

**UUSJ Committee and Task Force Reports  
for June 3, 2017 UUSJ Board Meeting**

**Reports Submitted as of June 1, 2017:**

Advocacy Oversight Committee.....Page 2  
Communication & Outreach Committee.....Page 7  
Green Activists - Environmental and Climate Justice Task Force.....Page 8  
Immigration Task Group.....Page 10  
Nominating Committee.....Page 11  
Program Committee.....Page 12

**Committees that did not submit a report or had no new information to report since the last Board meeting:**

- Audit Committee (not a standing committee)
- Escalating Inequality Task Group
- Gala Planning Committee (not a standing committee)
- Governance Task Force (formerly Bylaws and Standard Operations Committee; not a standing committee)
- Issue Selection Process Task Force (not a standing committee)

## **Advocacy Oversight Committee Report – June 1, 2017**

### **Members**

Bob Denniston, Loretta Garcia, Lavona Grow, Ed Kringer, Anna Rhee, David Strauss, Larry Underwood

The purpose of this group is to coordinate UUSJ's advocacy activities, materials, and infrastructure to support advocacy work; and to help identify, guide and provide feedback regarding UUSJ's advocacy program opportunities.

Since February, we have welcomed two new members, Loretta Garcia (River Road) and Ed Kringer (Accotink).

**Questions for Board consideration:** The Board showed its commitment to “go nationwide” with our advocacy efforts and voted at the February 4, 2017 to move forward on going nationwide. We discussed some implementation issues at our April 8 Board meeting (see minutes) but we have not addressed the following questions, a variation of which was included in our February committee report.

- What is our transition plan and timeline?
- How will this effort be funded?
- Does our infrastructure and governance structure support such a transition? (including how to represent, welcome, and accommodate Board members or congregation from outside our region)
- Specifically, how does going nationwide impact the model of member congregations and “fair share” donations?

### **Tax Status and Advocacy**

We are doing due diligence with regard to UUSJ's advocacy activities and our 501c3 (H election) status. Lavona has consulted with several experts and provided the Advocacy Oversight Group with resources (see activities listed in the 501(c)(3) vs 501(c)(4) chart to be handed out at the meeting). Additionally, the group received a briefing on May 26 and guidance on complying with 501(c)(3)(h) tax regulations. A briefing on the topic will be provided to the Board on June 3.

### **UUSJ Advocacy Corps Launch**

The Advocacy Corps launched on Tuesday, February 14 and is building the UU presence on Capitol Hill offices through monthly appointments and drop-in visits. Board members' help is needed to promote the Advocacy Corps in their congregations and to encourage new volunteers to join us.

Leading up to the launch, Lavona and Anna conducted two online webinar-style question-and-answer sessions on January 28 and 31, produced an informational video and added “Frequently Asked Questions” to the UUSJ new advocacy webpage. About 25 people participated in the information sessions, we talked to more people one-to-one, and others viewed the video. Our short-term goal was to sign up 6-8 people and by the end of the calendar year have about 16

members. By the time of the February 14 launch we had exceeded our calendar year goal and already had 23 people signed up.

With four months of experience, we are settling into a system to make each monthly Advocacy Corps day a success, such as the guidelines for selection of the issue focus, processes for resource and materials preparation (talking points, leave behind letter, business cards, UUSJ Advocacy Corps name badges, UUSJ notepaper), timing and communication with Advocacy Corps members, team group assignments, identification of target offices, setting up appointments, and many organizing details including the handling, documentation and packaging of constituent letters.

On its inaugural visit to Capitol Hill on February 14, 18 volunteer Advocacy Corps members from seven area congregations visited Maryland's Senators Cardin and Van Hollen and Virginia's Senators Warner and Kaine. We first met at the Friends Committee on National Legislation for an orientation and a short briefing by two FCNL staff on immigration and environment-related issues.

Members delivered nearly 200 handwritten letters from our region expressing gratitude and concerns. A major purpose of this day was to establish relationships with key senate staff and discuss UUSJ concerns on immigration and climate justice issues, which are UUSJ priorities, along with escalating inequality.

