

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Annual LGBTQ+ Community Iftar to Celebrate Joy and Resilience in New York City**

*The breaking of the fast meal and celebration is a safe space for LGBTQ+ Muslims to honor the traditions of Ramadan.*

**NEW YORK, NY, March 10, 2025** — The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center (The Center) announced today that it will host its [9th Annual LGBTQ+ Community Iftar on Thursday, March 13, 2025, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at 208 W 13th Street, New York, NY](#). This year's theme, *Joy and Resilience as Resistance*, emphasizes the power of experiencing and expressing joy in the face of adversity as a form of opposition to oppressive systems.

"This Iftar was started in 2017 during a time when queer Muslims were facing increased threats and needed LGBTQ+ institutions to be committed to expanding safe spaces that embraced our intersectional and multicultural identities," **said Mohamed Q. Amin, Founder & Executive Director of the Caribbean Equality Project**. "Almost 10 years later, we find ourselves under even greater threat to immigrants, erasure of trans people, and attacks on LGBTQ+ existence from a white supremacist administration."

Established by leaders from the [Caribbean Equality Project](#), [Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity](#), [SALGA NYC](#), and [Tarab NYC](#) in partnership with [The Center](#) and the [NYC Commission on Human Rights](#), the Iftar provides a safe and affirming space for queer Muslims and allies to break fast during Ramadan. This year's event is co-produced by [Advocates for Youth](#), Caribbean Equality Project, The Center, the [Fordham University Center for Community Engaged Learning](#), [Hidayah Us](#), [Nur Ashki Jerrahi Community](#), NYC Commission on Human Rights, SALGA NYC, [Safe Horizon Streetwork Project](#), and Tarab NYC.

"There have always been questions about one's identity - whether religious, gender or sexual orientation. The Annual Iftar has been a steady space where all those intersectionalities have an opportunity to come together under one roof, break bread, and share emotions", **said the Imam for the event, Mohammed Shaik Hussain Ali, board member of SALGA NYC**. "Community is a feeling, an embodiment of souls, cherishing the privileges while recognizing those who never got or get the same

The event features gender-neutral prayer, education, storytelling, culturally responsive entertainment, and a shared meal to break the fast. It will also include

remarks from community partners, performances, and resource sharing. The evening will end with a celebration with music by [DJ Armana Khan](#).

"The NYC Commission on Human Rights is proud to support the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual LGBTQ+ Community Iftar, a powerful celebration of faith, joy, and belonging. This space offers LGBTQ+ Muslims the opportunity to come together in solidarity and honor both their spiritual and personal journeys without fear of exclusion," **said Annabel Palma, Chair and Commissioner of the New York City Commission on Human Rights.**

LGBTQ+ Muslims often navigate a complex intersection of identities, facing discrimination within both religious and LGBTQ+ communities. The LGBTQ+ Community Iftar maintains the core traditions of a traditional Iftar while adapting certain elements to ensure a fully inclusive and affirming space for all attendees.

"The LGBTQ+ Community Iftar at The Center is a vital tradition that celebrates the rich intersections of faith, identity, and resilience within our community," **said Dr. Carla Smith, CEO of The Center.** "We are honored to continue this inclusive event, fostering a space where LGBTQ+ Muslims and their allies can come together in solidarity and joy."

The first LGBTQ+ Community Iftar was held in response to the previous Trump administration's ban on individuals from predominantly Muslim countries traveling to the US. Interest and attendance at the Iftar continues to grow, with the event routinely selling out in hours.

"We are committed to fostering inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African individuals, many of whom are Muslim," said Bashar Makhay, Founder of Tarab NYC. "The LGBTQ+ Community Iftar is more than a meal, it's a space for joy, resilience, and connection. As we gather in celebration, we also hold space for the genocide in Palestine, the crisis in Sudan, and injustices unfolding around the world—because our liberation is bound together."

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### **About The Center**

The NYC LGBT Community Center (The Center) was established in 1983 at the height of the AIDS crisis to provide a safe and affirming place for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers to respond to the urgent threats facing the community. For over 40 years, The Center has grown to meet the changing needs of New York's LGBTQ+ community, providing programs and services that empower LGBTQ+ people to lead healthy and successful lives. We operate in-person and virtually, providing recovery and wellness programs, economic advancement initiatives, family and youth

support, advocacy, arts and cultural events, and space for community organizing and connection. To learn more about The Center, visit [gaycenter.org](http://gaycenter.org).

### **About Caribbean Equality Project**

[Caribbean Equality Project](#) (CEP) is a grassroots community-based immigrant rights organization that empowers, advocates for, and represents Afro and Indo-Caribbean LGBTQ+ people in New York City. For a decade, the organization has focused on advocacy for LGBTQ+ and immigrant rights, gender equity, racial justice, immigration, and mental health services through public education, community organizing, civic engagement, storytelling, and cultural and social programming to end hate violence in the Caribbean diaspora.

### **About The New York City Commission on Human Rights**

The NYC Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) enforces the City's non-discrimination law and educates the public of their rights. The New York City Human Rights Law is one of the most comprehensive civil rights laws in the nation – prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations in over 25 protected categories, including sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, and more. If you have experienced or witnessed discrimination, contact CCHR online or call directly at (212) 416-0197.

### **About SALGA NYC**

[SALGA NYC](#): Serving the desi queer community of New York City, offering community and safe space for all South Asian queer and trans people. We are a social and support group for queer and trans people who trace their descent from the South Asian region as well as people of South Asian descent.

### **About Tarab NYC**

Tarab NYC is a community organization for LGBTQ+ Middle Eastern and North African people in NYC, fostering connection, empowerment, and cultural celebration. Organizing diverse programs—including support groups, happy hours, potlucks, drag shows, and advocacy efforts—Tarab NYC creates spaces for community building and social justice. Through events and partnerships, the organization uplifts queer MENA voices and strengthens a supportive network. For more information, visit [tarabnyc.org](http://tarabnyc.org) and follow @tarabnycorg on Instagram.