

**Report of UUA Trustees  
Ministerial Fellowship Committee  
March, 2010**

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) gathered at the UUA in Boston March 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, and the following report highlights the activities of the MFC that may be of particular interest to the UUA Board of Trustees.

**Summary of Candidates Seeking Preliminary Fellowship:**

We saw a total of 19 candidates (3 men and 16 women) with a wide range of ages.

The Committee grants the following Categories:

- I (“good to go!”)
- II (cleared for fellowship providing contingencies are met)
- III (individuals the MFC would like to see again following additional work on ministerial formation)
- IV (discouraging the candidate from further preparation for ministry)
- V (no potential for ministry)

The attached table summarizes the MFC decisions at our March 2010 meeting, but in summary we granted 15 I’s, no II’s or IV’s, 3 III’s, and 1 V.

**Overview:**

This report touches briefly on four areas: *MFC Firsts*; *Newsworthy*; *In Conversation* and *Scores from Panels*.

**Firsts:**

1. We were observed, during the first ½ of the weekend by Harlan Limpert, Vice President of Ministries and Congregational Support.
2. More than 50% of one panel members self-identified as *people of color*. On the other panel there was only one member who identified as a *person of color*, *Hispanic/Latino* or from a *historically marginalized community*. However in one session a person of color from the other panel was switched-in to balance representation.
3. Experienced a candidate “losing it” in the feedback part of the interview. Being unable to restore an environment of civility to enable the panel to complete the reading of its feedback, the panel provided the written script to be incorporated in a letter to be sent to the candidate at a later date. Frustration and sadness abounded. \*(Please see note at end of report)

### **Newsworthy:**

- 1) Sadly this was Beth Miller's last meeting with the MFC. Her years of service were recognized at our Saturday MFC dinner.
- 2) Six new folks were with the MFC for these meetings. Our candidate liaisons were Jacqueline Duhart and Jennifer Hamlin-Navias
- 3) Thursday's education module was by our two psychologists, Tony Stringer and PD Wadler . The topic was a review of each of the instruments used by the Career Assessment Centers we use. We learned the value these instruments provide, but also a host of problems they raises, so we are now at least aware of their limitations [particularly as predictors of future behavior].
- 4) A full day has been added to the MFC meeting in September. It will be an experiential and interactive day in AR/AO/MC facilitated by the *Visions, Inc.* of Roxbury, MA. The MFC's big question is: "Can they help us in evaluating AR/AO/MC competency of our candidates"?
- 5) Five *ministers of color* were either moved to inactive status or removed from fellowship either by inactivity or by their request.\*\* (Please see note at end of report)

### **In Discussion:**

- The UUA Administration has opened a dialog on the possibility of changing the MFC meetings for anticipated savings of about \$45,000 [of the \$600,000 estimated "cost of credentialing"] The concept is to have just two interviewing weekends, one in the fall and one in the spring, both Boston based. Three panels would operate concurrently. This would require adding an additional psychologist. This would make 3 panels of 15 as opposed to the current 2 panels of 7. It would not involve adding an extra board member and it would be a step away from thinking there could be representation from every identity group on every panel. It will be important to maintain identity representation on the overall MFC and at least one person of color and one psychologist on each panel, but impossible to have one community minister, one UUMA member, one MRE, one young adult, one board member, 30% lay folks, etc. on every panel. Panels will be smaller so this is not feasible. This possibility would be implemented in 2011 or 2012 after further study and discussion.
- Reflecting on the various instruments used in the career assessment process, possibly restructuring some for MFC needs. The *Process Working Group* would like to see some Emotional Intelligence material in future assessments.
- How wide a circle harmed by an offender's action do you consult when you consider applications for reinstatement of fellowship. [Greater detail can be

provided to those having interest in the topic, but we can assure that a rich and wide-ranging conversation is underway.] Petitioner’s rights, victim’s rights, and the rights of those in the congregation setting are in the mix.

| SCHOOL                  | MFC DECISION/ CATEGORY |    |          |    |          |           |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----|----------|----|----------|-----------|
|                         | I                      | II | III      | IV | V        | Total     |
| Starr King              | 4                      |    |          |    |          | 4         |
| Meadville Lombard       | 4                      |    | 2        |    |          | 6         |
| Harvard                 |                        |    |          |    |          |           |
| Andover Newton          | 1                      |    |          |    | 1        | 2         |
| Other - non UU          | 6                      |    | 1        |    |          | 7         |
| <b>Total candidates</b> | <b>15</b>              |    | <b>3</b> |    | <b>1</b> | <b>19</b> |

\*The candidate who “lost it” has reportedly sent a letter of apology for their behavior

\*\*One minister of color was moved from inactive to active. This individual is a Community Minister with whom communication has been intermittent.