UUSJ's Advocacy Corps made its second visit to Capitol Hill on its snow date March 21, involving 11 members from four area congregations who visited offices of 19 representatives from Maryland and Virginia, advocating for changes in immigration policy, one of UUSJ's three priority issues.

Collaborations with UUJEC and UUMFE: The April 11 and May 9 Advocacy Corps days on Capitol Hill highlighted UUSJ's collaboration with UU partners and steps toward the Board's decision and vote in February to take UUSJ and its advocacy program beyond the national capital region.

Conference "Reversing Inequality: Healthcare Justice is a UU Value" Washington, DC, April 3-5: The conference was cosponsored by UUSJ and UUs for a Just Economic Community. This event gave UUSJ an opportunity to expand our advocacy efforts through UUJEC's network. Individual UUs and congregations were invited to use UUSJ's "Write Here, Write Now" (WHWN) format, talking points and sample letter to write letters to the Members of Congress and send them to UUSJ for delivery to their Washington offices. UUSJ's advocacy program organized the training, materials, and planned the Hill appointments and visits for the conference. On April 5, conference participants delivered 407 letters from 18 states to 49 senators through meetings with their staff or drop-in visits to their offices. Funding for Anna Rhee's time pre- and onsite was supported by funds from a UU Funding Program grant awarded to UUJEC. The conference was a major commitment of UUSJ time over a period of nine months. The Board should evaluate the pros and cons of such collaboration.

After the conference, on our third visit to Capitol Hill on April 11, 13 Advocacy Corps volunteers visited the remaining 51 Senate offices to deliver UUSJ's message on healthcare justice. In partnership with the Cedar Lane UU Church, Family Advocacy Day was also introduced this month with the inclusion of parents and children in a meeting in Senator Van Hollen's office.

Also during April, to coincide with Earth Month and plans for the People's Climate Movement, UUSJ's partnership with UU Ministry for Earth and Commit2Respond promoted WHWN, talking points and a sample letter from UUSJ and resulted in receipt of 575 letters from UUs in 13 states. On our fourth visit to Capitol Hill on May 9, 13 Advocacy Corps members delivered these letters to the offices of 23 Senators and 24 House members. We also received a briefing by Senator Warner's environment staff person focused on anticipated EPA funding cuts including the Chesapeake Bay Program, a priority issue for Senator Warner.

UUSJ's visibility on Capitol Hill is increasing through the regular presence of Advocacy Corps members. We are building relationships with Congressional staff and offices and sharing UU social justice values on important concerns related to UUSJ's issue areas.

NOTE: The letter-writing campaign process is very time-intensive. We are fine-tuning our process for handling nationwide campaigns of hundreds of letters. Our ability to handle the promotion, documentation, organizing and delivery of letters to a large number of offices is limited. We must consider whether we promote delivery of any congregation's letters on any topic, or limit delivery of letter to our priority issues, or only on the issue that we are going up to the Hill to discuss. The largest letter delivery of the three was 575. A team of trained volunteers are need to handle the workload.

NEED: We need the Board members to actively promote the Advocacy Corps and the Write Here! Write Now! letter-writing campaigns in their congregations. We will probably schedule an information session and orientation this summer and a possible revision of the information session video. Also to discuss bringing the CAT program to their congregation. We can probably handle about one per month along with the monthly Advocacy Day activities.

### **Advocacy Training: Cedar Lane Seminary for a Day - February 18**

Pablo DeJesus and Lavona Grow delivered a 90 minute "how-to" workshop to Central Eastern Region UUs on the essential techniques for conducting advocacy in the federal forum. Twenty-five people attended the workshop to discuss how best to be resilient through advocacy.

### **Issue Advocacy Groups - See separate reports from each group**

**Immigration:** Continue to meet every two weeks as a steering committee. The group's sole function is focused on advocacy.

Of special note. In January 2017, our Immigration Steering Committee and the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Charlottesville, VA requested that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) allow a visit to the Farmville Detention facility (VA) for a tour with some congregations interested in establishing a visitation program. The request was denied because of "ongoing operational changes" attributable to the recent Executive Order. A national

organization, Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC), filed a federal complaint with DHS' Office of Civil Rights & Civil Liberties, using evidence gathered from our effort among others. Within 24 hours, the acting ICE Director Thomas Homan stated that ICE respects the work of CIVIC and other community-based visitation programs and that ICE has a strong desire to continue access to immigration facilities. A visit is in the process of being rescheduled.

