

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CREDENTIALING COMMITTEE**

Annual Report 2018-2019

Submitted by the Rev. Dr. Randolph W.B. Becker, Chair

The Religious Education Credentialing Committee (RECC) is a bylaw mandated committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association having jurisdiction over the Religious Education Credentialing Program. The RECC sets professional standards, determines evaluative practices, evaluates candidates, grants credentialed status as warranted, and is concerned with the profession of religious education in the Unitarian Universalist movement.

### **RECC Members**

- Rev. Dr. Randolph Becker, Minister of Religious Education, Chair, began term 2010, leaving end of General Assembly, 2019
- Rev. Emily Gage, Parish Minister, began 2018
- Peter Kandis, lay representative, began 2014
- Dr. Elias Ortega-Aponte, lay representative, began 2015, resigned in April 2019 to become President of Meadville/Lombard
- Kathleen Carpenter, LREDA representative, CRE, began 2013, leaving at the end of General Assembly 2019
- Sara Lewis, Master Level Credentialed Educator, chair elect for 2019+, began 2017
- Art Nava, lay representative, began 2017
- Jamaine Cripe, Credential Religious Educator Observer, for the Interview meeting only

Ex-Officio Members, UUA Staff

- Pat Kahn, Professional Development Program Manager, CRE-Master Level
- Aastha Poudel, Professional Development Assistant, serving as recording secretary
- Sarah Lammert, Co-director of Ministries and Faith Development, Executive Secretary to the RECC

### **PROCESS**

The RECC meets in person, usually in April, to conduct the business of the committee and to interview and evaluate candidates for credentials. The business portions of those meetings are open to the public and a portion of them are made available live-streamed upon prior request. This year we had no in-person attendance but did have several people attending the streaming time.

The committee also meets in the fall on a Zoom conference call for committee business. In addition, an executive committee periodically does business by email. Several other sub-committees carried out work during the year: Equivalency Team evaluates requests for substitutions to the recommended resources and models; Core-question Team develops the core of questions that are asked of all candidates at the Credential level.

(Candidates for the Associate Credential are not seen nor evaluated by the committee, but rather are evaluated by the Professional Development Programs Manager.)

Each of the candidates to be interviewed prepares and submits a portfolio of work in completion of the requirements and supporting documents (recommendations, self-evaluations, etc.) which the committee reads in preparation for the interview. Two committee members, first and second readers, take the lead in developing questions beyond the core ones asked of all credential level candidates. The interview, lasting an hour, includes a time of worship led by the candidate, a presentation on some aspect of their work chosen by them, and then about 40 minutes of questions and answers.

The committee evaluates the submitted materials and the in-person presentations and interview to determine whether to: grant the credential sought; grant the credential sought with specific suggestion for further work; grant the credential sought contingent on submission of additional items (work-products, recommendations, etc.), not grant the credential sought with encouragement to re-interview; not grant the credential sought.

The committee also commits at least two hours of its annual in-person meeting to some exploration of issues of Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, and Multiculturalism as it applies to the work of the committee and religious education in our movement. We also begin and end each day with a time of worship.

In general, during the week of interviews, approximately 10 hours of committee business is also conducted, including the integration of new members into the life of the committee, analysis of the efficacy of the elements of the program, relationship to the UUA's structure and bylaws, and other matters effecting the committee and candidates.

## **CONTENT**

### Business

During our 2018-2019 year, we:

- approved the work of the Resource List Update Team and created models for on-going maintenance of the list
- focused our ARAOMC time on a discussion of issues from the UUA's *Common Read* and on the engagement of local religious educators to address issues of systemic racism
- further developed a new concurrent path for candidates who wish to pursue Credential and Master level at the same time, including developing a model for how interviews/evaluations will take place. The new path will be available beginning in 2020.
- Reviewed our interview procedures to assure that candidates of differing abilities will feel welcomed and respected
- Reviewed various elements of the Program, including what "notable readings" means in a world of blogs; the retention of intellectual property rights to all submitted materials by the candidate; the understanding of the "technology lens" requirement; privacy and

security of committee and candidate materials.

- Reviewed the number and location of candidates expected in the coming years and Began to truly respect the geographic diversity of our movement by moving our meetings, in rotation, among the five Regions of the UUA:
  - o The 2019 meeting of the committee for the purpose of candidate interviews and other business was expanded by one day because of an increased number of candidates and was held in San Diego, California, March 31-April 6; the 2020 meeting will be in the Southern Region (Florida).

### Interviews

We interviewed nine candidates for credentials, all for Credential Level. We were able to grant the credential sought to seven of the nine at Credential Level; we encouraged both the unsuccessful candidates to consider re-applying for interviews with us in the future.

We continue to be impressed by the quality and depth of those candidates who receive their credentials; amazingly professional leadership is being developed in our congregations!

### **APPRECIATIONS**

As always, we are thankful for the support of the Unitarian Universalist Association and its commitment to professional religious education leadership, and to the member congregations who support and fund our work.

Our work could not be done as professionally, efficiently, competently, nor enjoyably without the efforts of Pat Kahn and Aastha Poudel – thank you.

Plus, the respect and openness of our committee members who work together in search of consensus and understanding, makes this committee a shining example of how committees can function beyond ego and toward shared values and vision. We are enriched by each other and by the marvelous candidates it is our pleasure to interview.