

**UUSJ Committee and Task Group Reports
for January 08, 2019 UUSJ Board Meeting**

Reports Submitted as of January 07, 2019

Advocacy Oversight Committee.....Page 2

Development Committee.....Page 3

Immigration Task Group.....Page 6

Program Committee.....Page 8

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)
- Communication & Outreach Committee
- Escalating Economic Inequity Task Group
- Green Activists - Environmental and Climate Justice Task Group
- Gala Planning Committee (not a standing committee)
- Governance Task Force (not a standing committee)
- Issue Selection Process Task Force (not a standing committee)
- Nominating Committee

Advocacy Oversight Committee Report – January, 2019
(Includes the Advocacy Corps and related advocacy efforts)

Members: Lavona Grow, chair, Bob Denniston, Ed Kringer, Anna Rhee (consultant), Sean McCarthy

- To be delivered, in progress, subject to Advocacy Corps outing January 08, 2019

Submitted by: Lavona Grow, Advocacy Oversight Committee Chair

Development Group Report – January 5, 2019

Members: David Strauss of UUC of Rockville, Gary Magnuson of UUC Frederick, Peter Bishop of Washington Ethical Society. Participants from Virginia are requested.

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director and Bob Denniston, Board Chair, and Martha Ades, Board Secretary and Program Committee Chair -- participate as appropriate and as invited.

Charge: The group was formed [in May 2018] to help stabilize and grow UUSJ's financial base as we advance our commitment to advocate for the issues arising from the principles and values of our UU faith.

Objective One: To replace the funds that in the past UUSJ has been dependent upon through grants. Nearly all foundations and grant making organizations are prohibited from giving money for lobbying. Therefore, grant funding for advocacy is unlikely and needs to be replaced with other funds in the UUSJ budget. In addition, past grantors of funds to UUSJ have indicated that such funding is not renewable. We will still be able to seek grant funds for activities that qualify, such as voter registration, and other episodic activities. However, the Development Group sees its primary purpose as generating ideas and activities to grow UUSJ programs by building on our foundation of congregational memberships, individual memberships, and periodic fund appeals.

Objective Two: To raise \$3,000 to support UUSJ advocacy. To fulfill this objective the DG proposed that UUSJ sponsor a fundraising reception on December 2, 2018 at River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation (RRUUC). For planning this event, we added two people from the Program Committee: Martha Ades, Board Secretary from Fairfax, Marsha White of Fairfax, and event representative Jack Lebowitz of RRUUC. In short, this event was wildly successful! **We had set a goal of raising \$3,000 hoping for attendance of about 80 people. Instead, we sold 144 tickets @ \$75 each and after expenses netted \$8,141.00.** There were several factors that contributed to this dramatic success, including the timing (a few weeks after the mid-term Federal elections), a keynote speaker with good credentials and a progressive reputation (Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-MD), an excellent venue, a large amount of in-kind contributions, and aggressive and passionate salespeople (Board members as well as the DG). To us, this event demonstrated that we can use some of the same methods that other progressive groups do to help sustain and support UUSJ's mission.

It is often difficult to make it clear why we needed to raise these funds; sometimes, the temptation is to say that simply, "this closes a budget gap." We believe it is better to help UUs feel that the funds they've contributed will make a difference in our impact. We recommend that the Board and staff of UUSJ publicize how we will get "value added" from this event's financial outcome. Example: **this money should help us expand and manage our efforts to "go national" by adding the vacant administrative assistant position.**

Future Event Fundraising:

- **Virginia Congressional Fundraiser:** While we don't want to rely solely on event fundraising, it is an important brick in the financial foundation we are trying to construct. There is some interest in having a mirror image of the December 2 event at a Virginia site. This would include asking an elected official (Rep. Beyers, or Senator Kaine) to keynote the fundraiser. There is a significant barrier: most congregations will be holding their stewardship campaigns beginning in mid-winter and lasting through the spring. It will be difficult if not impossible for UUSJ to actively compete with this function that is critical to the survival of our member congregations. Therefore, it is recommended that such an event should not be scheduled before June 2019.
- **Fall Gala Awards Dinner.** We believe this event has the potential to net at least as much as the December 2 event, if planned and themed appropriately. It is suggested that the Gala Awards Dinner be conducted as before. However, the event would be priced to meet a significant fundraising goal. For example, a price of \$95 per person (modest by DC standards) with 160 attendees would gross over \$15,000. After expenses, that should result in a net somewhat higher than the \$7,800 from December 2. This would require more work and more volunteers from the Board and congregations than the reception, but we have momentum in our favor, having achieved success at this kind of activity. We need a robust discussion of this proposal and we must make a decision on this soon so that planning can begin.

Individual Fundraising:

Another initiative that will begin in earnest following the spring stewardship campaigns is individual fundraising. Peter Bishop will lead this effort to meet one to one with UU members in our region, who are large individual contributors. Working through the ministers, a list will be developed of those persons believed capable of making substantial individual donations to UUSJ's critical advocacy work. We believe this will be a key part of our sustainability.

Board Member Contributions:

Finally, a couple of meetings ago the UUSJ Board approved a personal responsibility amount of \$500 for each UUSJ congregation. As you may remember this does not necessarily require your writing a check to UUSJ. It does mean you are responsible for that amount, whether it comes through fundraising events at your congregation (such as a film showing open to the public), or in other ways. We would welcome a brief discussion of this item.

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS NEEDED

1. How best to publicize the use of the money raised at the Dec 2nd event

2. Whether or not to sponsor a Congressional fundraising event in Virginia in late spring.
3. Whether or not to make the fall 2019 Gala Awards Dinner a significant fundraiser.

