

May 2, 2007

Rev. Dr. Lee Barker
President
Meadville Lombard Theological School
5701 S. Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637

Dear Lee:

Thank you for coming to Boston last week for the most recent meeting of the Panel on Theological Education, and for your patience. We look forward to your full partnership in helping to craft a new direction and to strengthen our Association's commitment to excellence in ministry.

As you know, the Board of Trustees empowered the Panel on Theological Education to do a thorough review of how and where the Theological Trust funds go. We hope to sharpen our focus and to be able to offer greater resources to Unitarian Universalist seminarians. Please review the statement below that represents the recommendations made in response to the motion unanimously passed by the Board of Trustees.

We understand that the allocations recommended to the Board of Trustees at their upcoming June 2007 meeting represent a reduction. The Panel on Theological Education remains optimistic that we can continue to work together with our UU theological schools to ultimately provide our future ministerial leadership with greater support for ministerial formation, development and excellence.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me either by phone at 1-508-757-2708 x104 or by email at bmerritt@firstunitarian.com.

Sincerely,

Barbara Merritt
Chair
Panel on Theological Education
Unitarian Universalist Association

N.B. Also sent to Starr King

STATEMENT FROM THE UUA PANEL ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

At its April, 2007, meeting, the UUA Board of Trustees passed the following motion:

“VOTED: that the Board of Trustees directs the Panel on Theological Education to present recommendations to the Board of Trustees that would make the funding of ministerial formation, development, and excellence the first priority for the use of the Panel’s resources, rather than the current singular focus on support for theological schools. The Board asks that the Panel present a timeline for the preparation of these recommendations to the Board for its June 2007 meeting.

Trustees asked that it be noted that this motion was adopted unanimously.”

The UUA’s Panel on Theological Education was advised of this motion at its meeting on April 23-24, 2007. Reflecting its responsibility to exercise due diligence and good stewardship in keeping with the Board’s directive, the Panel is recommending for the Board’s action at its June, 2007, meeting that the allocation of the Theological Trust funds for FYI 2008 be reduced by 10% to Starr King School for the Ministry and Meadville Lombard Theological School.

If approved, the Panel will use those funds during FY 2008 for a consultative process to clearly articulate a vision for the ongoing use of Theological Trust funds for Unitarian Universalist ministerial formation, development and excellence. Significant conversations will be held with a broad range of critical stakeholders including theological schools, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock, the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), its CENTER committee and other professional organizations, students, congregational and District leaders, and non-UU organizations such as the Alban Institute, other denominations, etc.

The result of this process will be recommendations for further action at the UUA Board of Trustees’ June 2008 meeting in keeping with the timeline called for in the motion. POTE anticipates a three-year graduated reduction to eliminate funding for the general operating costs for Starr King and Meadville Lombard. The Panel looks forward to the full participation of both schools in addressing the challenges for ministerial formation, development, and excellence not only for their own seminarians, but for the 65% - 70% of Unitarian Universalist seminarians schooled elsewhere and for the continuing development of all of our clergy.

Proposed	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
SKSM:	225,000	150,000	75,000	0
Meadville Lombard:	225,000	150,000	75,000	0
HDS:	30,000			
ANTS:	15,000			
Internship Clearinghouse:	25,000			
Panel Expenses:	8,000			
UU Scholars:	52,472			
Renaissance Program:	10,000			
<u>Excellence in Ministry:</u>	<u>60,000</u>			
Total:	\$650,472			