Peace Islands Institute (PII) aspires to facilitate a forum of mutual respect and collaboration, both welcoming and accepting varied viewpoints and voices with the intent to develop original and alternative perspectives on vital issues that our society is facing, generate solutions to these issues, support successful practices, thus promoting education, friendship and harmony and acting as an island of peace for all peoples in a society of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

The Peace Islands Institute, to fulfill its mission, organizes educational and cultural activities such as lectures, seminars, conferences, discussion panels, luncheons, informative dinners, programs for students and youth, trips to Turkey, etc. PII also hopes to advance diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism in the society and lead the way for a transcultural generation in the future.

PII started its activities as the Interfaith Dialog Center (IDC) in 2003, with the leadership of its volunteers by organizing short educational seminars at the conference room of the Rutherford Public Library. IDC rented its center at 545 Interstate Place, Carlstadt, New Jersey in the Spring of 2004. IDC hired its first full time staff in the Summer of 2004. Now, IDC has its office in Newark at 17 Academy Street Suite 701.

IDC changed its name to Peace Islands Institute (PII) in April 2011 and since then it has broaden its mission that has made PII a civil society organization that focuses on crucial social issues that prevent improvement of education, pluralism and overall quality of life.

The Dialog and Unity Dinners started in November 2004. Leaders from various communities in North Jersey have joined us in this journey, including representatives of faith-based groups, government officials, members of law enforcement, scholars, business people, artists and elected officials; who have come together at these dinners to celebrate unity within diversity. Over the years, the Dialog and Unity Dinners have become one of the most pleasant dialog gatherings and a source of inspiration for our communities in the Garden State.

Abraham's Table Luncheons are venues where speakers from three Abrahamic religions discuss and explore commonalities in the issues of faith and religious practice. Since its inception in 2004 as clergy luncheons, Abraham’s Table Luncheons have become one of NJ's most widely attended religious events.

PII Luncheon Forums serve as a platform for interfaith, intercultural, non-political forums to exchange ideas and discuss vital issues that relate to New Jersey residents. Distinguished speakers are invited to share viewpoints and experiences on any important issues that concern

the society.

Friendship Gatherings aim to break down the barriers between our communities by visiting local churches, synagogues, and community centers. With the support of Turkish-American families, PII serves homemade Turkish food at these events to create an informal and friendly atmosphere for open minded, candid discussions.

With PII Women Gatherings, PII aims to build a platform for women to engage social scientists, educators, and community leaders in intellectual and open discussions on issues ranging from education and moral understanding to global issues.

Neighborliness is a grass root project. Members of Turkish American community invite people of different faiths and cultures to a dinner party at their homes. The aim of the project is to improve the interactions among various communities with different ethnical backgrounds and kindle long lasting friendships.

Book Conversations feature publications that present genuine work and contributions to diversity and intercultural understanding in the American society. Each program begins with a 20-minute reading from the book by the author followed by a Q&A session.

There are values in a society that keep the society afloat. With this in mind, PII has undertaken an important project, ART & ESSAY CONTEST, to instill universally accepted values in our young and offer them a forum on various platforms where they can express their perspectives and learn how to practice these values from each other.

PII Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner and Awards Ceremony provides an opportunity for all of us to honor those who work tirelessly to protect and serve the citizens of New Jersey; and to make New Jersey a safer place.

PII Awards publicly recognize the outstanding achievements of those who have distinguished themselves in their profession, community and service to humanity in New Jersey. The awards are based on a variety of criteria, including interfaith/intercultural involvement, community service, community educational involvements, and business and professional leadership.

Trips to Turkey sponsored by PII are very much instrumental in building bridges between the Turkish-American Community and other faith groups. Turkey is particularly an attractive tourism site because it has historically been at crossroads for many civilizations and faiths, not to mention its marvelous natural beauties, warm hospitality, and world famous cuisine. Turkey is a land bestowed with Divine love, as some say. It is a land where diverse faiths and cultures have lived in peace for millennia. It is a land of dialogue and tolerance; it is the land of Abraham – the forefather of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

PII is continuously seeking new projects to expand its activities to reach out to people from all walks of life and make new friends. The network IDC has established is very instrumental in building bridges and organizing activities that serve New Jersey and society at large. All IDC events serve to cultivate friendship and deepen inter-cultural awareness and understanding

among many diverse, ethnic and civic communities in New Jersey.

Donations

If you want to make a donation, please send your check to 17 Academy St. Suite 701. Newark, NJ 07102. Your check must be payable to our new name the "Peace Islands Institute". Peace Islands Institute is a non for profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

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