DISCUSSION NEEDED

Discuss UUSJ Board member responsibility to raise a \$500 contribution from the member's UUSJ congregation. Related matters to also be discussed include timeframe, assistance needed, and suggested activities to raise funding

CLOSING AND GENERAL APPEAL:

There are many other potential ways of raising the funds UUSJ needs to continue to advance its advocacy activities in the region and nationwide. We welcome all ideas and suggestions you may have and we also welcome anyone on the Board and in Congregations who would like to join the UUSJ Development Group. Thank you.

Submitted by: David Strauss

Immigration Task Group Report – December 28, 2018

Immigration committee meets every other Thursday online at 4 pm ET

Active Members: Charlotte Jones-Carroll, convener, Gayle Boyd, Don Chery, Lavona Grow, Serena Lowe, Sean McCarthy, Kalman Rupp, and Dean Wanderer.

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director and Bob Denniston, Board Chair, and Anna Rhee, advocacy consultant -- participate as appropriate and as invited.

Activity and Status:

Public Comments on Rule Changes: The Immigration team focused on opposing two public rule changes deemed harmful to immigrants: overturning the Flores settlement (which requires that children be released from detention in 20 days or less, which if overturned would allow DHS to detain children indefinitely) and public charge (in which USCIS proposed adding use of public benefits like Medicaid, food stamps and housing subsidies to the current definition of a person likely to become a “public charge” or primarily dependent on government for daily living.).

We organized extensive tabling and reached out through UUSJ communications so that individual UUs could make public comments opposing these two rule changes by the deadlines. UUSJ also sent comments. US agencies are required by law to consider all such public comments before effecting the proposed changes. Final action by immigration agencies has not been announced.

Budget restraint for DHS/ICE/CBP: Meanwhile, we continued to monitor websites and partner communications to identify where we could join with other multi-faith initiatives to oppose these and other actions detrimental to immigrants. In particular, the committee urged restricting the DHS/ICE/CBP budgets, which have remained funded by a Continuing Resolution, because of the Administration’s insistence on major allocations for a border wall. We consider a border wall to be unnecessary and ineffective compared to alternative expenditures for border monitoring.

Comprehensive Statement on Immigration Issues: The committee undertook a Hill visit during partner “action week” in late September, carrying our summary of past and current positions on a variety of immigration and refugee topics. A letter from the UUSC CEO was also delivered with this package. We supported the Advocacy team’s visit on the immigration topic in early October by providing content for talking points.

Immigration Film Fest: UUSJ Immigration and Advocacy representatives joined the Action Tent of the 2018 Immigration Film Fest on October 27 to encourage public comment on the public charge rule change and to spread the word about the advocacy corps.

Immigration Priorities to 2020: The committee developed a set of high, medium and low priority actions for the next 24 months, to sharpen our focus on what is most feasible given our resources and most impactful based on our objectives. While comprehensive immigration reform remains one goal, we do not detect likely bipartisan support for that in the 116th Congress. We will be

inviting a broader group of UUs with interest in immigration to discuss these proposed priority actions in early February. At this time, the highest priorities would be:

- (i) to undertake advocacy for pathways to legal status for Temporary Protected Status holders and DACA holders, while fighting impediments to such legalization,
- (ii) to support rights of asylum-seekers to request asylum,
- (iii) to support family unity through alternatives to detention and faster reunification of minors with family or guardians, and
- (iv) to continue opposing significant budget increases for DHS/ICE/CBP, especially for a border wall.

We are looking into ways to organize hosting of asylum-seekers and other persons released from detention so they have better access to legal aid. We will be promoting humane treatment of detainees and opposing harassment of law-abiding immigrant residents, as well.

Submitted by: Charlotte Jones Carroll, convener, UUSJ Immigration Committee

Program Committee Report – January 5, 2019

The Program Committee holds monthly meetings

Members: Martha Ades, Chair, John Gubbings, Marsha White

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesus, Executive Director, Bob Denniston, Chair. Lavona Grow, AOC chair as needed and asked.

Looking Backward:

The Program Committee dedicated the last quarter of 2018 to supporting the December 2nd Fundraiser with Rep. Jamie Raskin speaking.

Working closely with the development Committee, the program committee provided best-practice advice and experienced volunteers to make the event a totally successful afternoon. Over 140 people attended the event which was catered with light hors d'ouvres. Registration worked well and we are thankful to the volunteers who provided music, tended bar, sold tickets at their congregations and helped with setup and clean up.

The Program Committee has best-practice checklists to assist any UUSJ group planning an event, whether it is a webinar, working group meeting, educational presentation or full fundraising event. We provide advice on communication methods, venue reservations and setup needs, agenda planning, food offerings, last-minute planning needs and post-event follow-up.

The Program Committee needs more volunteers who can help plan events. Being on the committee involves a once-a-month conference call meeting, conference call meetings as events get close to happening and support at weekend events with program logistics. If this sounds like something you would enjoy doing, please contact Martha Ades at marthalades@aol.com.

Looking Forward:

For 2019 there will be additional events for UUSJ participation for capacity building and fundraising.

Events being planned are:

- January 19, Women's March, Washington, DC – no program involved
- Relationship building at General Assembly – will need UUSJ volunteers
- September-October presentations of award-winning SWEAT play
- October 5 or 6 Gala Awards Event
- UUSJ Board meetings in March, June, September and December

Other potential events being discussed for the year are;

- Joint conference with UUJEC
- Virginia advocacy fund raiser, similar to Rep. Raskin event

Submitted by: Martha Ades, Program Chair