

The Newsletter of Asian/Pacific Islander Unitarian Universalists and their Allies

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Page 1

August 2006



Emma Min-Gi Olson with A/PIC banner at GA

Report from General Assembly

by KokHeong McNaughton (Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM)

The General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations was held this year in St. Louis, Missouri, from June 21 to June 25. A/PIC's presence at this year's assembly was once again significant although our number was still small.

Emma Min-Gi Olson carried our banner during the banner parade. We shared a booth at the exhibit area with DRUUMM where we sold t-shirts, gave out copies of our brand new brochure, and

(see GA, 5)

UU Group in Manila Celebrates First Anniversary

by Guerrero Roberto Ma (UU Community of Manila, Philippines)



Nina and Joy presenting Buddhism in Manila

By some miracle of faith, the Unitarian Universalist Community in Manila, Philippines, celebrated its first anniversary last May, 2006.

We were founded by myself (Bob Guerrero), Michael Lim, a Malaysian expatriate working in the Asian Development Bank, Greg Polistico, a former Jehovah's Witness, and Carlos Angana and Juliet Vasquez, two former Assembly of God ministers who have found UUism.

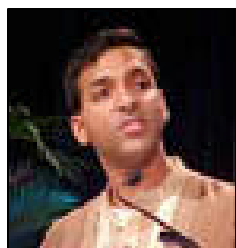
Our group of 20 to 30 meets every other week at an abandoned school in Bicutan, a suburb of Manila. There's no electricity (see Manila, 4)

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DRUUMM President's Letter



July 14, 2006

Dear Members of DRUUMM,

As you may know, DRUUMM held elections on Saturday, June 24, 2006 in St. Louis. Those elections have resulted in a noteworthy shift in leadership and focus for DRUUMM. It is with pleasure that I am writing to you for the first time in my official capacity as DRUUMM's newly-elected President.

In terms of the composition of our new leadership, a detailed list of the new Steering Committee and its Executive leadership accompanies this letter as an attachment. Please do share this attachment, and the contents of this letter, with others in DRUUMM, as may be useful. *[Please visit druumm.org for list of SC members.]*

As is the case with any significant change in leadership, such things as an organization's approach, priorities, and focus may also shift and be redefined. I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you a few of the shifts currently underway within DRUUMM.

Deepening Shared Ministry

One of the clarion calls I have heard from the DRUUMM membership as well as those on the Steering Committee is the desire for leadership and power within DRUUMM to be shared and decentralized. This call, without a doubt, possesses challenges. Yet, it also reflects the dream that DRUUMM be organized in ways that embody and honor the best of what our respective cultures offer –

- ◆ The sharing of work and responsibility;
- ◆ Holding one another in collective accountability;
- ◆ Mutually caring for all, as extended family members;
- ◆ Mentoring our young as they transition to adulthood;
- ◆ Respecting the wisdom of our elders; and,
- ◆ Honoring the fact that everyone in the family has talents and gifts to share.

No one is left behind. The energies of all are engaged

and included. This is our vision of "shared ministry," and we will be working in the upcoming weeks and months to further deepen and strengthen DRUUMM's sense of it. From a practical perspective, as our sense of shared ministry grows, our connections with those outside the DRUUMM community will likewise expand.

While I will remain the senior-most representative of the DRUUMM community, I have informed UUA staff and volunteers that they should expect to be working more and more with others on our Steering Committee and even those not holding an official DRUUMM title. [On matters where it is unclear who in DRUUMM might be an appropriate point of contact, I have offered to facilitate the necessary connections.] The noteworthy point here is that I, as President, will not be the sole, or even necessarily the primary, point of contact on all things related to DRUUMM. New collaborative relationships will be forming.

Additionally, DRUUMM's desire for deeper shared ministry also means that I will not be the unilateral spokesperson for DRUUMM. Frequently DRUUMM receives requests from the UUA with the hope, or assumption, that the President will be able to provide immediate, on-the-spot, "official" feedback. Under my presidency all official feedback will be vetted with the DRUUMM Steering Committee. As is the case with other UU institutions/organizations, such processes take time, but help ensure accountability to the community we, in DRUUMM leadership, represent and serve.

