

TO: Religious Education Credentialing Committee
FROM: Credentialed Observer
RE: April 2008 Report

Let me open by saying what an honor it's been to serve on this committee

By my observation, the RECC is staying true to the mission at hand. I am especially impressed by the measures taken to work toward accomplishing the AR/AO responsibilities by including an educational piece into the committee's time together and assigning an observer to the process each day.

My responsibilities had been made clear from the start, even before arriving, through instruction from Beth Williams. However, to reintegrate my concern, and upon looking through past notes, in *October 13, 2004* it was determined that "The credentialed observer will not receive any minutes from previous meetings due to the confidential information contained in them." As years pass, there will be more procedures or policies that may go overlooked due to short institutional memory (which we all suffer from). I suggest that the RECC keep all process decisions together and review them prior to meeting.

The RECC is a gathering of religious folk, and as such its openings and closings served to remind all present that they serve a greater good. By working, praying and eating together over the course of four days, they gave themselves the gift of thoughtfulness developed through relationship. Their agenda was well thought through. Day one was spent on business; day two on AR/AO presentation; day three on interviews; day four on matters arising. I was particularly impressed by the good use of the committee's time; e.g. instead of dismissing early when the agenda for the day was accomplished, they stayed on to deal with an issue from "matters arising".

The RECC dealt with several tough issues, some yet to be resolved, with good grace and respect. I was particularly impressed by their ear to "the field", making sure they kept to their mission while serving the religious educators who so long for recognition. I often heard awareness of "fairness", particularly in reference to questions asked or time allotted for each candidate. This was very unexpected and appreciated.

It was decided that Beth will have the authority to preview portfolios and that the committee will not be privy to any changes made prior to final reading. The necessity for this was made clear during preparation prior to interviewing the second candidate. Folks were sent 2 portfolios and many made comparisons between to the two, making note of deletions or additions.

RECC members are very conscious of boundaries, continually checking to see "whose responsibility is it", e.g. the director, the UUA Board, the office of finance, LREDA and more. They do not do this work alone!

And lastly, though all committee members know this already, they have a gem in Gail. Prior to this gathering I had not had the opportunity or privilege to work with her, and was unaware of her high level of facilitation skill. The RECC is blessed by her gentle manner, thoughtful approach and ability to keep to the task-at-hand. Did the committee members notice how often she thanked them? Now it is my turn

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Cartwright, CRE