

## **UUA April 2017 Board Leadership Development Report**

I, Elandria Williams, was charged by Jim Key to help move the Leadership Development conversation started by Tim and the rest of the board. There had already been previous conversations held by the nominating and appointments committee. At the October 2016 board retreat there were some constituent groups or offices named that should definitely be talked too and involved in the process. There were also multiple suggestions for how we could move forward. I decided to begin by interviewing the appointments committee, the nominating committee and the youth and young adult office. I entered into conversation with the Office of Multicultural Growth and Witness and was intending on talking to the youth observers when the crises hit. The conversations with the youth observers and the Office of Multicultural Growth and Witness will take place in the next month. All of the spoken to committees and offices including Multicultural Growth and Witness are excited to speak to each other both at GA and online. This conversation about leadership development directly relates to the conversations we are having at a board and national level about staffing, hiring and leadership and hopefully this conversation will be included in those discussions as well. I am pasting below the notes from the interviews that I conducted for complete transparency and to also say that my mother is currently on the Nominating Committee so there is no confusion.

### ***Next Steps:***

1. Talk with the youth observers and the Multicultural Growth and Witness Office along with anyone else that the board thinks are missing
2. Compile the interviews and present in report form back to all parties interviewed, the board and other necessary people/organizations
3. Have a meal meeting with all needed parties
4. Determine follow-up steps with timeline and plan

### ***Interview Notes***

#### Nominating Committee Interview- Joe Cherry and Elnora Williams

1. What do you see as the most pressing challenging facing the nom com in meeting your leadership needs?

don't know everyone and need to figure out a way to make the web wider and there might be someone that we don't know

ministers of our churches and DRE's/LRE's - they are going to have to branch out and name potential leaders and it has to come more top of the church on the local level and we may not know who leaders are

what does your heart need to grow - what calls you and what do you want to do and not have the skills to do

2. What is going well?

we are in transition and don't think that in the last go round and we did not get all the candidates that we could have tapped into and some of the applications we reviewed were repeats of other times and we are wondering what is it going to take

nominations is a go and get - we are trying to be more active in recruitment and mostly been a passive instead of going out and saying who you know. It needs to be more intentional. Now we are accepting self nominations at GA, nominations mentioned by regional and local staff, and congregational leadership during their affirming their membership

these are three levels of finding people and we are hoping that this will make a difference

Internal question- what makes your heart sing? Met with Bart and business people two days early and Bart gave a list of people and we were pretty intentional about young adults and other people of color without tokenizing.

3. What is your current relationship with DRUUMM, BLUU, and other identity based groups?

Joe-we are aware of them and we try to balance geography, church size and member of the alphabet. We have had liaisons in the past and Danielle and Elnora communicated with DRUUMM in the other groups. In the last year we were so fixated on the new process but now they are on the list and that is our intentional process.

4. Who are the connectors that you reach out to naturally?

there were already a hub of people and we were intentional about reaching out to people that didn't exist. Interweave, DRUUMM was already happening but now youth and young adults. Maybe Aisha might be connected and this year I talked to 42 people around what makes a natural leader that makes sense.

5. Do you have a leadership pipeline already?

No and we think the leadership pipeline is it and we think of nominating committee has first tier national leadership committee and Board is 2nd or 3rd tier and there is follow-through and follow-up and trying to get new people in that you don't know

When we were looking for a treasurer we had to talk to the treasurer to persuade him to be groomed to the position and we encouraged that and he found Lucia.

6. What suggestions do you all have or anything else you would like to share with me?

Might be nice to have a leadership weekend for people that are going to all serve on committees and welcome to national service and that might be helpful.

no unspoken but would be helpful if in the local church cluster you should work on semi local things and things that involve more than one church. I would like for someone to put in an application and interview them and you are a little light and this is what would you should do.

The nominations are coming in from lay people and we are balancing that and until Amanda came on Joe was the only minister and we get more lay applicants and nominating applicants.

2 years ago we hatched a plan so now the two committees - dropbox is what we use and I didn't get all the applications and so we need a new plan.

Idea is to go to a 16 month process so that people in January when your congregation certifies we can look at one or two people for leadership. In April the staff is supposed to bubble up names and I heard from Joanna that you are a good leader. Would you consider to applying. Instead of GA to November it would be 16 months. A lay person wants to do national and think about what skills do you want to develop in your volunteer work that would help with professional and much more about leadership development.