Reclaiming Our Agenda

From the viewpoint of vision and mission, it has become increasingly clear to us that multiple and competing external requests from the UUA and the broader UU community have been taxing our limited volunteer time and energy to the breaking point. These external requests have been overwhelming, so much so that they have been defining DRUUMM's priorities and agenda; we have not been able to focus on our own internal community-building to the extent to which we need.

While I do anticipate that DRUUMM will be expanding its lateral contacts with the UUA – developing new working relationships and collaborations – the fact remains that there are too few people of color within the

(see Letter, 7)

UU Evangelism: It's Time to Spread the Good NUUs by Vivien Hao (Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA)



For Unitarian Universalists, evangelism was once a dirty word. But no more — it's widely accepted and practiced. How do I know that? I googled it. When I googled "Unitarian Universalism and Evangelism," I got more than 74,000 hits. When I googled "Unitarian Universalism and Evangelist," I got over 46,000 more. I found a great UU evangelical website (www.uufaq.com) and several UU Evangelist blogs — in fact, I even started my own (ueevangelismsocal.blogspot.com) — for the seven UU churches in my LA/Orange County cluster which is supporting ways to maximize a \$100,000 direct mail/radio/newspaper advertising campaign that will start locally in September. For more visit: www.uua.org/programs/congservices/uncommon/ I also found dozens of sermons on UU evangelism, info about UU evangelical conferences and workshops at General Assembly, and even a UU evangelist tool kit.

So let's just get all those images of Hare Krishnas accosting you at the airport. And erase those ideas of fundamentalist preachers threatening hell, fire and damnation if you don't get saved. That is NOT what I mean by UU evangelism. A lot of people confuse evangelizing with proselytizing. To proselytize is "to induce someone to convert to your faith" while to evangelism really refers to conversing, not converting. The root word evangel, means literally good news. So evangelizing refers to sharing the good news. And I certainly believe we have good news to share about a faith that affirms life and love. In fact, I've often wondered why everyone isn't UU.

I'm the not the first person to think that either. Thomas Jefferson, an early UU evangelist, is famously quoted as saying, "I confidently expect that the present generation will see Unitarianism become the general religion of the United States." Jefferson would be disappointed to know that now almost 200 years later, the nation numbers 300 million but Unitarian Universalists less than one quarter million. Actually, more than 600,000 Americans said on their U.S. Census form that they are Unitarian Universalist—so that means there are almost 400,000 people in this country who

identify as UU, but haven't affiliated with a UU congregation!

I would venture to guess that among 600,000 self-identified UUs, there are fewer than 1,000 persons of Asian/Pacific Islander descent. Although we represent about three percent of the U.S. population, I'm hypothesizing that there are far fewer who have never heard the good news of our faith. In fact, research shows that among the general U.S. population, only about one-half of one percent of Americans can accurately say what Unitarian Universalism is about. The old joke is : What do you get when you cross a Jehovah's Witness with a UU? Someone who comes knocking on your door and has nothing to say.

I can relate to that, since I'm often tongue tied when someone asks what do Unitarian Universalists believe? It's much easier to say what we *don't* believe, rather than what we *do* believe. To avoid that awkward silence, I've been collecting elevator speeches—15-second sound bites about UUism.

We employ freedom, reason and tolerance as instrumental values toward the vision of creating and sustaining the beloved community.

In the midst of mystery and the enduring presence of religious community, the creative power of transforming love engages us in the beauty and tragedy of life to awaken compassion, call us to justice and invite us to live in harmony with the earth.

Too long—too hard to memorize? Here's a really simple one:

Unitarian Universalists are freethinking mystics with hands.

This was coined by the Rev. Tom Owen-Towle, a retired minister of First UU Church San Diego, who wrote a whole book about this. I used it as an opening line to talk about how UUs seek their own truth and meaning while being mindful of what is sacred and holy. And the part about the hands...I tell people we are *doers*, not just intellectual thinkers, and we are distinguished from "new age" religions because of our social justice work in our own communities and around the world.

