



Executive Director's Report – P.DeJesús

September 2021

Since the previous board meeting of June 2021, UUSJ has done the following:

Highlights:

- 1) Scheduled CEO & President [Rev. Mary Katherine Morn](#), UUSC, as our social justice awards ceremony keynote speaker on November 7th. Public announcement pending.
- 2) Planned a Democracy Action Team “full tilt” advocacy outing on voting rights, and scheduled an **expert opinion briefing** with guests, the [Center for Common Ground](#) and [Faithful Democracy](#) on Wednesday, **September 15 at 7pmET (RSVP)**.
- 3) Filled our board standing committees, and began to convene committee meetings and to gather in the operational team members (non-board).
- 4) Ramped up planning towards our **social justice activist round-table** on November 6th, with speaker **Rev. Pippin Whitaker** of the UUA Commission on Social Witness.
- 5) Appeared at the [8th Principle UU Learning Community](#) meeting on 8/11.
- 6) Started the Officer transition, including needed banking and institutional steps.
- 7) Were invited by the UUA Commission on Social Witness to speak about our [Action of Immediate Witness](#) (AIW) “Stop Voter Suppression and Partner for Voting Rights and a Multiracial Democracy”. We also hosted an AIW event by the **Democracy Action Team (DAT) with SWL, Public Citizen, and others on 7/22**.
- 8) Released 6 new action alerts covering each of our 4 policy priority areas.

Management:

Our board composition changed substantially. UUSJ's previous board voluntarily stepped back, off, and out of that leadership role to allow a new more national and justice-centered approach to take place, unfold, and emerge. The new board has accepted the baton from the previous and begun establishing its own culture and norms. Onboarding and orientation are ongoing. Correspondingly, a restructure of the officers and committees has occurred.

The **Development Committee** is now chaired by Rev. Eleanor and includes Norma with David Strauss as a non-board member. The **Executive Committee** is chaired by Charlotte as Board Chair, with officers. Mariano serves as Treasurer, Chloe Emily as Secretary, and Beyssa as Vice-Chair. The **Finance Committee** is now Chaired by Norma and includes Rev. Joseph with Charlotte and Mariano in an ex-officio capacity.

The **Membership Committee** is now chaired by Rev. Peggy and include Beyssa and Serena with John Peterson as a non-board member. The **Nominating Committee** is now chaired by Chloe Emily and includes Rev. Joseph.

During the August special session of the new board, the ad-hoc **Policy & Advocacy Review Committee (PARC)** was designated for continuation, Serena continues as chair.

Thank you all for volunteering.

Since the previous meeting, I have collaborated with the volunteers of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Focused on onboarding, transition, and orientation. These activities continue.
- 2) Continued the work of non-board, operational teams wherever possible and prudent. This applies most directly to the development and membership teams. Non-board members have been advised to avoid major decisions without board member leadership.
- 3) Paused the membership outreach to congregations beyond our founding members, with the intent of rethinking and restructuring the outreach plan. The membership team has received such guidance from the Membership Committee due to concerns about the tone, tenor, framing, and timing of our planned communications.

Needed actions:

- Continue onboarding and orientation, in particular, 1:1 or 1:2 listening and learning with the board
- Facilitating the work of standing committees
- Discernment over the policy priorities of UUSJ

Advocacy:

We continued the transition which began in 2020 to more management by staff with collaborative support by volunteers in “AIM style” interactions. See the advocacy [report](#).