**The Green Activists Environment and Climate Justice Task Group:** Meets quarterly, next meeting is June 17. The group is shifting focus from four “programs” per year to smaller “task force” meetings. Focus is primarily on awareness, witness/marches, and some advocacy. Much coordination and planning was spent on the Peoples' Climate Movement April 29-30. Doris Marlin was the point of contact working with Committ2Respond and UU Ministry for Earth. Advocacy: Priority issues were identified in January but more attention must be given to taking action.

**Escalating (income) Inequality:** The working group meets by Zoom online on the first Sunday of every month at 7pm. Primary focus is on issue research and identification for purposes of advocacy. Current focus is on healthcare reform, the budget and tax reform. Much time was spent this past year preparing comments for the Statement of Conscience on Escalating Inequality, which will be debated and voted on at General Assembly.

**Partners and Networking:**

Washington Interreligious Staff Committee (WISC): Lavona continues to represent the UUA at the Ecology and Environment working group (table) attending meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. In addition, attends the monthly all WISC “third Friday” meetings, which discuss specific issues such as the budget.

Coalition of UU State Action Networks (CUUSAN): Lavona talked with Evan Junker, the Executive Director of UU Justice Ministry of California and member of the Executive CUUSANS in April to discuss developing a working relationship with CUUSANs and UUSJ's plans for a nationwide advocacy network (officially as of February 4). Evan is a strong supporter of our efforts to go nationwide. Evan has discussed with the CUUSAN executive committee the merits of working with UUSJ. Evan invited key leaders to meet with him and Steve Buckingham (former UUSJ Board member and UULM-MD co-chair) at General Assembly to discuss further developing a “relationship model” to work with a limited number of interested SANs. In addition, Lavona will attend, for the third year in a row, the CUUSAN annual meeting held the day before GA.

Friends Committee on National Legislation and the NETWORK (Catholic lobby - Sister Simones/ Nuns on the Bus): Growing out of our work on the April healthcare conference and acquaintance through the Washington Interreligious Staff Committee (WISC), Lavona is working closely with both organization (both are 501(c)(4) lobby organizations) as sources of information about strategy, timing, and talking points on our priority issues. Lavona met with NETWORK staff on May 18.

**Congregation-based Advocacy Training (CAT):**

Since February we have not conducted any new Congregation-based Advocacy Training (CAT) sessions. We were invited back to Fairfax during April but we determined a fall date would be better. Rockville invited us for a training on June 10 but it was decided to reschedule in the fall since it was the same day as the Pride parade. We will look for CAT opportunities in an array of congregations including small congregations and Maryland congregations. Lavona talked with Rev. David Carl Olson of Baltimore recently and he was interested in the training with possibly Columbia/Baltimore/Towson or the Maryland cluster sometime in the fall.

**NEED:** We need the Board to talk about our overall Advocacy Corps activities and help get more members. We have a webpage dedicated to Advocacy and plan to update it this summer. This is a good place to refer people for more information. We also have a new email address for inquires [advocacy@uusj.org](mailto:advocacy@uusj.org).

**NOTE:** A particular challenge -- and this is good news -- is that so many volunteers are stepping forward that we are having difficulty in giving them all meaningful work to do.

**New Write here! Write now! Bookmark:**

As a result of our partnership with the UU Ministry for Earth, the Board Chair offered to crystalize our WHWN toolkit into a bookmark as part of the Earth Month materials. We worked together and they arranged for the layout and design. It is a popular handout. Pick up copies during the Board meeting.

**Advocacy Grant Submission:**

We submitted a grant application to the UU Funding Program during the March 2017 funding cycle. The proposal focused on continuing and expanding our advocacy efforts. We expect to hear about the grant by mid-June.

**Questions about Advocacy to the UUA Presidential Candidates:**

Al Carlson, Bob Denniston and Lavona Grow drafted three questions for consideration by the three UUA Presidential Candidates focused on their positions on UUA energy and resources for advocacy in Washington, DC. Including in their role as President; in the UUA office in Washington, DC; and what role congregations, state action networks and UUSJ should play.