(See *Evangelism*, 4)

(Manila — from page 1)



Unitarian Universalist Community of Manila group picture

and we rent the room for P500 (about \$9 US) for two hours.

We have no full-time UU minister so we are pretty much lay-led. Our worship services are simple, with readings, songs accompanied by guitar, and sermons, usually by myself, Michael, or Carlos.

But we are a true liberal religious group. We may be overwhelmingly Christian but we have had talks on Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, as well as other topics like UU views on LGBT, the right of conscience as well as the need to preserve the environment.

Apart from myself and Michael, our group is largely composed of lower-income families from the Bicutan area. There are a few dedicated and promising youth among them, though. After a radio spot a few weeks ago we have been joined by two more ladies, a former free-lance casting agent and a lawyer. They seem very enthusiastic about the liberal religious message of UUism.

We currently have two on-going projects: a small micro-finance project in Novaliches (a suburb of Metro Manila where Juliet is from), as well as a recycling project in Bicutan initiated with the help of the Mother Earth Foundation.

We're excited about having Joseph Santos-Lyons conduct his internship with us in September. We hope to become a full member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines, which is headquartered in the island of Negros to the south of Manila. They have been of great help.

We're a small group and we have a lot of difficulties, but we are strong in our liberal, progressive faith, and we hope to grow in number and in spirit. The Philip-

ines is a predominantly Catholic nation where dogmatic, conservative Christianity has always ruled. We are proud to be the voice, no matter how small, of liberal religion in our country.

Santos-Lyons Internship Fund

A/PIC member Joseph Santos-Lyons will be spending September 06 through April 07 as ministerial intern with the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines, in the city of Dumaguette on the island of Negros, as well as with the new Unitarian Universalist Community of Manila. They are a couple of the few liberal religious voice in the Philippines. He's committed to raise \$4000 to underwrite his internship.

If you are willing and able to support this project, please consider making a donation by sending a check to "**UU Church of Annapolis**", c/o Rev. Dr. **Fred Muir, 333 Dubois Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401** and indicate *UUCP Santos-Lyons* in the memo line.

More info: email josephsantoslyons@gmail.com

(Evangelism — from page 3)

So, I say unto you, start spreading the Good News! Get your elevator speech down and use it! There are hundreds of millions of people out there who haven't heard the good news—including our API brothers and sisters.

The marketing campaign that's being launched in the LA area this fall has the theme "Imagine a Religion where people with different beliefs worship as one faith." Well, I am imagining that if my UU church in a southern LA suburb actually reflected the community that surrounds it—every third person in our pews would look like me! Rancho Palos Verdes, Torrance, Gardena, and many other cities we serve are about 30% API!

Wow, when that day comes, we will truly have Good NUUs!

Here's a UU Evangelist Pop Quiz for you!

1. Americans who have no church affiliation are on the rise. In the last 15 years, the proportion of people who are "unchurched" has gone from:

a. 1 in 6 to 1 in 3 b. 1 in 5 to 1 in 3 c. 1 in 4 to 1 in 3

(see Quiz, 5)

(GA — from page 1)

the latest issue of Hot Rice. Our booth was in a good location right across from the UUA Bookstore and diagonally across from the Beacon Press booth. We saw a steady stream of visitors to the booth during exhibit hours. Most of them, however, seemed to be there to check out and sign up for the new White Allies for Racial Equity group (uallies.org.)

A big thank-you to Mark Watanabe who organized the A/PIC luncheon on Saturday in the nearby Kitchen K Restaurant. A total of 12 people showed up at the luncheon: Mark Watanabe, Joseph Santos-Lyons, Rev. Leslie Takahashi Morris, Young Kim, KokHeong McNaughton, Kevin Mann, Jennifer Strong, Catie Chi Olson, Kat Liu, Naomi Barke-Lake, and Sally and Dennis Brown. Christopher Long also dropped in from an adjacent table to socialize. In addition to Kevin, Kat, Naomi and Christopher, two other newcomers who connected with us during GA but were not able to attend our luncheon have since joined our mailing list: Erin Robbason and Matthew Anderson. Welcome to all!

