

CATALYST

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OFFICE OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC CONCERNS

Engaged in recognizing and “re-storying” ourselves for a multicultural Unitarian Universalist future

Headline News:

We're delighted to announce that, beginning this year, the **President William G. Sinkford Scholarship Fund** will award one \$20,000 scholarship annually to a promising ministerial student who identifies as a person of color, Latino/a, Hispanic, and/or multi-racial. For more information, please contact Janice Marie Johnson.

We are excited about the new **Community Outreach Ministry** of the **James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation**, developed by the **Rev. Chris Long** in association with board and ministerial leadership. He will serve as the congregation's Community Outreach Minister. The Office of Racial and Ethnic Concerns will fund this ministry during its first six months.

Here's how the congregation made this exciting new ministry happen:

Rev. Chris Long, a member of JRUUC since 1999, became a guest Worship Associate in September of 2009. Shortly thereafter, he proposed a community outreach program to the minister and board of trustees, and they responded with enthusiasm. Over the next three months, Rev. Chris delivered several Sunday services, ran Q&A sessions, and worked to inform the community of his plans. He attracted many new visitors to the services and demonstrated impressive pulpit talent. In January, Rev. Chris submitted a proposal that highlighted a few communication and infrastructure issues that needed to be addressed prior to establishing the community ministry; a task force then worked with him to develop ways to address these questions. At a February 14th congregational meeting, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to support the Community Outreach Ministry project.

On February 11th, the Office of Racial and Ethnic Concerns, under the guidance of the **Rev. Alicia R. Forde**, launched a **Virtual Multicultural Learning and Networking Community**. This inspiring first session included the participation of twelve parish ministers who are all leading their congregations into a multicultural *now*. The goals of this multicultural community include: Creating a virtual community that allows for “cross-fertilization”—the exchange of experiences that begin to broaden our individual and collective MR/MC practices; creating a virtual community that enables us to make explicit the theological practices that we're embodying and share those practices with a wider audience using the technology available to us (e.g., blogging and an ongoing web presence); and actively constructing a community of support and guidance for leaders engaged in this transformational ministry.

Upcoming Events:

Third Annual Religious Professionals of Color Retreat: Finding Our Way Home, March 3– 6, 2010 in San Francisco, CA. Special thanks to Lesley Murdock, Office Manager, UUA Washington Office, for her tireless and cheerful work in pulling this together. We will welcome 60+ participants: ministers, seminarians, religious educators, and special guests. UU President Peter Morales will join us, as he always does. We look forward to welcoming him in his dual roles as President and *hermano*.

DRUUMM West Coast Gathering! From March 19-21, Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries, an organization for people of color in the UUA, will hold its first regional west coast conference at Throop Memorial Church in Pasadena. The program will focus on the ways that UUs of color can work together to identify and free ourselves from internalized racism. To learn more about this event, and register visit DRUUMM's new website: <http://www.druumm.onefireplace.org/>.

Janice Marie Johnson has initiated a Fall 2010 gathering: “**Professionals Of Color At The UUA And Beyond: Sharing Our Hopes. Sharing Our Challenges. Strengthening Our Community.**” We are pleased to report that it has the support (philosophical and financial) of the administration. Watch this newsletter for more details!

More information from the Diversity of Ministry Initiative:

Installations are being planned. Let us celebrate these new ministries!

April 18, 2010. First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh with the **Rev. Alma Crawford**

April 24, 2010. UU Church of Annapolis with the **Rev. John Crestwell**

The Diversity of Ministry Team (DOMT) has decided to meet *more*, rather than less, frequently. At its February, 2010 meeting, the team committed to concrete steps that will enhance the future of the Diversity of Ministry Initiative, the future of ministry for ministers of color, and multiculturalism in Unitarian Universalism. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for April and June.

JUUST Change Consultants. The UU Church of Long Beach, CA (Rev. Alicia Forsey, Interim minister) has begun working with JUUST Change Consultant Dr. Mark Hicks; Rev. Alicia Forde also visited the congregation on February 20-21 as it began the JUUST Change Consultancy process.

The **First Parish in Cambridge** has been reviewing ministerial packets, and continues to work closely with JUUST Change Consultant Rev. Dr. Tracey Robinson-Harris in shaping the congregation’s vision for multicultural ministry. We anticipate good news regarding its new associate minister!

Exciting New Resources:

The Arc of the Universe is Long: Unitarian Universalists, Anti-racism and the Journey from Calgary—study guide now available! This guide, authored by Leslie Takahashi Morris, Chip Roush, and Leon Spencer, provides a simple way to begin to explore the complex history contained within the book. The guide provides an outline for five 1½ hour discussions exploring the themes of the book and is suitable for adult religious education offerings. This book is one of the still limited number of histories within our movement that includes the voices of people of color—in this case, reflecting on the work of anti-racism in our Association from the mid 1980s through 2005—and it can be ordered through the UUA Bookstore. To download the guide, visit uua.org or email Janice Marie Johnson.

The Mentorship Program for seminarians and ministers of color has started off well. The first group of Mentor/Mentee pairs have begun their work, and will have quality face-to-face time at the March retreat. If you are interested in the program, please contact Janice Marie Johnson.

Seminarians of Color. Coordinators **Walter LeFlore** and **Angela Henderson** continue to host monthly phone meetings. They also host a private Facebook group, "Unitarian Universalist Seminarians of Color," which is open only to seminarians. To sign up, contact angelahenderson@hotmail.com.

Dream with us. Strategize with us. Build community with us. Support us...Join us in this holy work.

Living our faith,



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