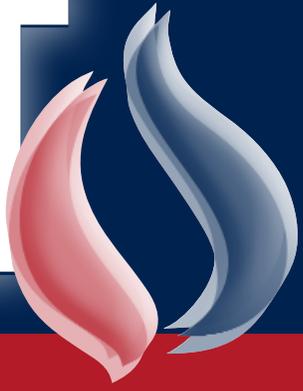


# The LIGHT



## One Nation, Many Faiths

The Interfaith Alliance

December 2007

### Quinn, Meacham Receive Walter Cronkite Awards

On November 6, 2007, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation and Honorary Chair Walter Cronkite proudly presented the 10th Annual Walter Cronkite Faith & Freedom Awards to Jon Meacham and Sally Quinn, two of America's foremost journalists and authors. The elegant décor of New York City's Rainbow Room at 30 Rockefeller Plaza added a touch of timeless charm to this year's gala.

The Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy said Quinn and Meacham were selected because of their commitment to preserving religious liberty and honoring America's history of religious pluralism. Together, Meacham and Quinn created and moderate *On Faith*, a groundbreaking online forum where a panel of leaders in faith, journalism and academia answer a different question on faith and politics each week. Rev. Gaddy, TIA's president,

and Bishop Jane Holmes Dixon, TIA's Senior Advisor for Inter-Religious Affairs, are two of the national voices actively participating in this conversation.

Editor of *Newsweek*, Meacham is the best-selling author of *American Gospel: God, the Founding Fathers, and the Making of a Nation* (2006), widely reviewed as the best book yet about the revolutionary idea of separating religion and government in a democracy. Quinn has covered politics, culture, and religion as a reporter and columnist at *The Washington Post*. Former co-anchor for "CBS Morning News," she is currently writing a book about the influence of religion in Washington.

Accepting the award, Meacham said that he has encountered "the kind of extremism that The Interfaith Alliance has so brilliantly and devotedly fought. . . . We have seen the

### Sen. Kennedy Cites TIA on Senate Floor

After a decade of organizing and lobbying by members and staff of The Interfaith Alliance—and just before this newsletter went to press—the United States Senate passed the bipartisan, comprehensive hate crimes bill. On the Senate floor during the debate, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) praised TIA's work saying, "The Interfaith Alliance—a nonpartisan advocacy organization representing 75 different religions—said that hate crimes are an assault upon 'the belief that lies at the core of our diverse faith traditions [and] that every human being is endowed with dignity and worth.'" Please urge your Members of Congress to ensure final passage and tell President Bush that fair-minded Americans will not tolerate a veto: [www.interfaithalliance.org/hatecrimes](http://www.interfaithalliance.org/hatecrimes).

*Continued page 6*



The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church; the Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy; and Walter Cronkite.

## Jesus Is Not On The Ticket

Dear Friends,

A week or so ago on a Saturday morning, a local political leader visited me in the office of the church that I serve in Louisiana. He wanted my thoughts on whether or not he should run for a seat in the Louisiana state legislature. Having known the man across several years, I encouraged him to enter the race. At the same time, I said to him, "Please remember that Jesus is not on the ticket. This election is not about religion. Our state needs leaders who will make tough decisions that improve economic development, strengthen the quality of public education, and reign-in advocates for devoting public funds to support religious ministries, schools, and charities." I also reminded the would-be candidate that even though I thought he should run for office, he should not expect any endorsement or favoritism from me. He said, "I knew that before I came to visit you."

As this man walked out of my office, I could not help but wonder how many such conversations had gone on or were continuing across our nation in scores of different venues. And I wondered what kinds of promises were being made or deals decided.

Already religion is playing a role in this election cycle disproportionate to its proper place in a political campaign. For that reason,

the election year program of The Interfaith Alliance—*One Nation, Many Faiths. Vote 2008*—is taking on more significance than ever. We have prepared materials for houses of worship, candidates, and voters. In relation to all of these audiences, our goal is to heighten sensitivity to the religious diversity in this land, to the abuses of religion that stem from an overly-zealous enthusiasm for using religion as a political strategy, and to the long term consequences of winning an election at the expense of weakening the Constitution. Our materials provide clear, strong, positive guidance on how to negotiate successfully a way around and through election-year dangers, and to preserve both the integrity of religion, respect for the non-religious people in our nation, and the vitality of our democracy.