Since the previous meeting, I have collaborated with the volunteers of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Organized for a “full-tilt” advocacy outing on [voting rights \(WHWN\)](#) during September with an eye on both the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act ([WHWN Handout](#)).
- 2) Produced six (6) action alerts:
 - **Urge [President Biden](#) to Provide Relief to Students** -- Join Members of Congress in the Call to Tackle Student Debt. Also, **[Tell Congress To Support The Broad Principle of Relief for Students](#)** -- Join Majority Leader Schumer

- and Rep. Pressley in the Fight to Eliminate Student Debt
 - **Tell the House, [Pass H.R. 40](#)**: UUs Endorse A Fact-Based Understanding of American Slavery
 - **[Tell Congress](#) to Take Bold Action for Climate, Jobs, and Justice**
 - **In the Budget, we Must Include [Pathways to Citizenship](#) for Essential Workers and Their Families**
 - **[AIW 2021](#)** - Stop Voter Suppression and Partner for Voting Rights and a Multiracial Democracy
- 3) Joined in coalition advocacy activity, inclusive of **[Faithful Democracy](#)** and **[Washington Interfaith Staff Community](#)** (WISC).
 - 4) Issued a **[letter](#)** to Secretary Mayorkas and V.P. Harris on the Title 42 issue.

Needed actions:

- Two of our policy teams need rebuilding or repair. Environmental Action Team and the Economic Justice Team.
- Assessment and modification of our “full tilt” advocacy outing schedule.

Education:

Since the previous meeting, I have collaborated with the volunteers of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Hosted an **[Action of Immediate Witness](#)** forum during July
- 2) Planned a voting rights **expert opinion briefing** for **September 15 at 7pmET** (**[RSVP](#)**), this builds upon our new tradition of inviting guests to speak.
- 3) Planned for our **social justice activist round-table** on November 6th, this continues a tradition of roughly biennial programming that has been popular.

Needed actions:

- Home stretch planning for back-to-back activities on November 6th and 7th
- Building a team in support to help identify speakers and develop events

Engagement:

Since the previous meeting, I have collaborated with the volunteers of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Scheduled CEO & President **[Rev. Mary Katherine Morn](#)**, UUSC, as our social justice awards ceremony keynote speaker on November 7th. It is an honor and privilege.
- 2) Launched a support engagement effort for **Afghan Family Arrivals**, offering context and referral materials.
- 3) Been invited by the UUA Commission on Social Witness to speak about our **[2021](#)**

AIW on October 6th. Details are forthcoming, planning has begun with the DAT.

- 4) Scheduled zoom appearances by Pablo at Washington Ethical Society, and the ministry Reclaim Our Democracy, First Parish in Concord, MA.
- 5) Appeared at the 8th Principle UU Learning Community meeting on 8/11 with Nicole Pressley of SWL-UUtV. Paula Cole Jones said nice things about the new UUSJ.
- 6) Joined the major **Poor People's Campaign: NCMR** event in DC and mobilized or amplified for their subsequent actions.

Needed actions:

- Improve internal clarity on how engagement activities differ from education or advocacy activity, in practical operational terms

Operations:

As in the area of management, here the focus has been on transition between the two boards. The emphasis has been to maintain activity steady, moving forward, where prior plans had been put in motion across our advocacy, education, and engagement.

Since the previous meeting, I have collaborated with the volunteers of UUSJ, and we have:

- 1) Began bank authorization transition
- 2) Announced our new board. We also thanked our previous board and the nominating committee for their service.
- 3) Started drafting an annual report FY19-21, which will offer our first ever program budget, and will ensure IRS compliance.
- 4) Began planning towards our 2021 end-of-year appeal and its elements.
- 5) Initiated board member queries regarding environmental and economic justice partners in support of our 2020 UUFP grant. Follow-up is required.
- 6) Supported the development of our events across education, advocacy and engagement, as well as routine communications and amplification efforts.
- 7) Raised **\$2,633.30**. SALSA shows that in the ~90 day period since our last board meeting we've received financial support from 47 donors, 34 were new, 10 returning. Of these 44 were one-time, 3 were recurring donors. \$2,531.70 (avg. \$65.25) was raised from on-time donors, \$101.60 (\$52.50) from recurring donors.

Needed actions:

- Planning for our social justice awards ceremony with Rev. Morn on November 7th
- Resumption of UUFP grant activity
- Gear up for 2021 end-of-year appeal