

Asylum, Refuge, & Relocation: Multifaith and Community Responses to Global Migration

February 6, 2017 – Historic Academy of Medicine at Georgia Tech

875 West Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30309 USA.

<http://lamp.iac.gatech.edu/symposium2017>

In a time of uncertainty for migrant communities in Georgia, across the United States, and in many parts of the world, the Leadership and Multifaith Program (LAMP) held its third annual symposium in Atlanta on the topic of “Asylum, Refuge, and Relocation: Multifaith and Community Responses to Global Migration.” Convened on February 6, 2017, in honor of World Interfaith Harmony Week, this symposium brought together over 200 members of the Atlanta community and the campuses of Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology, making it the largest LAMP gathering since the program’s inception in the spring of 2015. The daylong event aimed to raise public awareness and provide resources for students, faculty, religious congregations, and community leaders who work with immigrants and refugees or care about issues of global migration.

In keeping with the LAMP vision to promote multifaith understanding in a religiously plural society, speakers and workshop leaders addressed questions of migration from a variety of perspectives, including legal advocacy, spiritual care, education, interfaith action, and community organizing. By highlighting action steps and opportunities for partnership, the symposium sought to work across religious and academic boundaries to promote strong communities, a vibrant nation, and a peaceful and prosperous world. It did so, first, by focusing attention on one of the most pressing global issues of our day, the Syrian refugee crisis. The symposium began with a film screening and discussion with the directors of *After Spring*, a documentary on the Syrian crisis that was executive produced by Jon Stewart and directed by Ellen Martinez and Stephanie Ching. The film tells the story of the Syrian conflict by documenting what it is like to live in Zaatari camp in Jordan, the largest camp for Syrian refugees. It follows two refugee families in transition and aid workers fighting to keep the camp running. With no end in sight for the conflict or this refugee crisis, everyone must decide if they can rebuild their lives in a place that was never meant to be permanent.

The afternoon keynote address by Derreck Kayongo, CEO of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, focused on a second dimension of global migration: its relevance at the national level for citizens and residents of the United States. With his address entitled “How the *Legal* Power of Protecting Rights Expands the Marketplace,” Kayongo shared his personal journey of becoming an American citizen after fleeing Uganda during the rule of Idi Amin Dada. He encouraged the audience to continue fighting for the principles of interfaith cooperation and cultural diversity that have made America a home for refugees from all nations and religious backgrounds. The symposium gave attention, thirdly, to the local dimensions of immigration and refugee resettlement in the Southeastern United States, the region that birthed the American civil rights movement. A series of afternoon workshops and a resources reception provided participants with tools

and strategies for taking action on behalf of refugees and immigrants in their neighborhoods, worshipping communities, and places of work. Recognizing that there are many paths toward interfaith harmony, this third annual LAMP symposium did not seek one definitive answer to the challenges of global migration but rather undertook to provide a forum for residents of Atlanta to build stronger ties while working to make their communities into safe spaces for all.

LAMP is a collaborative endeavor of the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts at Georgia Institute of Technology and the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. It centers upon the complexities of life, work, and leadership in a world where many faith traditions converge dynamically in geopolitical space, whether these encounters are local, regional, or global. The Candler School of Theology brings to this initiative expertise in Christian encounters with diverse religious traditions. The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts brings expertise in robust cross-disciplinary and cross-arena engagement. Both institutions hold longstanding commitments to excellence in research, education, and community service with the shared goal of interrogating critical elements related to the intersections of faith, leadership, and civic engagement.

Submitted by:

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Uploaded Images:

- 1) Symposium flyer
- 2) *After Spring* film screening and discussion with Professor Laura Bier of Georgia Tech and film directors Ellen Martinez and Stephanie Ching (left to right)
- 3) Audience during *After Spring* discussion
- 4) "Migration and the Middle East" workshop with Professor Heather Sharkey of University of Pennsylvania
- 5) Discussion with keynote speaker Derreck Kayongo of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights and respondent Silas Allard, Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University
- 6) Poster Presentation and Resources Reception (1)
- 7) Poster Presentation and Resources Reception (2)

Video link:

- 1) Keynote address by Derreck Kayongo, "How the *Legal* Power of Protecting Rights Expands the Marketplace," www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgQCiol67AU&feature=youtu.be