We are in church to grow as people and anytime you can - learned to do spreadsheets and started as a volunteer and if we talk to people what you want to do and how does that work in your faith development and how do you want that to

Info for the board

even though this is a difficult time i appreciate the work that you are doing and no one signed up for this moment and don't want us to feel that we are off by ourselves and people willing to approach us and support pastoral. 2 or 3 month interim I have no thoughts and have heard ridiculous possibilities and if there is anyone to put forth it would be good to get something done. Main job is to be pastoral in the moment and that their voices are heard and we need a listener right now and someone who can encourage us to reach into our best selves and the system has to change and we are not going to get anywhere by being mean to each other.

If we can't restore our relationships with each other we are lost.

We have had long conversations about this and in the Finding Our Way Home meeting i stood up with Aisha and Kim Johnson and said we are the leadership of these two committees and we need you to find people who you can recommend for growth and if someone has a better smarter idea.

#### Appointment Committee Interview - Leadership Development

Marcia and Kimberly

1. What do you see as the most pressing challenging facing the appointments committee in meeting your leadership needs?

Marcia- all of these financial committees and we get tons of applicants and people don't know anything about finances and they require knowledge and backgrounds. It is hard to get any diversity in those applicants and that is our biggest challenge.

Kimberly - opportunities around what we can do to get where people they need to be, a different way of thinking, a different kind of outreach. Some is getting the word out and people will say I never knew about the appointments committee except I have sent it to the place where they will see it. Something between us sending it out and they receive it.

Marcia- getting people to where they need to be, there are less and less people that are applying except for their particular congregation which makes it hard for us to know how to get them in the right place or if they are appropriate. We used to have district boards and now we don't have that as an option.

Silos of power- Tim, Lucia and others on the board want to make a unanimous decision but the decision needs to be on the appointments level. There are assumptions about who makes

decisions which is interesting because it is helpful to have input and recruiting people and understanding what is needed and maybe it is a miscommunication and not a very clear hashing out. Lucia thinks that this is the process because of Larry Ladd. I had three candidates for two positions and he did not give me any input and he did correct.

Specific committee needs -do you have a rubric for each of those - listing out unspoken requirements that might not be there

retirement committee- all committee was white and they were clear and concerned but as a committee had a conversation about what they could do in the future and not sure whose concern it is - once a committee is selected who holds them accountable

applicants- a ton of ministers- a lot of people who are ministers or seminary - 2 to 1 or 3 to 1

2. What is going well?

Kimberly- I think the coordination with Tim from the board is going very well and Marcia agrees.

Lucia is very helpful with some complications because she has very recently told us about an opening on the investment committee and she and Tim Brennan have strong candidates until the three of them come to an unanimous decision about who they want.

Kimberly- We met with the health committee, retirement and set in on part of the board meeting in January and understanding the needs of those committees and humanizing the whole process and getting big picture perspective.

We have more than one type of committee with specific requirements- election committee- we have applicants but don't meet the criteria. We get a number of applicants but not always.

All committee have a charge

We are doing reasonably well in terms of demographics-

3. What is your current relationship with DRUUMM, BLUU, and other identity based groups?

they are apart of a group that we intentionally reach out to

one of us is responsible to reach out to the stakeholder groups

my experience is that it is very one sided and I will contact them with something happens and it is not that I am on the phone and talking to a leader there

My connection has been with the followup of the DPA and I ask Scott Taylor and I got more results from contacting the retired District Executive and past District President

Youth and Young Adult Office- we have met with Bart Frost a number of time and Courtney with Blue Boat Home - helpful and we do have young applicants and not complicated

4. Who are the connectors that you reach out to naturally?

Marcia- Nancy Bowen and Scott Taylor and Victor who is currently DPA president and Hope Johnson

Kimberly- that is partly about who the individual people have a relationship with. Andrea Lerner and Jude Geiger - president of the UUMA

we have individual relationships but not a pool

5. Do you have a leadership pipeline already?

Marcia- The pipeline used to be the DPA and that is not helpful, don't think so  
seminaries

applications are only good for two years and we started a process for every two years and that  
is a place we could make choices about who we remind and don't remind  
the applications are kept in a dropbox and you can make notes on them and I make that note on  
that person's applications but we don't have a systematic way of doing that

Marcia- I have personally done this but we don't have a system in place for that. If there was a  
system that could help with this we would definitely use it.

6. What suggestions do you all have or anything else you would like to share with me?

Kimberly- the cases that check twelve different things and there is not a person that can call  
them up and help them discern what they are interested in.