Although she wasn't able to attend GA this year, current A/PIC Chair Jennifer Ryu was honored along with her partner Preston Moore amongst those who received their Preliminary Ministerial Fellowship this year during the Service of the Living Tradition, which was held on Friday night.

As a follow-up from the unfortunate racial incident during the Closing Ceremony at last year's GA, the UUA Board appointed a Special Review Commission who gave their report during Plenary I as well as a workshop (#4044). The Commission's final report to the Board was released in March 2006 and is posted online. The theme of this year's GA is "Toward Right Relations," with special emphasis on anti-racism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism. Many of the workshops and programs reflect this theme. Some of them are reported on the GA website (uua.org/ga/ga06):

- ◆ #2019 Building Intergenerational Community
- ◆ #2036 In Covenant - How Do We Work Together in Healthy Congregations?
- ◆ #2046 Dismantling Chaos Session #1: Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Workshop
- ◆ #2050 Right Relations: Congregations' Role in

Local and Larger Communities

- ◆ #2058 Why Here? Why Now? Why Us? The Urgency for White Ally Activism
- ◆ #3019 Class, Caste, Race, and Gender in Disasters from Katrina to Aceh
- ◆ #3055 Oppression Through the Lenses of Ableism and Racism
- ◆ #4023 Making Families Matter: Affirming and Nourishing our Faith Communities
- ◆ #4044 Race, Youth, and General Assembly: What We've Learned
- ◆ #4070 Affirming a Multicultural Unitarian Universalist Identity
- ◆ #4073 Building Inter-Racial, Multi-Cultural Religious Community
- ◆ #5006 Multiracial Families - A Growing Experience

Three A/PIC members were elected to the DRUUMM Steering Committee during Saturday's DRUUMM Annual Meeting. They were: Rev. Manish Mishra (as President), Catie Chi Olson (as Second Vice President) and Cathy Chang (as incumbent Treasurer.)

(Quiz — from page 4)

2. If you ask an unchurched friend or acquaintance to come to a church service with you, what is the statistical likelihood he/she will do so then or in the future?

- a. 7% b. 80% c. 90%

3. How much does a phone call from a church member within 72 hours of a visitor's first time at our church increase the likelihood that this person will return a second time?

- a. 30% b. 40% c. 50%

4. According to UUA research, what are the most important times on a Sunday in determining whether a visitor will return?

- a. Ten minutes prior to service b. Ten minutes after service c. Sermon time

5. According to UUA research, what is one of the biggest "turn-off" for second-time visitors?

- a. When they are greeted again as if they were a first-time visitor
 b. When a member they met the first time does not recognize and greet them
 c. When they are asked to join a committee
 d. When the offering basket is passed to them

(see Quiz, 6)

(Letter — from page 2)

UU movement and we simply cannot do everything everyone would like us to do. As such, under my presidency DRUUMM will work intentionally to ensure that its agenda and priorities are not driven by those outside of DRUUMM.

This means that those external to DRUUMM should be prepared to hear “No” as an answer to requests made of us. We will be responding to external requests as our self-defined priorities and as our base of volunteer time and energy will allow.

In order to ensure that DRUUMM hears necessary and urgent requests from the UUA in the intended vein, I have asked President Bill Sinkford and Moderator Gini Courter to flag such issues to me personally as being of high institutional priority and urgency. I will do my best to ensure our community responds accordingly.

Unflagged requests will be assumed to be of lesser urgency and priority, and also responded to accordingly.

Broadening Relationships of Accountability

We recognize that part of the reason why DRUUMM has been pressed in recent years to respond to external needs/requests is the very well-intentioned desire of majority culture UUs to be in accountable relationship with people of color.

This is a hopeful sign, and equally so is the development of DRUUMM’s newly formed partner organization, Allies for Racial Equality (ARE). The St. Louis GA proved for us in DRUUMM leadership that the work of education, awareness building, support, and accountability can be done much more effectively in alliance with majority culture UUs who have made a commitment to personal growth by working through issues of privilege and racial oppression.

