

Mosaic Project Report

An Assessment of Unitarian Universalist Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color and Latina/o and Hispanic and Multiracial/Multiethnic descent

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Executive Summary

The Mosaic Project is an assessment project of the Identity-Based Ministries staff group, in cooperation with the Office of Youth Ministries, the Office of Young Adult Ministries, and other Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) staff, that focuses on identifying the Unitarian Universalist ministry needs of Youth and Young Adults of Color.



Method

The Mosaic Project used a number of strategies to gather information about Youth and Young Adults of Color and their congregations:

Appreciative Inquiry. An interview designed to elicit feedback from Youth and Young Adults of Color on three topics: the multicultural nature of Unitarian Universalist communities and its impact on participants' experiences; the ways in which participants bring their Unitarian Universalist values into the wider community; and participants' experiences with deep listening and sharing.

The Mosaic Project Summit. A gathering at which attendees identified the themes and focuses of an ideal ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color, what is needed to create the vision, and the roadblocks to achieving it.

Congregation Survey. A survey of ministers, religious educators, youth advisors, and others, that gathered congregations' racial and ethnic demographic information and their levels of involvement in addressing racism, oppression, and multiculturalism.

Youth and Young Adults of Color Survey. A survey of Youth and Young Adults of Color that focused on participants' experiences in youth groups, young adult and campus ministry groups, and continental and district events.

Observations and Other Data. Observations made at Unitarian Universalist-sponsored youth and young adult gatherings, plus other materials, surveys, and studies by UUA offices and committees, ministers, and individuals.

Assessment Findings

Participation rates of People of Color in congregations drop sharply in the youth and young adult age range. Most Youth and Young Adults of Color are isolated from other People of Color in their congregations. Most congregations have families with transracially adopted children.

Most congregations are only minimally involved in antiracism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism work.

Participation in People of Color community is a positive and important part of meeting the needs of Youth and Young Adults of Color. However, the opportunity to gather as a community occurs mostly at continental events.

Recommendations

To provide a ministry that meets the needs of Youth and Young Adults of Color, the UUA and Unitarian Universalist congregations, districts, and organizations must focus on four key areas:

- Identifying and dismantling racial and ethnic inequities in Unitarian Universalist communities and institutions
- Creating multicultural communities that encourage the full participation of all who seek a liberal religious home
- Supporting healthy racial identity development of all Unitarian Universalists, with particular focus on the specific needs of People of Color
- Nurturing and supporting People of Color communities at local, district, regional, and continental levels and helping Youth and Young Adults of Color connect to them

Our congregations, districts, and Association must be a part of the scaffolding that supports Youth and Young Adults both in their development of a healthy identity and through the transition from childhood to adulthood. The positive impact of creating such an environment can reach beyond the Youth and Young Adults of Color community into all ministry areas.