Kimberley

I am worried that there will be no one to take up positions in the next 5 years.

lack of opportunity for leadership development and advancement

#### Youth and Young Adult Office Interview Leadership Development

1. What do you see as the most pressing challenges facing the office in meeting your leadership  
needs?

we all hold different portfolios and one of the major challenges from where I sit is that national  
committees are not the most healthy place that can support youth and young adults and youth  
and young adults of color. Seminary is great and it is also really expensive and we don't have  
formal lay leadership programs and we have the credentialing program for LREs which is 25-30  
year olds. Summer seminary can help but it is a capacity issue. This is not just about parish  
ministry anymore but is a broader lens.

Elizabeth- one is we have a cultural problem that we think that training is the same as  
leadership formation and it is not the same as getting high touch coaching feedback and honest  
people that can walk with you thru your demons and we put people through a three hour thing  
and they are ready. Questions around culture that we do training of trainers for OWL and  
nothing else and we let the regions do it and we let religious educators decide whether to do it  
or not. You can really see this with youth and young adults of color. There is a much stronger in  
Metro NY or Denver because India and them or there. Where you don't have champions it  
doesn't exist.

Formal power structures are still very much functioning and we need someone to do a thing and  
it is about who we can think of. We have made strides in having data and a matching list. Not  
that there should be parcel nominations but it should be collaborating with equitable approach-  
age and experiences.

Governance roles- what do we do with the issue around leadership development in the  
governance structure when it is asking people to work without pay. BLUU has done phenomenal  
leadership in this moment around work but not credentials and we are going to pay people doing

the pastoral care regardless and we have to grapple with that piece. Honestly that is part of why I struggle because I know how much uncompensated time it is.

Jennica- mentorship and real direct connection with elders and that multigenerational linkage and Youth Ministry Roundtable has shifted focus to balance leadership development with spiritual development. I will say that it seems like nationally and within the regions often there is a step by step process to develop more leadership roles and then youth bridge and thank goodness for Annie's and bridge makers and if you are passionate you are going to have to wait 5-7 years before you come back as an advisor and in the congregational life staff there is not a lot of support for young adult leadership development or participating in a congregation or for places with district boards.

Annie- some things I have noticed for emerging adults they are a youth leader and the young adults that are selected are 25+ and I am 19 and there is a leadership drop off and young adult at GA team we decided to get a freshman in college and she struggled to follow-through on her responsibilities. The whole bridging issue that we have and continue to have. I have not thought a ton about leadership per se and one thing I am taking part is that oh shit we really need leadership and in my work I have mostly thought about how do I provide more opportunities for young adult to plug into spiritual life- meaning makers, bridges and more important to connect them to spiritual opportunities. I echo a lot of what Elizabeth has said and there has been a marked increase in folks of color in the GA leadership because of the relationships and programs she has built. Our YA GA team is rocking and the folks of color on that team are Thrive folks.

Each region supports youth ministry in different ways- some don't do conferences but they do support regions (don't provide places for young people to come together.)  
young adult - trying to start a YA ministry roundtable  
pacific western - works closely with Eric Bliss and he has four districts has staff too  
the shift to regionalization has changed this

Elizabeth- How much are we pretending like the structure is working and we are working around gaps. I reach out to people and I have too and that is how it works and it doesn't work if we don't and there are uneven skills and I see a YA of color on Facebook and I reach out to them. That is not our collective approach because that is the way the system is supposed to work

Annie- Campus ministry- reach out and YA- only does two national programs

Bart- money issues and even to fairly compensate regional organizers would require

## 2. What is going well?

Annie- GA team is going well and good trajectory for how we seek and select our leadership team for YA

Jennica- the roundtable has done a really good webinar series based on the competencies around what adult leadership development for what youth ministry is

Elizabeth- there is no certainty that people have leadership or spiritual development opportunities at the local level and trying to fill the gaps and trying to figure out the go arounds- national things, connect them with regional staff that can make it happen. Some of the culture shift like an increase in spiritual practices both in summer seminary and meaning makers, doing some of the things like send cards to each youth and young adult and that pushes back on top down program spiritual flourishing without attention to aesthetics and the emotional experience.

Bart - visibility and connections with regional staff and in the regions that do support youth ministry the pipelining of that as well as a willingness to try new things and we instituted a scholarship process in putting the money where it needs to go. What I hope to go well in the future is a shifting of resources and a lot of funding is in summer seminary and some of the money should go somewhere else. Distinct want to connect with religious professionals and ministers and here is how you can support them and work on their leadership.

