

## **UUA Board of Trustees Report** **Identity-Based Ministries** For January 2008 Meeting

**Taquienna Boston**—Director

**Sofia Betancourt**—Director, Office of Racial & Ethnic Concerns

**Devorah Greenstein**—Program Coordinator for the Office of Accessibility Concerns

**Keith Kron**—Director, Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian & Transgender Concerns

**Simona Munson**—Program Coordinator for the Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian & Transgender Concerns

### **Office of Accessibility Concerns**

Much of Devorah Greenstein's work this winter is centered around two projects. The first is a large book project in collaboration with the Global Ministries Department of the United Methodist Church. The office is also working with a co-author to create an "accessibility manual" that will be part of each Methodist church's library, and will build on Devorah's UUA accessibility website to bring attitudinal accessibility to an equal footing with architectural accessibility. It is an exciting undertaking.

Devorah has also spent a considerable amount of time working on a curriculum and collecting and developing resources for a course to be co-taught with Rev. Sofia Betancourt at the Starr King School for the Ministry in January 2008. The course, "Combating Oppression", looks at oppression through the lenses of racism and ableism, and its goal is to create a "tool kit" of resources for UU seminarians—who will be our next generation of UU ministers—that will assist them in their anti-oppression work.

### **Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns**

To date, we have received 32 Beyond Categorical Thinking (BCT) requests, though one was postponed. In February, Keith will meet with the Ministerial Settlement Representatives in Phoenix to discuss the program. Keith will join Paula Cole Jones to discuss the interim year and preparing congregations for a multicultural world (with BCT as one tool) with the annual meeting of interim ministers in April, this year taking place in Houston. We are looking to conduct a training for new BCT facilitators in late spring, emphasizing the need for people of color and people with disabilities as new trainers. New materials for the BCT workshop and handouts are nearly completed.

We currently have 574 Welcoming Congregations in the United States.

### **Office of Racial and Ethnic Concerns**

During the last quarter Sofia Betancourt has focused primarily on furthering the Diversity of Ministry (DOMT) initiative through DOMT meetings, identifying congregations, congregational visits, and task force facilitation. She has also worked with the cultural misappropriations task force and several affiliate groups and former affiliate groups. Additionally she has worked with Rabbi Julia Watts Belser on the creation of a UU Study Guide to accompany *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* ([www.tracesofthetrade.org](http://www.tracesofthetrade.org)). This documentary follows ten descendants of the largest slave trading family in US history as they reconstruct the triangle trade, learning about the history of the slave trade and wrestling with personal and national history. The guide is now in final draft form and in the critical review process. It is expected to be published online in time for the film's February release.

The Assessment of Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color and Latina/o and Hispanic Descent task force met and selected three topics for study based on initial interview data: Symphony of Voices, Living your Unitarian Universalism Wherever You Go, and Deep Conversations. The Mosaic project is now—and will be for the next several months—conducting one-on-one interviews with as many youth and young adults as possible. Planning for a week-long summer '08 gathering of youth and young adults of color is beginning. I am in conversation with key Youth Office and Young Adult and Campus Ministry staff to insure that the DRUUMM YaYA Steering Committee and community has the staff support they need during the YACM restructuring process.

### **Office of the Identity-Based Ministries Director**

Taquiena Boston led a workshop on preparing the way for ministers of color and/or Latina/o/Hispanic identified ministers at the Joseph Priestley District Anti-Racism Conference in October 2007. A modified version of this workshop will be presented at the “Leading Congregations Into a Multiracial/Multicultural Future – Now Is the Time” Conference in San Jose, CA in February 2008 and at the 2008 General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The modified workshop will provide information about the Diversity of Ministry Initiative. Along with Taquiena Boston, presenters will include Sofia Betancourt, Director of Racial and Ethnic Concerns; Paula Cole Jones, JUUST Change Consultancy; and Keith Kron, Director of OBGLTC and the Beyond Categorical Thinking Program.

