

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

WASHINGTON DC 2ND WARD
WASHINGTON DC STAKE

1707 Glenkarney Place
Silver Spring, MD 20902

February 10, 2013

To The Judges for the 2013 World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize:

I would like to strongly encourage The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought to select Faith in Action DC's recent event, the first ever "DC Young Adult Faith Leaders Summit" (DCYAFLS), held on February 9th, 2013 for the World Interfaith Harmony Week Grand Prize. The DCYAFLS perfectly captured the spirit of interfaith harmony and religious understanding envisioned by your organization.

I personally considered it to be an honor and privilege to host the event in our chapel and welcome nearly 100 young adult faith leaders from over a dozen local religious communities around the Washington DC area. Together they encouraged stronger local cooperation between emerging leaders from diverse religious groups, learned more about each other's faith traditions, shared successes and challenges mobilizing young people for service and social justice, and built a strong network of supportive allies. The event was close to my heart and interests as I serve as the Bishop of a dynamic congregation of 285 young single adults in the Washington DC area.


Summit attendees were diverse and included Baha'i, Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Latter-day Saint, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, and Zoroastrian communities. These young people included clergy, laypersons, community organizers, and activists. Washington DC's Mayor Vincent Gray personally addressed the summit along with representatives of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. These visits by the leadership in the highest levels of local and national government spoke to both the recognition of the importance of interfaith work in our nation's capital and the United States as a whole, and further to the exemplary work of the organizers who brought together such an inspiring gathering of young leaders.

By focusing on the emerging generation of faith leaders, the summit also highlighted the vital role that young people play in shaping our increasingly pluralistic country and world, and the value of encouraging young people of faith in leadership positions.

This summit spoke volumes to me, both spiritually and intellectually, and it is my hope that similar events will take place in the future, and that my own faith community will continue to be a part of this important work. I applaud the organizers of Faith in Action DC's "Young Adult Faith Leaders Summit" and recommend their selection for the World Interfaith Harmony Week Grand Prize.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Bishop James A. Young
Washington DC YSA 2nd Ward