

Interfaith Conference announces Pardeep Singh Kaleka as new executive director

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin –The Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, which represents the regional leaders and adherents of 18 faiths and denominations, announced yesterday that Pardeep Singh Kaleka will be its next executive director.

Kaleka was hired after a long search process that included many candidates. He will begin July 1. Retiring executive director Tom Heinen will retire after a short transition period.

Pardeep Singh Kaleka is a first-generation immigrant from India. He received a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice/Sociology from Marquette University and a master's in Clinical/Community Psychology from Alverno College. He has served the community through multiple positions, as a police officer, educator for at-risk high school students, community consultant, and trauma therapist. He is one of the co-founders of Serve2Unite, a nonprofit organization founded after the 2012 white supremacist attack on the Oak Creek Sikh Temple, to counter extremism. In 2018, he co-authored a memoir, "The Gift of Our Wounds." His columns on mental health and community trauma appear regularly in the Milwaukee Independent. He serves on the City of Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force's Steering Committee and the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin's board of trustees. An accomplished public speaker and advocate, he has spoken with groups locally and across the globe. He is married with four children.

"The hiring committee agreed that Pardeep is the right person to lead the Interfaith Conference into the future," said IFCGM Chair Elana Kahn. He is creative, energetic, innovative, and a proven community builder. We're excited to go through this period of transition with Pardeep at the helm. Tom Heinen has accomplished so much over the last decade, and we will properly thank him for his faithful stewardship."

The IFCGM will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2020, which will include unveiling transformative new initiatives that are now being planned.

About the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee

Founded in 1970, the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee is a 49-year-old nonprofit organization through which the regional leaders and adherents of 18 member faiths and denominations: Dialogue to build personal relationships; conduct public programming to counter hate and fear while fostering interfaith, intercultural and interracial understanding, tolerance and friendship; and work together on hunger, unemployment, environmental challenges and other social issues to create a better society for everyone. The Conference's underlying emphasis is "to uphold the dignity of every person and the solidarity of the human community."