Religion's role in this election cycle is not to assure that candidates hold one particular religious conviction. At its best, religion will inspire voters to demand straight answers to questions about war and peace, immigration, national security, international relations, government subsidies for religious activities, civil rights laws, a balance of powers, environmental concerns, a burgeoning national debt, public education, and other issues of importance to the public welfare.

In this election cycle, regardless of your politics or your point of view on religion, get involved and demand that candidates engage in civil dialogue about important issues that will determine the future of your community and of our nation. Then make your decisions and vote.

Warm Regards,



Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy  
President



Ask  
*Shayla*

By **Shayla Woodson**,  
Member Services Associate  
[memberservices@interfaithalliance.org](mailto:memberservices@interfaithalliance.org)

*This edition of the Ask Shayla column begins a three-part series on e-mail communication, matching fund gifts, and monthly giving. Part one explores various e-mail related questions that members have asked.*

- 1) Your weekly e-mails are coming as spam! How do I change that?**  
Some e-mail systems have filters to pre-screen all mail before it enters your mailbox. Most filtering programs will send us an e-mail to verify our address and we will do that. If you add us to your 'safe list' or 'allowed addresses', this will allow you to receive our e-mails.
- 2) How can I get the e-mail updates under a new e-mail address?**  
Either: **(1)** log on using your username and password that you've created and change your e-mail address or **(2)** send an e-mail to Member Services via our website and I will change your e-mail address. **Note:** Due to security reasons, I cannot reset any passwords. I can have our online system send you an e-mail reminder and you can reset it yourself.
- 3) Is there a difference between taking me off the mailing list and removing me from solicitations?**  
Yes – there is. When I receive a request for solicitation removal, you are still receiving renewals and any form of online correspondence that you signed up for. When members request a mailing list cancellation, your membership is cancelled along with any online communications you are currently receiving.
- 4) I want all correspondence through e-mail and internet only.**  
Not a problem. Send me an e-mail at [memberservices@interfaithalliance.org](mailto:memberservices@interfaithalliance.org) and I'll set your account up that way.



## Help TIA Track Faith-Based Funds

### Are Your Taxes Supporting Partisan Politics, Government-Funded Religion?

By **Preetmohan Singh**,  
Deputy Director of Public Policy  
[psingh@interfaithalliance.org](mailto:psingh@interfaithalliance.org)

**B**ased on the activism of thousands of TIA members like you, we have been successful in blocking the Congress from establishing a permanent faith-based office or allowing religious discrimination with taxpayer dollars. However, President George W. Bush's Executive Order establishing the White House faith-based initiative has allowed 11 federal agencies to set up programs providing funding to religious groups. Since 2001, TIA has called for a complete dismantling of this office because it's unconstitutional. We now need your help to identify groups who have been offered or denied faith-based funding for partisan political gains.

The Rev. Welton Gaddy has twice interviewed the former deputy director of the White



With your help, we can shine a bright light on the failed faith-based initiative.

House's faith-based office, David Kuo, on his weekly Air America radio program, "State of Belief." As Kuo said on the show and the Government Accountability Office confirmed in a report to Congress, the faith-based office has raised the following issues: grants are being made based on religious identification rather than program performance; the White House has misled the public into think-

ing that there had been a pattern of discrimination against religious organizations; and evaluations of many faith-based organizations' programs are based in conjecture, not data.

If you suspect that organizations in your local community are using taxpayer funding to advance a sectarian agenda, please contact us.

As Rev. Gaddy testified at a congressional hearing

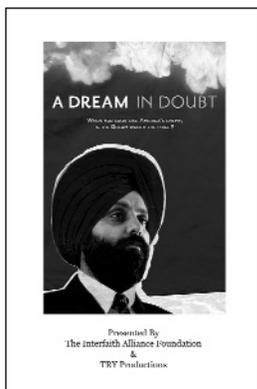
on the faith-based initiative, "We do not need a faith-based office in the White House. We have faith-based offices all over this nation and they are right where they belong—in synagogues and gurdwaras, mosques and churches, in temples and store-front ministry centers." 

## A Dream in Doubt: Film Addresses Hate Crimes

### The Interfaith Alliance, Woodrow Wilson Institute Screen Award-Winning Documentary

**D**ozens of TIA members, Capitol Hill staffers and our coalition partners involved in advocating for stronger hate crimes legislation attended a screening with the filmmakers of the award-winning documentary, "A Dream in Doubt," in Washington on October 3. The film, which chronicles the aftermath of the first post-9/11 hate murder of a Sikh man in Arizona, was co-produced by Preetmohan Singh.

