



## ***The President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge***

### **Advancing Interfaith Cooperation and Community Service In Higher Education**

#### **Background**

Since his inauguration, President Obama has emphasized interfaith cooperation and community service – “interfaith service” for short – as an important way to build understanding between different communities and contribute to the common good.

Interfaith service involves people from different religious and non-religious backgrounds tackling community challenges together – for example, Protestants and Catholics, Hindus and Jews, and Muslims and non-believers- building a Habitat for Humanity house together. Interfaith service impacts specific community challenges, from homelessness to mentoring to the environment, while helping to build social capital and civility.

American colleges, community colleges, universities, seminaries and rabbinical schools, have often been at the forefront of solving our nation's greatest challenges. The White House is encouraging institutions of higher education to make the vision for interfaith cooperation a reality on campuses across the country.

The White House is launching the *President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge*, an initiative inviting institutions of higher education to commit to a year of interfaith cooperation and community service programming on campus. This programming might take the form of diverse campus groups working together to implement a specific year-long service project. It might also involve students from a campus partnering with local religious groups to tackle a specific community challenge together.

#### **Challenge Components & Timeline**

---

1. **Interested institutions of higher learning should indicate their intention to participate in the *President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge*** by completing the “[Participation Form.pdf](#)” available at [www.ed.gov/edpartners](http://www.ed.gov/edpartners).
2. **Institutions develop plans** to launch new or build on existing interfaith cooperation and community service initiatives beginning in the fall of 2012. Use the Planning Report document to submit final plans by **October 15, 2012**. This document is also available to [www.ed.gov/edpartners](http://www.ed.gov/edpartners).
3. **Institutions across the country will launch and execute their initiatives** to foster interfaith and

community service. A Facebook group provides a way for participants to share with each other. On Facebook search for "[The President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge](#)" and ask to join the group.

4. **Institutions report** on their programmatic successes through written and digital media. Institutions will receive an official reporting format for mid-year and final reports.
5. **Initiatives will be reviewed** on the implementation of their plans by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Corporation for National and Community Service.