Jennica- hard to think about what is going well- leadership development curriculum - bring well to life- trying to get feedback besides one or two people - figure out some way to get better connections to get feedback on how people are using it

Annie- campus ministry leadership development - it is not going well but I do have small groups that include student leaders and adult leaders and the folks that come to them helps but doesn't get consistent attendance and two students are crafting a curriculum but the folks that are wiring the curriculum need a lot of support and they are not trained to do that

Youth Ministry Roundtable- the historic lack of trust has been overcome and build better relationships

3. What is your current relationship with the nominating and appointments committee?

Liaoning with the nominating committee and appointments committee is Bart's role and my relationship with the appointments committee is 100 times better

nominating committee- didn't hear back from the chair and wasn't until this year that I was able to connect and sent folks their way but there is some structural issues with the nominating committee- recruitment and seek outside feedback. My personal experience as a chair of another committee and they didn't want outside feedback or listen and the appointments committee is more accessible and flexible and they are looking more for recruitment.

Nominating committee mostly focuses on evaluation. There is some stuff that I have concerns around and a larger structural conversation around time requirements and if we are requiring a minimum of 3 years to serve and it doesn't work for youth and the likelihood of something to happen is unhealthy for the committee and I put it close to 100%. My personal experience watching this happen over and over again.

I want to build relationships and support them in their work.

Elizabeth- i would love to see people list their priorities and what they would put up top is recruitment and what I would love to see is teaching other people how to do leadership development well and there is capacity in those committees and if they developed a tight framework, practices that would help UU adults do leadership development of younger folks and if they spent their time training each other about that I am excited about that. The adults that want to recruit folks coming in just don't have the skills to do leadership development.

Bart - that causes harm and a lot of things are fearful

4. What is your current relationship with DRUUMM, BLUU, and other identity based groups?

Elizabeth is primary connector with DRUUMM and BLU

Bart - ARE doesn't have the capacity or willingness to work with youth and young adults

Interweave doesn't exist and there is an LGBTQ task force

TRUST - Sarah Lambert is trying to build a relationships and that is something that we are looking forward to but it has been on hold with trust issues

Equal Access- Suzanne

Annie- I have no relationships with any identity groups

new formations of white networks that are newer - Nora, - unofficial - strategy for later - official and unofficial

as confusing about what is the best way for folks - how can we do this that doesn't tap into capacity even more and would be better to not hold that connection and asking them to have other connections and who liasoning

Jennica- youth caucus staff and GA- participating in a DRUUMM worship and asking Equal Access to help our youth caucus staff to understand accessibility to create programming and always seem like one off requests and not a lot of deep relationship building

5. Who are the connectors that you reach out to naturally?

Elizabeth- champions around youth and young adults of color- white ministers or white DREs and there are also religious professionals of color and they will do everything that needs to happen to get that young person conversation - it is a lot of capacity - talking with the family, - Shannon Harper, India, Matthew Johnson, Mitra, and there is a list of people who Bart- we really try to connect with as many folks that we know that will benefit or we can provide support too and that goes from across regional staff ministers, program alumni, campus ministers, constituent matters list, Annie's YA leaders list. I think part of it too is that we know when our personal relationships are fruitful and not and in our system it is not always clear between the boundaries and connections between regional staff or our office. Rare for regional staff people to reach out to us and generally we are the ones that do the reaching out.

6. Do you have a leadership pipeline already?

Jennie created a resource - how do I do all of these things- 4 year leadership track for youth and Bart can send that to me. I

Annie - I feel like the leadership pipeline has shifted - leadership begets leadership and I shift depending upon where folks are coming from

7. What suggestions do you all have or anything else you would like to share with me?

Elizabeth- Taquiena - underdeveloped and underexposed and with leadership development with young folks and folks of color and with folks whose networks don't have as many resources I have watched a lot of people this happen too. Some folks know how to intuit and buffer and put that with real leadership development. I don't feel like we have a shared understanding about how to give feedback to people letting people crash and burn - how do I talk to other people because they want the face but that is it.

Jennica- Youth Caucus staff- the more qualified, adept, strong, capable these youth leaders are they are like they got it and we don't need to support them and they harder they fall. We have set them up without bolstering them. Really trying to help youth connect with local networks while they are there and encourage them to develop them the entire year. I don't know how to build buttresses around national leaders because they need a support network around their congregation.

Annie- thanks and this has been thought provoking

Bart- thanks and any time you want to chat and more than happy to talk about this.