While DRUUMM cannot single-handedly meet the institutional need for relationships of accountability, my hope is that ARE and DRUUMM’s collaboration will develop in such a way that ARE might take on some of the awareness building and accountability work that has, until now, been funneled exclusively

to DRUUMM and to UUA diversity consultants. If the St. Louis GA proves to be an accurate barometer, we have reason to be optimistic and hopeful in this regard.

Strengthening Our Institutional Structures

As you are aware, in recent years DRUUMM has moved towards a highly successful caucus structure that allows people of color to network and find support among those who share identity characteristics and similar experiences. We have been promoting this identity-based “small group ministry” while staying together within an umbrella community committed to the common goals, needs, and experiences of all UU people of color.

As the DRUUMM caucuses have developed and matured, it has become clear to us that we have outgrown the institutional structures created by our forefathers and mothers. A comprehensive overhaul of our by-laws is badly needed, one that will better factor-in the new caucus structures.

In addition, if DRUUMM is to truly deepen its sense of shared ministry, we need some way of internally ensuring that we are in accountable relationship with one another. It is not appropriate for one DRUUMM member to claim to be representing the whole, when such a mandate has not been granted, or if granted, the necessary ongoing communication with the broader DRUUMM community is not taking place. Our internal structures of accountability need to be clarified and strengthened.

These issues are, I believe, critical to the continued long-term success of DRUUMM. As such, in the upcoming months I will personally lead our efforts at major internal reorganization. Expect and look for the first of these changes to be introduced and discussed at the annual DRUUMM fall conference.

Developing Financial Self-Sufficiency

While DRUUMM and its membership are incredibly grateful for the financial support the UUA has given us, and continues to give, the fact remains that our overall funding from the institution has consistently been cut in recent years. With each successive year, DRUUMM has more members,

(see Letter, 8)

(Letter — from page 7)

more continental programs and events, and less and less UUA funding with which to do that work.

This is a complex topic, with significant implications. For me, the question that is most starkly raised is “Who is to fund the work of building, sustaining, and promoting a racially and culturally diverse Unitarian Universalism?”

If one follows and interprets the financial ledger of recent years, it would seem that the institutional message is that the few people of color that exist in our movement need to cough up more and more money themselves to do the diverse community building work that the majority of UUs (of all backgrounds) consistently indicate is a priority.

For us in DRUUMM this inconsistency is no longer tenable – it forces us into a position of constantly dwindling resources, financial insecurity, and perpetual dependence on an unstable funding source. As such, we are resolved to explore how we might successfully frame, and then launch, a DRUUMM capital campaign: we are committed to the goal of financial self-sufficiency for DRUUMM.

We are very new to the work of creating a capital campaign, and hope that we might find synergy between DRUUMM’s desire to develop an endowment and the next denominational capital campaign, which the Development Office is currently preparing. We have asked for the UUA’s help by inviting the Development Office to assist us as consultants in the development of a DRUUMM capital campaign; similarly, we would like to work closely with them in exploring how monies to support a racially diverse Unitarian Universalism might best be leveraged in the next UUA capital campaign.

The Rev. Danielle DiBona, DRUUMM First Vice-President, will be leading our fund-raising and capital campaign initiatives, working closely with DRUUMM Treasurer Cathy Chang. Please be in touch with them if you’d like to support these efforts.

Overcoming the Obstacles of History

A brief word about DRUUMM and our relationship to LUUNA and the Hispanic Ministers’ Caucus. The

fact that there have historically been strained relationships between DRUUMM and our Latino/a and Hispanic brothers and sisters is not news to anyone; it is a fact that has always deeply saddened and troubled me. I want to take this opportunity to be clear that this history of rift and division is not my history: it is a past of which I was not personally a part, and it is a past that I do not believe anyone within DRUUMM or without should cling to with covetousness or pride.

As Chair of the Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus I tried to run counter to our organizational history (and acrimony) by reaching out to my Latino/a and Hispanic counterparts in the development of joint programs. I will continue to do so as President of DRUUMM.