**On the Near Horizon:**

- The next Advocacy Corps day is June 13 and the topic will be on healthcare and the intersection with the budget cuts.
- We will participate and facilitate a working group at General Assembly on climate change and the environment - a "Collaboratory" - addressing working with UUSJ and CUUSANs.

Submitted by: Lavona Grow, Chair

## **Communications Committee Report – May 31, 2017**

### **Members**

Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Bob Denniston

Several Communications items need to be addressed regularly. For this we need more members for the Communications Committee. We need people to help with the following:

### **Follow up on eNews**

- Since changing to sending eNews once a month we need to track how have the open, read, unread, statistics changed.
- We need to track eNew stats monthly.
- The links from each article in the eNews are tracked by Salsa, so it would be helpful to know which types of articles receive the greatest number of clicks.

### **Fundraising**

- We need to follow-up with those who haven't opened out spring appeal email blast, to be done shortly.
- A statistics report is in the works.

### **Facebook Stats**

- Need to regularly review and evaluate Facebook statistics, which reach the most, which prompt the greatest number of post clicks.
- Need someone with Facebook experience with suggestions on how to improve our performance.

### **Twitter Stats**

- Need more consistent Tweets. Generally the individual articles from the eNews are tweeted.
- We need to regularly produce Twitter stats.

### **Brochure change**

- The brochure will be updated to reflect current information.
- Ultimately our brochure needs a complete redesign. Suggestions are to have the membership form be an insert so that a third of the brochure is torn out for mailing.
- It has also been suggested that we use a service called Fiverr.com, a freelance service, to come up with a new brochure design. We could use a volunteer to assist with this.
- The brochure is also be supplemented with a smaller information version that will fit on a post card.

Submitted by: Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson

# **Green Activists - Environment and Climate Justice Task Force Report – May 30, 2017**

## **Members**

Eric Goplerud, Doris Marlin, Bob Dennison, Larry Underwood, and Lavona Grow

## **Regional Climate Justice through UUSJ**

Quarterly meetings drawing participation from 12-18 UU congregations in the national capital area. Five UU congregations are doing Carbon Footprint Games. Games either 4 week or 4 month program that secured thousands of youth and adult pledges to specific actions to reduce energy use. Highlights in the four concentration areas: Home energy; Food and water at home; Transportation; Recycle reuse. Carbon Footprint materials have been formatted for wide distribution throughout UUSJ and UUA through Commit2Respond. Link: <https://uucf.org/social-justice/social-action-groups/cag/carbon-footprint-game/>

## **UUA Presidential Candidates respond to Climate Questions**

Led the development of candidate questions that were supported by more than 100 UU organizations and UUs. All three candidates responded to the following (responses posted on UUSJ website):

- What do you see as the root causes of the climate crisis?
- What foreseeable impacts of global climate disruption are you most concerned about? Why?
- How do you relate global climate disruption to the other great moral, spiritual and religious issues of our time?
- What moral imperatives should guide Unitarian Universalist climate action?
- How do you respond to global climate disruption in your current life and ministries?
- As UUA President, what specific actions and policies would you implement to address the climate crisis? How would you increase institutional support from the UUA for its congregations and their members to work towards climate justice, environmental justice, and a sustainable way of life?
- As UUA President, how would you expand and support the UUA's work with other faiths and non-governmental organizations to take collective actions towards shifting to a low carbon future, advancing the human rights of impacted populations, and growing the climate justice movement?
- How should the UUA and its congregations offer ministerial support for people struggling with despair, confusion, or denial related to the global climate crisis?
- How should the UUA and its congregations offer ministerial support for members of front-line impacted communities of the global climate crisis? What steps should the UUA

take to be in greater solidarity with the front-line impacted communities of the global climate crisis?

### **People's Climate March: Washington, DC - April 29**

Co-led UU preparation for the march, communication, organization of pre- and post-march organizing to sustain UU engagement. More than 300 UUs participated in pre-event rally. Our GOAL is: "Build a strong climate justice movement with UUs." Great Photos: [bit.ly/UUSharePhotoApril2017](http://bit.ly/UUSharePhotoApril2017). On Sunday, All Souls had a special climate justice Sunday services with guest preacher, Johnnie Aseron, a leader of the Standing Rock encampment. After services, many UUs stayed to work on building the environmental justice movement among and across UUs nationally.

