

ENDOWED CHAIR IN INTERFAITH STUDIES

HISTORY:

In 1999, representatives from the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist religions in Rochester, NY came together to further improve relations among people of all faiths, stand against hate, and build bridges of respectful understanding. From this effort, the Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue (CISD) was formally created on November 28, 2001, shortly after the 9/11 tragedies.

In 2004, CISD found its permanent home at Nazareth, and the Virginia-based International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) supported the Center's efforts through generous annual contributions. In 2011, the Center was renamed the Brian and Jean Hickey Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue in honor of two of its other most dedicated long-time supporters. At the same time, the IIIT Chair in Interfaith Studies was established.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The IIIT Chair in Interfaith Studies' primary responsibility is to serve as executive director of the Center, responsible for developing and executing strategies to:

- Promote interfaith understanding and provide interfaith education and training across the life cycle in the local and global communities and across the curriculum and divisions of the University.
- Work with all its internal and external partners to develop new young leaders who have the knowledge, skills, and passion to be active in building civically engaged interfaith communities.
- Develop its regional, national, and international reputation as an entity both affiliated with Nazareth University and networked in partnership with interfaith leaders and organizations all over the world.
- Enhance its own base of financial support and endowment to guarantee the future of its programs and its leadership.
- Establish systematic ways of determining if its programs are effective in creating behavioral and attitudinal change, while continuing to explore best practices with its community and organizational partners.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The IIIT Chair in Interfaith Studies is an endowed faculty line, per donor agreement. The person must be a faculty member and thus the chair selection is guided by the faculty hiring process. The dean makes the appointment in consultation with the search committee and the provost.