

Judy Maghakian, Director of ARK, graduated from Pepperdine University in California with a BA in both Education and Social Work in 1959. Since that time she has continued her educational development, taking courses at San Anselmo Theological Seminary and Princeton Continuing Education Institute. She has taken advantage of numerous opportunities to fine tune her skills in human development and community organization. The most recent being The Global City offered by New York Theological Seminary. Featured instructors were: Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, Dr. Saskia Sassen, Dr. Luis Rivera-Pagan all on Columbia University faculty ~ Shulamith Koenig, United Nations Human Rights Committee and Dr. Emile Townes ~ African American Studies with Yale Divinity School. A primary respondent to these Global reach presentations was David Gonzalez, a reporter on the Metro Desk of the New York Times.

Judy was transformed by the events breaking down racial barriers which began with the March on Selma in 1962. Since those events she has concentrated her expertise in empowering the voices of people to engage in peace building through networking and partnering with others and in their vocational choices and community building and implementation skills. Through curriculum development with others she has effectively worked to engage people of all ages with experiential hands on learning. She and her husband have designed and hosted over 42 work-study opportunities around the world. The focus has been knowledge, understanding and engagement with the diversity of cultures, religions, socio-economic backgrounds, city and suburbs embracing poverty, middle America and the upper class. The consistent focus was to guide each to see the world as bigger than themselves and to respect and have a sense responsibility for their human family.

Judy envisioned ARK in 2000. She connected and net worked with 15 others to fashion a global peace building program involving three countries, Guatemala, Palestine and the USA. ARK has expanded to include Malawi~Africa, Lithuania, Jordan and now Afghanistan. The mission of ARK is to empower participants, especially youth, to be responsible world citizens through relationships and expanding knowledge and to be active architects of a culture of peace. Countless training sessions and five successful summits have been realized under her leadership to build peace, locally, nationally and globally. Judy sees her leadership role as ultimately working herself out of a job. She knows when to step aside and empower others to lead with new vision, energy and skill.

Judy, along with her husband, Rev. Harry Maghakian, have also founded three programs in St. Paul/Minneapolis that have involved and benefited thousands of people: LIBERTY PLAZA, a 173 unit affordable housing project which was built in 1968, and now is part of the Washington DC Neighborhood Network Centers located in all 50 states. PEOPLE, INCORPORATED, a mental health program which includes 43 programs and a budget of 25 million. And THE LOFT, an inner city youth program. The Maghakians turned over the leadership of these programs. All three are currently self sustaining. The three programs have been successfully functioning for over 40 years.

Judy has served on the Human Rights Board of Golden Valley, MN, the Peace Task Force of the Twin Cities Presbytery, the Israeli~Palestinian Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church and currently serves on the staff of Andrew Riverside Presbyterian Church, USA in the University of Minnesota community.

Judy and Harry Maghakian have two grown children, David Maghakian and Sally Maghakian O Keefe, both engaged in vocations that serve and empower others.