**UU Appalachia, DC Metro listening call** on environmental concerns to create dialog and mutual support of UUs in rural and coal country and national capital area. Discussions on coal, environment, fellowship

**The Commit2Respond and Green Sanctuary** working with UUCF CAG and regional UUs to sustain engagement by UUs on climate, and to make UUA a climate justice leader. The national Green Sanctuary board meets at UUCF in May. A rapid response on environmental justice issues is being led by UUSJ, C2R, GS and UUMFE. Monthly calls.

### **Earth Month Write Here! Write Now! Letter-Writing Campaign**

During April, to coincide with Earth Month and plans for the People's Climate Movement, UUSJ partnered with UU Ministry for Earth and Commit2Respond for a WHWN. UUSJ provided talking points and a sample letter and resulted in receipt of 575 letters from UUs in 13 states. On our fourth visit to Capitol Hill on May 9, 13 Advocacy Corps members delivered these letters to the offices of 23 Senators and 24 House members. We also received a briefing by Senator Warner's environment staff person focused on anticipated EPA funding cuts including the Chesapeake Bay Program, a priority issue for Senator Warner.

### **Upcoming Events**

UUSJ Green Activists Environment and Climate Justice Meeting  
Saturday, June 17, gather at 9:30am, the meeting begins at 10:00am  
UU Church of Silver Spring, MD

Submitted by: Eric Goplerud

## **Immigration Task Force Report – June 1, 2017**

### **Members**

Dean Wanderer, Pablo DeJesus, Lavona Grow, David Strauss, Charlotte Jones Carroll, Don Chery, Ron Outen and John Gubbings

Activities and Accomplishments:

**Priorities for the forthcoming year:** Comprehensive Immigration Reform is our top priority but there are many moving parts in its development. Our present efforts include the end of mandated detention bed-fill numbers, family detention of those mothers and children who have arrived in the US without permission, opposition to wall funding, civilian control and oversight of ICE, and the requirement that ICE's performance is in compliance with lawful standards.

**Detention Watch:** We expect to visit the Farmville Detention Facility in support of the establishment of a Detention Watch program in Virginia.

**Advocacy:** We are conducting a visit to Senator Cardin in Washington in June, 2017 to discuss our opposition to three immigration-related bills, the "Michael Davis, Jr. and Danny Oliver in Honor of State and Local Law Enforcement Act" ("the Davis Act") and H.R. 2406 and H.R. 2407 that give an unprecedented expansion of authority to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). We will continue our visit program, however, our topics may be change as events dictate.

**Farmworker justice:** We endorsed a petition in support of the Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2017 which would provide otherwise undocumented workers temporary status while employed.

**TPS for Haiti:** We endorsed a petition in support of the extension of Temporary Protected Status for Haitians.

**Arbitrary Detention of Asylum Seekers:** We signed onto a draft letter expressing concern for Arbitrary Detention of Asylum Seekers. We were invited by the Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) to join the UU Association, UU Service Committee, and others allied with the national immigration detention visitation network.

Submitted by Dean Wanderer and David Strauss

## **Nominating Committee Report – May 31, 2017**

### **Members**

Nancy Sorden, Chair, and Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson

### **Duties**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates for officers of the Board of Trustees, for at - large membership on the Executive Committee and members of all standing committees. (Bylaws Article X, Duties: 10.2)

### **Actions/Accomplishments**

This year the UUSJ Board unanimously voted for a UUSJ Bylaw change that established a new structure for the Executive Committee where the two Co-Chair positions were replaced by three different Chair positions: a Chair — for a term of one year, a Vice-Chair — who will assume the Chair after one year, and an Immediate Past Chair — to be assumed by the Chair for one year. Lavona Grow then assumed the Immediate Past Chair position for one year. However, no one was nominated to be the Chair or Vice-Chair. John Gubbings, Treasurer and next officer in-line, assumed the position of Acting Chair until a Chair is nominated.

