



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Congressman Recognizes Unificationist as ‘Living Legend’ for Interfaith Efforts”

Houston, Texas (June 6, 2019) — A Unificationist from Houston, TX was recently recognized by a local non-profit organization for his outstanding contributions to the lives of others and commitment to human progress. Rev. Mark Hernandez was the recipient of the Living Legend award on June 1 by Verna’s H.E.L.P. Foundation (Helping Everyone Live Positive). The nonprofit, founded and directed by Verna Thomas-Melton, selected Rev. Hernandez because of his tireless efforts toward cultivating interfaith unity and dialogue.

“Our greatest challenge is to love with God’s love, with Jesus’ love, because we are of one Heavenly Parent,” said Rev. Hernandez. He asked the audience to look around at the rest of the guests, who represented interracial, interdenominational and interfaith people. He recounted how his marriage was also a symbol of interfaith and cross-cultural healing and about his passionate dedication toward peace and interfaith exchange at the Royal Oaks Country Club, where the foundation held its annual fundraising event and honored a handful of other Living Legend recipients. Rev. Hernandez closed by saying, “the challenge to realizing peace in our world is answered not by governments or technological advances, but by you and me, when we each commit to live and love as if ‘Peace Starts with Me,’ because it does.”

Established in 1985, Verna’s H.E.L.P. Foundation has been dedicated to helping youth and disadvantaged young adults through educational programs, job fairs, legal clinics, and scholarships. The nonprofit has also brought forth initiatives aimed to fight crime and promote peace in Dallas, including “No Crime Day,” which has now evolved into the annual National Night Out community-police awareness event. Living Legend recipients included members of the city government, local business leaders, educators, musicians, and clergy. Rev. Hernandez encouraged all of them to continue their crucial, life-changing work.

Congressman Colin Allred, representative of the 32nd Congressional District of Texas, also addressed the crowd and shared his personal story about growing up in Dallas and being a product of the public school system. He gratefully acknowledged the many mentors, teachers, and coaches that guided him along his journey and encouraged the Living Legends to continue their crucial, life-changing work.





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"PEACE STARTS WITH ME"



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