



# BAHÁ'Í FAITH

UNITED STATES BAHÁ'Í NATIONAL OFFICES

Office of Public Affairs

February 19, 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 sacred scripture of the Bahá'í Faith instructs Bahá'ís to "consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship" and to "be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements." The Summit embodied both of these ideals, as it gathered over 100 young leaders from over a dozen local religious communities – Bahá'í, Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Latter Day Saints, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, and Zoroastrian – and provided a forum for these leaders to discuss ways in which they could work together toward the betterment of society. Summit participants met in small groups to learn more about each other's faith traditions, convened in larger groups to consult on interfaith advocacy for social justice, and sat down to break bread together, all the while embodying the type of religious understanding and harmony envisioned by your organization.

The clergy, laypersons, community organizers, and activists gathered at the Summit were addressed by Washington DC Mayor Vincent Gray, who noted the crucial role that the faith community will play in the nation's capital as it continues to grow and evolve, and by representatives of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, who emphasized the vital work that the faith community does in administering social services and building community. As the Summit's productive and uplifting program made clear, these dynamic and empowered people of faith are part of an emerging generation of leaders that will play a pivotal role in an increasingly diverse global society.

The Bahá'í community was thrilled to take part in the Summit and looks forward to further collaboration with the interfaith community in Washington DC. We applaud the organizers of Faith in Action DC's "Young Adult Faith Leaders Summit" and highly recommend their selection for the World Interfaith Harmony Week Grand Prize.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

  
Anthony Vance

Director, Office of Public Affairs

Bahá'ís of the United States