The screening was co-sponsored by the Division of U.S. Studies of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which hosted the event at their theater. The showing was followed by a panel discussion facilitated by the Rev. Welton Gaddy, and



featured Singh, the producer/director Tami Yeager and Rana Sodhi—the brother of the first post-9/11 hate murder victim, Balbir Sodhi. The film has won several awards at film festivals across the U.S. and will be shown on PBS next year.

"A Dream in Doubt" follows Rana as he seeks vindication for his brothers' murders by working to educate fellow Phoenix-area residents about hate crimes; acting as the spokesman for his family and the Sikh community; running his gas station to support his family; and, most importantly, attempting to guard his own school-aged children—Rose, Satpreet and Navdeep—from bullying and harassment.

The film personifies The Interfaith Alliance

The filmmakers would like your help to host similar events with the film across the country.

Foundation's belief that those who value religious pluralism must send a strong, unified message that democratic and religious values call for equal protection for all people to be free from attacks motivated by hate. Religion and government must work together to create an America in which diverse people are safe as well as free.

You can see pictures from the event at [www.interfaithalliance.org/hatecrimes](http://www.interfaithalliance.org/hatecrimes) and learn more about the film at [www.adreamindoubt.org](http://www.adreamindoubt.org). 

## Super Six Defend the Constitution

By **Beth Sadow**,  
Communications Intern 2007

**W**hat do you get when you stick six college-age people in a room and tell them to fight for their civil liberties? For the interns at The Interfaith Alliance, you get a fulfilling and relevant internship experience unique to Washington, DC. Six college students were selected from across the country for these competitive positions. They had one thing in common: they were driven to promote their beliefs and values by assisting The Interfaith Alliance in promoting civil liberties, countering the Religious Right and fighting for the separation of church and state. Despite these shared goals, they represented a diverse set of backgrounds and religious faiths. These six interns included people of different faith traditions, including Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Unitarian Universalism.

The internship is designed to teach its participants about the different departments and how each promotes religious liberty, upholds the separation of church and state, and fosters an appropriate role for religion in public life. The interns had a very diverse set of responsibilities, ranging from working on blogs to planning the annual LEADD camp for high school students to creating membership outreach materials.

Individually, they organized and produced their own projects. Chris Wieman worked in the field department, researching different demo-

TIA's Super Six Interns team up with Batman and Robin to defend the Constitution's guarantee of religious liberty for all Americans.



graphics and faith traditions. He also helped to develop and improve resources to spread the message of religious pluralism. Erik Kesting organized the Leadership Education Advancing Democracy and Diversity (LEADD) program. By working with other staff members, he developed the week-long summer camp that teaches high school students how to become informed and engaged citizens in a religiously diverse nation. Max Croes worked in the field, developing activities and projects for affiliates to utilize. Mobeen Nawaz worked on fundraising and researching foundations with similar principles. I worked in the communications department researching the top news stories and helped produce *State of Belief* on Air America radio. Sarah Burgess

worked with the First Freedom First campaign, updating its website, coordinating events, and looking for creative ways to spread the First Freedom First message.

The interns worked tirelessly and diligently, often staying long after business hours in order to get extra projects done. It wasn't all hard work and long hours, however. The interns were given opportunities to accompany staff members to Capitol Hill for important hearings, as well as participate in making history by asking questions for July's CNN/YouTube presidential debates. Each came away with a valuable experience and a new perspective on Washington, DC and religion's role in politics. 🇺🇸



In TIA's intern "bullpen," l-r, Erik Kesting, LEADD; Beth Sadow, Communications; Chris Wieman, Field; Mobeen Nawaz, Development; Sarah Burgess, First Freedom First; and Max Croes, Field.

# High School Students Become Interfaith LEADers

**A**t a time when many national leaders, even presidential candidates, lack an understanding of America's First Freedom—the freedom of belief—the Interfaith Alliance Foundation created Leadership Education Advancing Democracy & Diversity (LEADD). Designed to educate and inspire high school students, LEADD Camp 2007 looked at government, law, and active



During their day in Washington, the new Interfaith LEADers tour the National Archives and other sites in the Capital City.

citizenship through the lens of the religious freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

This year, 29 high school students became LEADers. No other existing camp brings together young people so fully representative of America's pluralism, comprising a wide range of religious, socio-economic, and ethnic diversity.

