Joya Colon-Berezin is a native New Yorker and a graduate of Oberlin College (2002). At Oberlin she majored in sociology and minored in theater and religion. After graduating she spent several years working in the Bronx as a community organizer on housing and affordable rent issues. She has spent the past four years working for the humanitarian relief arm of the United Methodist Church, focusing on domestic refugee resettlement. She will graduate from New York Theological Seminary in May 2012 with a Master of Divinity Degree. She has an eye towards doctoral studies in theology and ordination in the United Church of Christ.

Joya has been a member of OCDC since 2001.

“There are few social justice models that seek to account for the whole person—that is body, mind, and spirit. To the extent that OCDC tried to do just that, it has influenced the trajectory of my life in several important ways. The emphasis on the “ism’s,” power, and privilege is such a vital point of departure for understanding injustice and the way it operates in the world. We don’t all come to the table with an equal hand, and these seen and unseen dynamics have serious social consequences. Secondly, the opportunity to practice the skill of listening particularly within the context of mediating conflicts is a skill that has come to my rescue in difficult situations in more ways than I can count; in my personal and professional life. I applaud OCDC for its commitment to the whole person. I only have one regret—that I don’t still have my notes!”