and initiatives that have contributed to the development of Toronto's rich interfaith scene. <http://www.scarboromissions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Toronto-Interfaith-History-and-Directory.pdf>

Educational Resources (from local to global)

- [Learning to live together – a comprehensive intercultural and interfaith curriculum](#)
- [Online toolkit for youth-led interfaith service-learning](#)
- [Safe and caring schools for students of all faiths – A guide for teachers](#)
- [Teaching curiosity and respect for religious differences \(curriculum\)](#)
- [Interfaith Explorers – a variety of curriculum resources \(Abrahamic faiths\)](#)
- [Face to Face: Faith to Faith, Summer Intensive Training & Templates](#)
- [Interfaith Action Guide for Abrahamic Traditions](#)
- [Animating Interfaith Culture for 5,000 Teenagers a Year](#)
- [Comprehensive curriculum using the arts and the logic of circles, rules, moral modeling and the Golden Rule to inspire young people to become global citizens](#)
- [Curriculum which supports and challenges young people to appreciate ethical living through the application of the Golden Rule](#)

- [Children of various religions recite their Golden Rule texts \(video\)](#)
- [Interactive resource to express student understanding of the Golden Rule](#)
- [An art activity and lesson plan enabling young people to envision a world of compassion](#)
- [A collection of short videos featuring youth and the Golden Rule](#)



The **Interfaith Curriculum Resources** section of the Scarborough Missions website features links to numerous interfaith curricula produced in various parts of the world. Most of these more than 40 curricula are focused on youth. And most can be downloaded free of charge. To view these resources, click here: <http://www.scarboromissions.ca/interfaith-dialogue/curriculum-resources>

Organizations around the World Committed to Interfaith Youth Efforts

- [European Interfaith Youth Network](#)
- [Global Interfaith Youth Network](#)
- [Global Network of Religions for Children](#)
- [Interfaith Youth Core](#)
- [The Young Leadership Council of the International Council for Christians and Jews](#)

- [The Interreligious Coordinating Council of Israel](#)
- [Interfaith Youth Leadership Coalition](#)
- [New Vision Partners](#)
- [North American Interfaith Network](#)
- [The School for Peace: Neve Shalom](#)
- [The Tony Blair Faith Foundation](#)
- [United Religions Initiative](#)
- [World Faith: Interfaith Youth in Action](#)
- [World Spirit Youth Council: Children of the Earth](#)

About the Author

Héctor Alfonso Acero Ferrer



In addition to his work as an Interfaith Intern at *Scarboro Missions*, Héctor is pursuing a Master of Philosophy at the *Institute for Christian Studies* where he is a research assistant for their *Centre for Philosophy, Religion, Society and Ethics*.

Originally from Bogota, Héctor began undergraduate studies in philosophy at the National University of Colombia, transferring to the *University of Toronto* to complete his Honours Bachelor of Arts.

Héctor also holds a Master of Divinity and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from the *Toronto School of Theology, Regis College*. While at TST, Héctor was actively involved as a student representative, serving as president of the Regis College Student Council. Parallel to his studies,

Héctor has worked for several non-for-profit, faith-based organizations dedicated to social justice and education including, *Fontbonne Ministries* and the *Newman Centre Catholic Mission*. Héctor's research interests include philosophy of language, the intersection of faith and society, and current trends in Latin American theology.

Please publicize this directory

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For more info about this GTA youth directory or to learn more about developments in the field of youth & interfaith, contact

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