But that is not sufficient. I intend in the upcoming weeks to issue an open invitation to the leadership of LUUNA and the Hispanic Ministers’ Caucus to meet with the leadership of DRUUMM in the spirit of reconciliation. Long-nursed wounds need to be healed. Beyond healing, and in the best of all possible worlds, I hope that we might even articulate and eventually claim a vision of a culturally and racially diverse Unitarian Universalism that we could both support.

I believe that it is okay for both groups to work on such a vision in parallel, separately; but I dream, so earnestly, that our visions may also be worked on collaboratively, more deeply so than at present. In the coming weeks, I will extend this invitation and hope that my Latino/a and Hispanic brothers and sisters will respond positively.

A Bold and Brighter Future

The vision and goals outlined above are ambitious by any measure. They will require doing things differently, and they will require taking risks. I have faith that DRUUMM, that all of us, are up to the task.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you an opening vision for my presidency of DRUUMM. I know that this is the first of what will be many interactions between us, and I look forward to seeing, along with you, how the outlined dreams evolve, develop, and grow.

In love of, and commitment to, our faith,

Rev. Manish K Mishra

GA Reflections – the Many Blessings of Family

by Catie Chi Olson (White Bear UU Church, Minneapolis, MN)

How much I look forward to GA; to see A/PIC members, though I never get to spend as much time as I would like to with any one person, particularly Mark Watanabe this year.



Matt Kelley (seated) met with UUs of color after his Multiracial Family presentation at General Assembly.

This mother's heart was so proud of my daughter Emma Min-Gi. She carries the banner well on the cover of our GA report. She honored her commitment to be present at the DRUUMM booth and enjoyed meeting all my friends, though I could not help introducing her as my baby. With three other children – Jacob Min-Su, Samuel Min-Wu and Phoebe Min-Joung, Emma is often asked by me to be “the responsible one.” Sam, whose dark coloring pleased my *ajima* (Auntie), is more often perceived to be my transracial adoptee. When he was four, he told me “If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be so brown.” I feel called to write their names, because I am seldom seen as their mother.

And it is from that mother's heart that I feel a deep kinship with the white adopting parents. I am seldom seen as the daughter of my mother: a local artist once asked us how long we had been together (my whole life), how we met, etc., assuming that we were a lesbian couple, which embarrassed my mother. When I travel with Emma, most people made the same assumption about the two of us. Though I was

not embarrassed, I was saddened by not being seen accurately – always thinking of The Other's perception. Or lack of it.

There was amazing joy for me at GA – the first offerings of MultiRAC were well received. Matt Kelley exceeded my own expectations and fulfilled a vital role as someone analyzing the role and position of us people of color in our Unitarian Universalist

home. Jennifer Strong was a delightful help and a non-anxious presence, as well as Rev. Manish Mishra and Re. Leslie Takahashi-Morris. Thanks also to Joseph Santos-Lyons for his part in running the workshop following the GA Program Committee-sponsored talk. Without Vivien Hao's strategic help and vision, that money would not have been made available to MultiRAC. I deeply thank Rev. Wendy von Zirpolo, the chaplain of the emerging UU ARE (Allies for Racial Equity) group, and Rev. David Takahashi-Morris for their willingness to serve as chaplains for the ARE.

The other offering from MultiRAC was for an anti-bias, anti-oppression reading program called Families All Matter (FAM), developed by a local group call eMaze. It was a joy to share this in a UU setting, because the program is very dear to my heart. I believe FAM is ideal for fulfilling the revolutionary idea put forward at the final plenary – what will each of our congregations do in the work against racism and classism? The website has recently been out of commission; please contact me at catiechi@ix.netcom.com or by cell 612-807-6645.

GA Reflections — Drugs and Racism

by Jenni Chun-Lian Gaffney (CYF — Church of the Younger Fellowship)



Jenni with UU for Drug Policy Reform Banner

This year at GA, I went on the *Faithful Fools Street Retreat* for the first time. It's a program that came out of San Francisco whereby participants are encouraged to go out into the streets and interact with homeless people.