The second LEADD Camp met in August 2007 at the Pearlstone Retreat and Conference Center in Reisterstown, Maryland. Thanks to this proximity to Washington, TIA's Policy staff arranged for each of the LEADers to lobby their own Members of Congress on Capitol Hill on issues where religion and politics intersect.

Academic sessions led by an experienced, diverse faculty, included From Diversity to Pluralism, Religious Freedom Then, Religious Freedom Today, and an examination of the intent of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment. Additional workshops focused on practical applications including Action Planning, Messaging and Mobilizing, and Forming and Sustaining an Interfaith Group.

Inspired by this new look at diversity and religious freedoms, the new LEADers learned how to take their interfaith action plans back to their communities in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, North Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. 🇺🇸



Janice Marie Johnson (background), from the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, leads a workshop on conflict resolution.



Each of the Interfaith LEADers met with the staff of their Members of Congress to lobby for religious freedom and the separation of religion and government.



During a break from their lobbying visits, LEADers enjoy a tour of the United States Capitol, shown here in the Rotunda.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE

www.interfaithalliance.org

# Gala

*continued from page 1*

bloody and tragic wages of religious extremism. We have to find a way to manage our affairs in a way that respects our religious differences, does not push religion to the side—because you can't, ask James Madison about that—and move forward in a way in which we manage and marshal religious fervor and religious feeling for a greater good because it's not going away, it's never going to go away, until what Faulkner calls the 'last red and dying evening.'"

After saying that "Walter Cronkite has always been God to me," Quinn talked about her personal journey to define her beliefs. In her teens, after seeing her father's pictures of the Holocaust, she decided she was an atheist, because "no god would allow that." Over the years, viewing the "evil that religion had done," she became "zealous about my atheism."

*Continued page 7*



Legendary journalists Ben Bradlee and Walter Cronkite clasp hands, as Sally Quinn and Rev. Gaddy share the moment.



The Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy and Walter Cronkite.



Great food, enlightening company, and a shared commitment to religious freedom.



The Rev. Dr. Galen Guengerich, chair of The Interfaith Alliance Foundation, speaks at the Rainbow Room.



Each year, members and supporters of The Interfaith Alliance reconnect, network, and meet new friends at the Walter Cronkite Gala.

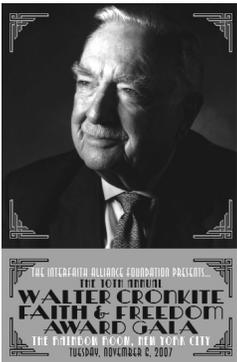
# Gala

continued from page 6

Thanks to Meacham, she said, "I began to see the good in religion, not just the evil."

The more she learned about religion, the more tolerant and respectful she became. Now she says she's neither an atheist nor an agnostic. "I decided what I am, is grateful. Every single day...I'm grateful for all the blessings in my life....So Gratitude is my religion."

When Quinn asked him to collaborate in creating On Faith, Meacham told her if the Dalai Lama would participate, he would join her. It took only seven hours, he said, before she told him that the Dalai Lama had agreed to be the first guest voice.



Jon Meacham, Sally Quinn, and Walter Cronkite.



Different traditions, shared values.

# Karen's Story

Is religious freedom alive and well in your community? Do you wish you could be more involved in helping defend the Constitution from those who want to impose one religious view on everyone else? You could help organize a new local affiliate of The Interfaith Alliance in your community, joining 47 local alliances in 38 states. That's what Karen Lalioff is doing in Indiana.



Karen Lalioff, Indiana.

"I learned about TIA some years ago when my daughter was in grade school and we were having trouble with teachers who felt obligated to bring the public school students to their particular understanding of Christ," she recently told Jay Keller, TIA's National Field Director. "To me as a parent, religious freedom means the right to instill the religious values of my own family's tradition. That the law was on my side made little difference."

Then, while researching federal laws about religion and public schools, Lalioff discovered a sermon by TIA's president, the Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, who was responding to a rally in Monroe, Louisiana calling for school prayer. "Do organizers of this rally want to support personal, intimate spiritual communion with God or a religious demonstration intended to intimidate if not convert those who do not participate in it?" Rev. Gaddy asked.

