

# St. John's Hospice

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## International Visitors Council

Since last fall, St. John's has been honored by some wonderful foreign visitors who have joined with us to learn about volunteerism, religious pluralism and service to the homeless in the US. They have even served the luncheon meal!

These groups have been facilitated by the International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia. The IVC is the region's leading international organization for sponsoring citizen diplomacy. Nancy Gilboay, President of the IVC, contacted St. John's last year to explore whether some of her foreign groups could visit and participate in the St. John's program.



To date five groups have been hosted. These include journalists, educators and Muslim clergy from Pakistan, India, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tunisia to name only a few. Very notable was a group of ladies from the Middle East who, in addition to serving the noon meal, serenaded our guests with Arabic folksongs. Truly wonderful!

On Thursday April 21, St. John's was awarded the Citizens Diplomacy Award by the IVC at a ceremony at City Hall. During the presentation, Nancy Gilboay stated that foreign participants described their experience at our program as "life changing". Needless to say we are very appreciative of this honor.

The IVC does an amazing job in presenting America to the world in the very best light. This is important work and St. John's looks forward to continuing this relationship.