The Nominating Committee met with Lavona Grow, UUSJ Immediate Past Board Chair, John Gubbings, Acting Board Chair and Treasurer and examined the leadership positions on the UUSJ Board that needed to be filled for fiscal year 2017 - 2018 . These positions include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Chair and Vice-Chair have been vacant this year and the current Treasurer – John Gubbings and Secretary – Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson will both reach the end of their final year of Executive Committee terms (4 year term limit). The position descriptions of these Executive Committee positions were sent to the board this week.

### **Terms of Open Positions on the Executive Committee**

Chair – one year term, eligible for a second year term

Vice-Chair – one year term, followed by second year term as Chair

Treasurer – two years

Secretary – two years

At-Large Executive Committee Member – four years (Reference: Bylaws Section 8.1)

### **Slate of Nominations for the 2017-2018 Executive Committee**

Chair – Robert Denniston, UU Church of Arlington

Vice-Chair – open

Treasurer – open

Secretary – Martha Ades, UU Congregation of Fairfax

### **At-Large Positions**

**One** At-Large Position is open

Martha Ades is nominated for an At-Large Position

Bob Denniston is nominated for an At-Large Position

**Submitted by Nancy Sorden**

## **Program Committee Report – May 29, 2017**

The UUSJ Program Committee holds monthly meetings.

### **Members**

Marsha White, Hannah Connolly, John Gubbings, Lavona Grow, Pablo DeJesus, Martha Ades, Chair

Each year the Program Committee plans and organizes UUSJ programs to support our mission. Since February the following activities have occurred.

- On April 3-5 UUSJ co-sponsored with UUUJEC an Inequality Conference focused on Healthcare Inequality. The three-day conference helped UUs learn and share best practices for healthcare justice and advocacy in Washington DC. Participants came from 16 different states. Dynamic speakers shared the latest policy initiatives and grassroots efforts. Speakers included Chuck Collins, Sister Simone Campbell, Bishop Douglas Miles and Reverend Graylan Hagler. We learned from National Nurses United, Americans for Tax Fairness, the United Steelworkers, NETWORK and FCNL how important the voice of the faith community is to have in the healthcare conversation. Ami Bera, the lone UU in Congress, shared his perspective. Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal offered her insight on healthcare activism and the road ahead.

Small group discussions expanded knowledge and workshops helped attendees practice advocacy skills. One the final day 50 participants delivered constituent letters and met with staff at senate offices representing 30 different states.

- On April 8 the Committee supported the Board Meeting by provided refreshments and organizational support for the Board Retreat at Paint Branch UU, Maryland.
- After the Peoples' Climate March on April 29, we sponsored a letter writing campaign at All Souls where UUs were gathering for discussion and de-compressing. We worked with All Souls to plan this event for music, food trucks, etc.
- UUSJ sponsored a discussion about the intersectionality of environmental racism and environmental/climate justice with Rev. Earl Koteen who was visiting from California. Rev. Koteen has years of experience advocating at the local and state level in California Bay area. One event was hosted at Arlington UU on May 14 and another on Monday, May 15 at the United Methodist Building, which included interfaith community.

With Board approval, the Committee has scheduled future Board Meetings for Saturday afternoons:

- June 3, 2017 – All Souls, DC
- September 9, 2017 – All Souls, DC

- December 9, 2017 – Virginia Congregation
- March 20, 2018 – Maryland Congregation
- June 2, 2018 – Virginia Congregation

The Committee has revised the UUSJ Program Evaluation Form to be used at future UUSJ programs and meetings. This new form will provide valuable feedback and can provide us with metrics that will inform organization of better programs.

In late May the Committee produced a Gala Survey to assess the Board's willingness to be part of another Gala. The last Gala was held in 2015 and included a catered dinner and awards to eight different individuals or groups.

In progress is a Webinar Checklist to be used as a best-practices tool for holding Webinars that will provide valuable information to our membership and supporters. The Program Committee has meeting checklists that help us organize meetings that are well crafted and informative.

Several ongoing projects are being worked on in June and beyond:

- Scheduling Zoom calls for Board meetings between the quarterly face-to-face meetings
- Support for June 17, 2017 green Activists meeting
- Supporting webinars with the first one addressing the New Economy
- Planning for a Gala in the 2017-2018 year if the Board Survey finds the idea supported.

Submitted by Martha Ades, Program Chair