Lesley Murdock, UUA Washington Office Manager/Administrator, has joined the Identity-Based Ministries as a shared staff member with the Advocacy and Witness staff group. Lesley is the new staff contact person for the Building the World We Dream About welcoming congregation curriculum on race and ethnicity field test as well.

Forty-three of the 45 congregations selected for the **Building the World We Dream About** field test are still participating in the field test. Initial evaluations provide positive feedback on the experience. A uua.org list serve and website for field test facilitators is being developed. In addition, the survey evaluation forms for the field test will soon be available on Survey Monkey.

Taquiena Boston and Tracey Robinson-Harris participated in a consultation with the Commission on Appraisal about how to incorporate anti-oppression/anti-racism/multiculturalism into their current focus on the principles and purposes in October 2007.

Sofia Betancourt and Taquiena Boston met with the UUMA at their invitation in October to explore areas of cooperation and collaboration. They attended this meeting along with Beth Miller, Director of Ministry and Professional Leadership, and Harlan Limpert, Director of District Services.

## **Sofia Betancourt Travel Schedule**

### January

14 – 18	Berkeley, CA	Teaching an intercession course at Starr King School
22-24	Orlando, FL	IDBM Staff Meeting

### February

22 – 24	San Jose, CA	Now Is the Time Conference
28 – Mar 1	Raleigh, NC	Cultural Misappropriation Task Force

### March

5 – 8	San Francisco, CA	Ministers of Color retreat
30		Preaching at Church of the Restoration

## **T. Boston Travel Schedule**

### January

3-4	Boston, MA	Public Witness Team and Leadership Council Meetings
22-24	Orlando, FL	IDBM Staff Meeting

### February

5-6	Boston, MA	Public Witness Team and Leadership Council Meetings
8-9	Savannah, GA	Georgia Southern University Conference on Cross Cultural Counseling and Education
12	Boston, MA	Social Justice Strategic Plan Retreat
22-24	San Jose, CA	Now is the Time Conference
28 - Mar 2	Ghost Ranch, NM	District Executive retreat

### March

4-5	Boston, MA	Public Witness Team and Leadership Council Meetings
13-15	Boston, MA	JTW Transformation Committee spring meeting

## **D. Greenstein Travel Schedule**

### January

3-4	Boston, MA	Accessibility training for UUA staff
12-19	Berkeley, CA	Teaching “Combating Oppression” course at Starr King School for the Ministry
22-24	Orlando, FL	IDBM Staff Meeting

### February

21-24	San Jose, CA	“Now is the Time” anti-oppression conference
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### March

10-15	New York, NY	Meeting with co-author and editor of interfaith accessibility book project that is being written in collaboration with the United Methodist Church
28-30	St. Louis, MO	Organizational meeting with UU clergy and lay leaders with disabilities forming affinity group "Equal Access" (venue subject to change)

### **K. Kron Travel Schedule**

#### January

12-13	Winnipeg, MB	Beyond Categorical Thinking
17-20	Fort Lauderdale, FL	UU Men's Retreat
21-24	Orlando, FL	IDBM Staff Meeting
24-25	Phoenix, AZ	BCT conversation with Ministerial Settlement Reps
26-27	Youngstown, OH	Preaching, consultation

#### February

3	Marysville, WA	Preaching, Workshop
8-9	Savannah, GA	Multicultural Identity Conference
10	Statesboro, GA	Preaching
22-24	Denver, CO	Interweave Convocation
27-29	Tacoma, WA	UUMA-PNWD Ministers' Meeting
29-Mar 1	Tacoma, WA	PNWD District Conference

### March

2	Bainbridge Isl. WA	Beyond Categorical Thinking
8	Greenville, SC	WC & Storytelling Workshop
9	Spartanburg, SC	Preaching, Workshop
15-16	Modesto, CA	Preaching, Consultation
17-19	Boston, MA	Diversity of Ministry Meeting

### **L. Spencer Travel Schedule**

#### January

22-24	Orlando, FL	IDBM Staff Meeting
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#### February

8-11	Boston	Youth Ministry Implementation team meeting
22-24	San Jose, CA	Now is the Time conference

### March

5-8	Oakland, CA	Diverse Religious Professionals
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