



Executive Director's Report – P.DeJesús

April 7, 2018

Since the last Board meeting December 9th, UUSJ has engaged in the following:

Leadership Activity:

Advocacy, the cornerstones being:

- 1) We maintained our **Capitol Hill Advocacy Corps**, marking its 1 Year Anniversary, and making monthly visits, on the federal budget, DREAM Act, dismantling the social safety net (Medicaid requirements), and the Johnson Amendment as well as a couple of supplemental visits.
- 2) We helped mobilize or support a UU presence at **Marches/Rallies/events** such as March For Our Lives (MFOL) 2018, and A.C.T. Now to End Racism.
- 3) We continued offering a **webinar and briefing series**, building off our collaboration with Unitarian Universalists for Just Economic Community (UUJEC), one with UU Author Chuck Collins on Initiatives to Reverse Inequity, and one led by Lavona Grow on Four (4) Ways to Get Our Voices Heard in Washington.

Outreach, the cornerstones being:

- We sustained talks with **UUA and UUSC** regarding our pivot to Advocacy; and,
- We held our **Social Justice Leaders Roundtable** on March 17th at Arlington; and,
- **“House Visits”**: We had a meeting with the Social Action Committee of UUC Frederick and a Share the Plate appearance at Cedar Lane.

Management Activity:

Our **Board Composition** has seen several changes. **Jane D’Ambrogi** of Towson UU replaced Christopher Croft, during our previous meeting. **Karen Scrivo** joins returning Goodloe MUUC to the board. **Robert “Bob” McCarthy** joins as the Alternate for UUC Fairfax replacing Ed Butterworth. We thank them and welcome their input on both challenges and opportunities.

Nevertheless, **our leadership needs remain dominant**. The **Executive Committee** continues without a Vice-Chair. We also need a new financial volunteer (bookkeeper), although we have a verbal commitment. We have successfully recruited a Treasurer, **Michael McCord**, who requires board confirmation on April 7th. The Core Group continues functioning in lieu of a complete and operational Executive Committee. UUSJ

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would not be able to function without the participation of the current team of **Martha Ades, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Al Carlson, Bob Denniston, Lavona Grow, and John Gubbings**. We deeply value their contributions. We remain in need of new participants and referrals to folks with specific skills and interests related to organizational operations.

Since the last meeting, I have collaborated with the various compositional bodies of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Endeavored to improve our profile and visibility among UU affiliate organizations such as **Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU)**.
- 2) Continued collaboration with **UUJEC**.
- 3) Set the stage to extend collaboration with UUA for the **Poor People's Campaign**.

Needed actions remain:

- Continued recruitment of **Executive Committee** candidates; and,
- Formal re-constitution of all our **Standing Committees** (Development & Membership; Finance; and, Nominating). Although a group has begun to huddle on Development issues; and,
- Sorting out of our **Outreach and Networking** needs. While several advocacy outreach pilots are coming together, general organizational needs are weak; and,
- Follow-up on the **Governance Committee** kick-off. However, the Core Group is working to reconcile management and governance dynamics that present as comingled.

Advocacy & Related Activity:

We continue to have **Lavona Grow** in the lead as chair of the Advocacy Oversight Committee and **Anna Rhee** contracting on our advocacy work. In this area we have:

- 1) Continued building the UUSJ presence on Capitol Hill Advocacy Corps.
- 2) Held a UUSJ Green Activists strategy and agenda setting meeting.
- 3) Continued engaging on Immigration. The team made an advocacy outing to the Hill in late January.
- 4) Held monthly meetings on Escalating Economic Inequity (EEI).

Needed actions include:

- Those reported previously. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on preserving democratic decision making, cultivating new leadership, and making sure that the volunteer experience is both meaningful and empowering.
- Revisiting the need for a Witness Oversight Committee.
- Assisting the EEI and Immigration teams prepare for scheduled strategy sessions.

Operational Activity:

We continue to lean upon our Staff, Contractors and the Core Group plus other dedicated volunteers to get UUSJ operational duties done. In particular we feel the absence of our Administrative Assistant (AA). Nevertheless we have:

- 1) Opened a candidate review process, seeking to fill the AA position.
- 2) Completed our eNews for March and April without an AA.
- 3) Steered home our **Social Justice Leaders Roundtable** on March 17th at Arlington.
- 4) Attempted a new/lapsed member drive in the form of an “Unlock Funding” effort.
- 5) Initiated a policy change to accept Donated Stock / Marketable Securities Policy.
- 6) Begun preparing for our:
 - a. Member Canvas on Priority Issues for the next two-three years
 - b. 2018 Spring Membership Drive
 - c. Fundraising efforts directed at both individual and institutional donors
 - d. Presence at General Assembly

Needed actions include:

- Engaging congregations that haven't had a UUSJ visit. Especially with board members that haven't had strategy contact with the ED or Board Chair; and,
- Continued outreach and networking to UU funders and players; and,
- Completing a match in support of our current UUSJ grant.

Forward Looking:

We are deep into the season to focus on Development & Membership issues, and therefore budget implications. **UUSJ is rounding the corner on hard decisions driven by projected budget austerity.** That means:

- 1) We need a substantive and noteworthy improvement in our fundraising culture
- 2) Sharing leads and finding leads to network into relationship with funders
- 3) Building an effective Development & Membership team to plan and help execute

Planning continues:

- To revamp our organizational materials; and,
- Frame out a GOTV program for 2018 Mid-term elections.

Feasibility queries continue regarding:

- A more formalized relationship with the CUUSAN, the Coalition of Unitarian Universalist State Action Networks.