



Jewish Community
Relations Council
MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 11, 2019

Elana Kahn, Director
Jewish Community Relations Council
Milwaukee Jewish Federation
Elanak@MilwaukeeJewish.org
414-403-3705

**Pardeep Singh Kaleka and Arno Michaelis to receive 2019
Robert H. Friebert Social Justice Award**

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin – Pardeep Singh Kaleka and Arno Michaelis have been selected to receive the 2019 Robert H. Friebert Social Justice Award. The award was established in 2014 by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. Previous honorees are attorney James H. Hall, Danae Davis, Jose Olivieri, Reggie Jackson, and Fran Kaplan.

Arno and Pardeep were chosen for their individual and collaborative work to counter hate, provide a model for friendship and the power to change one's life. The selection committee was overwhelmed by their stories of moving forward from tragedies, giving voice to the victims rather than the perpetrators, and choosing a path of compassion and good.

After the 2012 white supremacist attack at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin, Arno and Pardeep developed a personal relationship and from that, founded the organization, Serve 2 Unite, which works to establish a healthy sense of identity, purpose and belonging in order to divert young people from violent extremist ideologies and a range of behaviors that harm the self and other.

Their 2018 book, "The Gifts of our Wounds," was selected as Booklist's 2018 Editors' Choice.

"We are so pleased to be honoring Arno and Pardeep for the work they do together," said JCRC Chair Ann Jacobs. "Their partnership is an inspiring and important model for countering polarization of all types."

"We are continually inspired by Arno and Pardeep's way of bringing themselves fully into the work of healing our community," said JCRC Director Elana Kahn.

The award will be given at the [JCRC's 2019 Annual Meeting](#), which will be June 20, 11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at Renaissance Place. Event theme is "Use Your Power for Good: Women Wage Peace," and will feature a pair of Israeli Jewish and Druze women from the Israeli organization, Women Wage Peace. Click [here](#) to RSVP.

Robert H. Friebert (1938-2013) dedicated himself to the pursuit of social justice and the Jewish value of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). A graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School, Friebert was a founding partner of the law firm [Friebert, Finerty and St. John S.C.](#) He argued four cases in the United States Supreme Court and served as the first public defender for the State of Wisconsin from 1966-1968. Friebert was also extremely active in local, state and national Democratic politics in his pursuit of social justice. In addition to his legal and political work, Friebert held significant leadership roles in numerous organizations, boards and commissions. For more on Friebert and the award, click [here](#).

About the Jewish Community Relations Council

Founded in 1938, the Jewish Community Relations Council, a program of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, advocates for the rights and values of Jews individually and collectively, here and abroad. The Council implements a coordinated program of education, action, and advocacy for the Jewish community. For more than one hundred years, the Milwaukee Jewish Federation has been dedicated to building a strong Jewish community. The agency distributed nearly \$19 million last year to Jewish and non-Jewish organizations locally and around the world.

###