Having grown up a small town girl, I was terrified of walking the streets alone so I asked for someone to "shadow" me in case I got into trouble. I used the map provided me and found the soup kitchen that I was to go to for lunch. When I got there I found a building with resources including classes to help a person get a job, free childcare while attending those classes, and a safe place for mentally ill and drug addicted people to hang out, play pool and watch TV. A group of black people hang around outside, waiting for lunch, waiting for class or sleeping against the building in the shade. Once I realized that they were not a "gang" but individuals, I felt safe enough to ask my "shadow" to move on. It took me forever to work up the courage and think of something to initiate a conversation. "What do you do?" or "Where do you live?" seemed inappropriate for someone likely to be homeless and unemployed. Finally I scooted closer to a black man and asked, "Waiting for lunch?"

Derrick and I hit it off and I enjoyed getting to know

him. He was currently homeless and jobless but he was taking classes and was on his tenth day without marijuana. He told me that all the jobs required drug testing, so he had to be marijuana-free for 30 days before he could get an interview. I told him how unfair it was that he had to be drug-tested for a minimum-wage job while many folks who smoke pot daily never need to be subjected to drug testing in their high-paying jobs in my hometown of Los Alamos.

"Would anyone hire me? Look at this!" Derrick said, and pointed to his skin. "There's nothing out there for black men." Looking around I had to agree: 98% of those being served in that soup kitchen were black people who seemed as capable of a job as anyone else and the few white people were clearly mentally ill and probably incapable of most jobs. Before I left I asked Derrick how I could stay in touch with him. He gave me an email address he had just gotten the week before at the public library. I hope to stay in touch to make sure he gets back on his feet, or else invite him to come to live with us and get a job here.

Drugs and racism are intertwined, with drug policies often detrimental to racial minorities. The criminalizing of drugs in the United States started because of racism against Asians for their use of opium, later it expanded to target blacks and Hispanic. To find out more, please visit this website: www.erowid.org/plants/cannabis/cannabis_faql.shtml#2-1

To find more compelling statistics about drugs and racism, try these two websites:

www.csdp.org/news/news/profiling.htm

www.DrugWarFacts.org

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This list is low-volume, high-interest, ad-free, spam-free and virus-free. We send out regular announcements and share news articles and other resources.

GA Reflections — From an A/PI Youth

by Kevin Alan Mann (1st UU Church of San Diego, CA)

I am Kevin Alan Mann;

I am a 2nd generation Queer Filipino-American Earth-centered lover of words;

I am a brother, a son, a lover, grandson, and a multi-national product of public education;

I take alliance with the under-privileged, under-served, under-recognized and misunderstood;

I am a Diverse Revolutionary Multi-Cultural & Multi-Faithed Unitarian Universalist.

The 2006 Unitarian Universalist General Assembly changed my life.

In one word – “Wow”

In one phrase – “*Passionate-Emotion*”

In one article for the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus -
The Following:

GA 2006 was filled with joy, sadness, anger, tears, isolation, community and hope – all this at my first GA. I had only a few understandings and expectations provided by the brief orientation session from my delegation at the First UU Church of San Diego. I knew GA was big, I knew I would meet people from all over the nation, I knew I would learn and grow – these things I expected. However, what I did not expect, what I could not have known, was the emotional rollercoaster ride GA had waiting for me.

The ride began at the opening ceremonies in St. Louis, Missouri. Apparently it was a tradition for our faith to apologize/honor the local Native American populations in order to recognize that our founding fathers massacred 98% of their people and stole every piece of land for which this great nation of ours rests upon. A little *harsh* I know, but being from Philippine decent I know all too well the *harsh* reality of greed, manifest destiny, imperialism and the American way of life. The UUA GA committee summed up my feelings well during their acknowledgement of the ridiculousness for the exiled native nation to drive 4 hours from Oklahoma to St. Louis in order to accept our humble apology.

This notion of “Intentional Diversity” and its complexity and consequence of cultural appropriation is at the heart of my struggle with Unitarian Universalism. What does it mean to accept and affirm a diverse set of cultural belief systems? Where is the line between diversity as our badge of acceptance, and diversity as solace to our wealth of privilege as a collective faith association?

