

# 2019 NEWSLETTER



“What I’m doing is convincing my students – 3,500 – to keep a smile of hope. And that smile of hope is not a movement of the lips, but the expression of your heart. We can align together to heal one another.”

Tanenbaum *Peacemaker in Action* Archbishop Abuna Elias Chacour, founder of Mar Elias Educational Institutions, Israel



Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* Pastor James Wuye (Nigeria), Dr. Yehezkel Landau (Israel/Palestine) and Imam Muhammad Ashafa (Nigeria)

## Illuminating the Paths Toward Peace

This summer we welcomed two dozen religiously-motivated peace activists—Tanenbaum’s *Peacemakers* and for the first time, some of their mentees—to our *Network Working Retreat*. Tanenbaum’s *Peacemakers* often work in isolation, so these Retreats are rare opportunities for them to gather from across the world to exchange lessons learned along the difficult path toward peace. Set in idyllic upstate New York, the Retreat offered a moment of safety, and time for dialogue and planning collaborative action.

Knowledge and stories shared were empowering and courageous, but also sometimes heart-breaking. For example, there was Yeni, a mentee. Her family’s lives were threatened after she tried to save a man who had been tortured by a gang in El Salvador. The man died, and Yeni’s family had to escape to a different region so they would not be killed.

The Retreat also gave the *Peacemakers* a chance to continue working with the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect. With their UN colleagues, they reviewed the *Plan of Action for Religious Leaders in Preventing Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes*, and shared the challenges they experience in their respective countries.

This year’s Retreat was a great success. *Peacemaker* Imam Muhammad Ashafa (Nigeria), eloquently reflected: “*The need to study other religions is the same as needing to know ourselves better. That’s one of the best things Tanenbaum is doing – creating opportunity where people will study themselves at the very close range...It is the dream of Marc Tanenbaum really coming true.*”



## A Letter from Tanenbaum’s CEO



Friends,

It’s easy to feel overwhelmed as daily headlines shout the latest attacks and acts of religious bigotry. At Tanenbaum, we face such challenges, because we know that it’s possible to have safer classrooms, respectful health care systems, inclusive workplaces, and peaceful

communities. It’s a lot to ask, but we’ve had real successes. That’s why I invite you to check out this newsletter – to see some of the achievements you helped make possible.

First, some exciting news. We launched a new Hospital Membership program. Penn State Health is our first member. It has two hospitals and treats 30,000 patients annually. We’re already rolling up our sleeves to help them institutionalize anti-discrimination policies and train their employees in religio-cultural competence.

In this newsletter, you’ll see more about our *Peacemakers in Action Network’s Working Retreat* this past July. We had religiously motivated *Peacemakers* from 4 continents participate; they shared ideas on their peace efforts, and

on ways to expand their work to the next generation. Also check out the highlights from our 2019 Religious Diversity Leadership Summit at Bloomberg. It was so successful we’re going to a larger venue next year!

There’s much more, including free, educational resources on fake news and disinformation on our website. And if you’re around on November 14<sup>th</sup>, join us for *Confronting Hate: Examining Anti-Semitism Through the Lens of Different Ideologies*. We’re holding a lively discussion to address the resurgence of anti-Semitism and religious bigotry – more details can be found at [Tanenbaum.org](http://Tanenbaum.org)!

What we’ve shared here is a small snapshot...but to learn more, join us for a Coffee with Joyce and Mark (virtually or in-person). Our work is urgent and we’d love to share more with you...

With gratitude and resolve,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joyce S. Dubensky". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joyce S. Dubensky



## Normalizing Religious Diversity at Work

This summer, Bloomberg LP hosted Tanenbaum's Fourth Annual Religious Diversity Leadership Summit for business professionals from 40 companies. In a day dedicated to exploring *innovative approaches* to addressing religious diversity, equity and inclusion, Tanenbaum Deputy CEO, Mark Fowler challenged participants to use what they learned to imagine, "...what a shift in perspective around religion would look like at work."

Ted Childs, Principal of *Ted Childs LLC* and keynote speaker, set the stage by calling on those present to step up by normalizing the conversation about religion and inclusion in workplaces. The presentations which followed provided participants with the information they needed to meet Fowler and Childs' challenges.

In addition to reviewing the newest data about religion at work, attendees heard stories from different companies about employee resource groups, managing for the country's ever-changing socio-political climate, and LGBTQ rights and the Religious Freedom Restoration Acts.

These issues are complex, but as one attendee noted: *"Don't try to change too much all at once – moving the needle in one area or two can have big impact."*

Speakers, panelists and moderators represented multi-national companies and organizations including: Marc Masri, *DTCC*; Tonya Cornelius, *The Walt Disney Company*; Ted Childs, Principal of *Ted Childs LLC*; Michael Lipka and Neha Sahgal, *PEW Research*; Janessa Cox, *AB*; Robin Fretwell Wilson, *University of Illinois College of Law*; Jennifer Pizer, *Lambda Legal*; Dan Eckstein, *Accenture*; Farah Siddiqui, *Salesforce*; and Kashif Saroya, *Target*. The Summit was sponsored by *Bloomberg LP*, *DTCC*, and *The Walt Disney Company*.

At the end of an exciting – and full – day, one attendee was ready to meet the morning's challenges: *"Let's focus on what unifies us, not what divides us."*

Missed this year's Summit? Send an email to [workplacediversity@tanenbaum.org](mailto:workplacediversity@tanenbaum.org) and make sure you're informed about next year's event!



Farah Siddiqui, Salesforce

---

“ Listen with compassion in hope of increasing our understanding of one another such that we move from tolerance to acceptance and inclusion.”

— Participant at Tanenbaum's Fourth Annual Religious Diversity Leadership Summit

---

TANENBAUM | Center for Interreligious Understanding

55 Broad Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212.967.7707  
info@tanenbaum.org

Visit our website [Tanenbaum.org](http://Tanenbaum.org) to join our email list  
and receive monthly news and event updates!



## Combat Religious Prejudice

### Teach Respect in the Classroom

Too many children are bullied for being different. Your \$1,000 gift will prepare a teacher to create a respectful classroom.

Photo: Tanenbaum Peacemaker in Action Sakena Yacoobi with student | Afghan Institute of Learning



Please accept my generous gift in the amount of:

\$1,000    \$500    \$250    \$100    \$50    \$35    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your check to: TANENBAUM, 55 Broad St., 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10004  
To donate online, please visit: <http://tanenbaum.org/donate>

I'm proud to help Tanenbaum combat religious prejudice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tel Email