"I began organizing our first meeting with concern that I would not find meaningful support on interfaith issues that are close to my heart, yet at our first meeting there were many energetic, engaged people with a wealth of experience," Lalioff said. "I feel a great sense of hope for the vision of a welcoming community, willing to stand with one voice and defend the integrity of individual faith."

For more information about how you can help protect religious freedom and the constitutional separation of religion and government, contact Jay Keller at [jkeller@interfaithalliance.org](mailto:jkeller@interfaithalliance.org) or 800-510-0969.

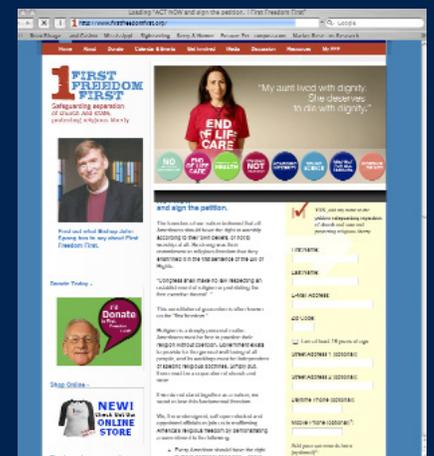
# STATE OF BELIEF RADIO

Saturdays: 10 a.m. Eastern/7 a.m. Pacific  
Sundays: 7 p.m. Eastern/4 p.m. Pacific  
On the Air America Radio Network and XM Satellite Radio – Channel 167.  
For your station: [www.stateofbelief.com](http://www.stateofbelief.com)



# FIRST FREEDOM FIRST

By early October, the First Freedom First petition had been signed by more than 300,000 citizens. More than 40 national organizations have also endorsed the First Freedom First project. For more information or to add your name to those calling for a restoration of religious freedom and separation of church and state: [www.firstfreedomfirst.org](http://www.firstfreedomfirst.org) or 800-510-0969.



**Please Note Our New Address:**

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1212 New York Avenue, NW  
Seventh Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
800.510.0969 or 202.238.3300  
www.interfaithalliance.org



THE  
INTERFAITH  
ALLIANCE

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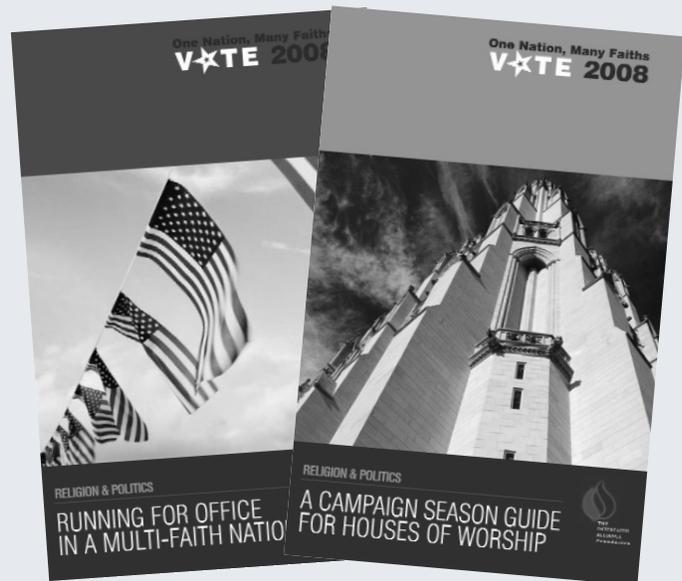
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**One Nation, Many Faiths ★ www.interfaithalliance.org**

## ...And This Just In...

- Updated versions of TIA's award-winning *One Nation, Many Faiths* publications "Running for Office in a Multi-Faith Nation" and "A Campaign Season Guide for Houses of Worship"!
- Plus, an all-new DVD companion for houses of worship, featuring religious leaders, TIA activists and tax experts discussing the role religion can legally and appropriately play in the political process – and what the law says you should avoid.
- Also look for TIA's "Five Questions" booklet, which will help you evaluate candidates' positions on religious liberty issues during this busy election season.

For more information, or to receive copies of this year's *One Nation, Many Faiths* publications, contact asclater@interfaithalliance.org or call 202-238-3271.



**One Nation, Many Faiths**  
**V★TE 2008**