Does accepting all cultures equate to the wearing of traditional Indian bindi dots to show one’s cultural-ness? Is it

right for a sea of privileged faces to sing and dance ancient African songs without remotely understanding its meanings and cultural significance? Is it OK to wear traditional native Hawaiian costume and use the luau at our events and parties? Is it right to claim Buddhism, Yoga and other Eastern traditions as our own, when only a *sliver* of our people come from Asian decent?

For all these reasons and more I was ecstatic to stumble upon the Youth of Color caucus, DRUUMM YaYA (Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministry Youth and Young Adults). More than any space I had ever encountered, this was MY spiritual home. Here existed people who knew me, as I knew myself. Without explanation, labels, or rigid identity stereotypes. These youth shared in my collective struggles and in our shared collective identity we healed and grew in solidarity with one another’s strength.

They shared my pain,

When I was shown I did not belong;

They shared my frustration,

At a people who did not understand the difference between tolerance and acceptance;

They shared my disappointment,

At an association that felt “name tags” were the answer to racism;

And they shared my sadness,

At a system which privileges the wealthy and hinders the low-income,

At a system inaccessible to the differently-abled including the Deaf, and persons in wheelchairs,

At a system that prevents youth of color from being fully accepted into our faith tradition.

But most importantly, they shared my hope,

A Hope for our Unitarian Universalist faith community,
A Hope for challenging and dismantling privilege and oppression,

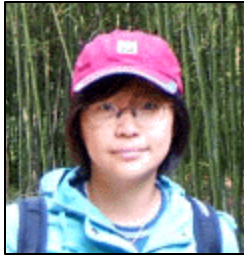
And of course... a deep desire and hope for genuine, honest and radical Love.

Thus my hope for the Unitarian Universalist Association is great and my belief in our liberal faith is even greater. The experience at General Assembly 2006 was invaluable to who I now am. I return an enhanced person, deeper in my commitment to Unitarian Universalism, and empowered to make the radical change necessary for our faith. I pledge to actively engage myself in the exhaustive process of anti-racism and anti-oppression work. I can only hope that more will answer the call and help create a genuine dynamic and affirming living faith tradition.

There is no doubt in my soul that ours is a faith that truly saves lives. *Isang Mahal - One Love*

Postcard From Abroad

by Yi Luo (Sydney Unitarian Church, Sydney, Australia)



I am living in Sydney as a PhD student in Computer Science. I have been here for more than four years. I was born and raised in a common family in Changsha, which is a city in south central China. My parents, like many of their generation, adopt atheism of Marxism, while keeping some Buddhism practice at home. My family is also close to a few Christian friends, who provided me some early education about Christianity.

I found out about the Sydney Unitarian Church (www.sydneyunitarianchurch.org) at the beginning of 2006. It is a liberal church, which serves not only Christians, but everyone who wants a spiritual life. Besides our regular services, we sing, enjoy music, read poems, chat and eat. We celebrate Orthodox Easter and Buddha's birthday. Our members are from many countries, including South Korea and North America. The church is part of Sydney's multicultural scene.

I believe that many Chinese are at heart UUs. China is on the way towards modernization and capitalization. But China should not misunderstand the west. There is something we should not forget. There is something both creditable and lovable, both western and eastern. I believe UU speaks out what the thing is. I hope I can help to spread the words through translating some of our UU pamphlets into Chinese!

Become an A/PIC Member!

A/PIC membership is open to all individuals who self-identify as partly or wholly Asian or Pacific Island in heritage or origin.

To become a member, simply state your intention by sending an email to steering@apiuu.org with the following information:

- ◆ Your full name
- ◆ Name of your congregation or UU organization with which you claim affiliation
- ◆ Your ethnic identity
- ◆ Contact information: mailing address and phone number
- ◆ A statement of intent (eg. I, _____, intend to be counted as a voting member of A/PIC.)

Membership privileges include:

- ◆ Voting
- ◆ Holding elected offices
- ◆ Accessibility to members' only section of our website
- ◆ Scholarships to conferences and meetings
- ◆ Subscription to members' only email list
- ◆ Receive minutes of all Steering Committee phone conferences
- ◆ Receive bi-annual updates on Membership Directory

And..... There's no membership dues!

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To: