



Report to the UUSC & UUA Boards of Trustees, March 2015

UUCSJ is now at the halfway point of our original five year plan! Here are some highlights from the last quarter and a glimpse into our program priorities for the rest of the year.

Youth and Young Adults: Justice programming for high school youth and for young adults (college age and up) is one of our core priorities. This year's highlights include:

Global Justice Internships

Last summer we had 15 young adult internships in justice organizations in the US and abroad, up from nine placements the prior year. This summer we will have capacity for 23 placements, and have already received 37 applications. As part of our contribution to Commit2Respond, we have three internship placements with climate justice projects or organizations. We continue to strengthen our support and reflection framework for these placements, to help our interns process their summer immersion through the lens of their faith and through study of different social change models. We also assign chaplains from among our Program Leaders to offer support and encouragement through the summer.

Activate! Youth Justice Trainings

We have renamed our youth justice trainings "Activate!" and have four programs scheduled for this coming summer: two weeks in Boston, one week each in New Orleans and Tucson, and one day in Portland, OR just prior to General Assembly. We are particularly excited about our new Tucson program, partnering with BorderLinks and No More Deaths to give our youth a first-hand experience of the perils – and the justice issues – surrounding immigration.

Youth Service Learning

We have found a great deal of interest from church youth groups in our new program to Brooklyn for Hurricane Sandy Recovery; we currently have a group traveling with us in April, and two others scheduled for the summer. We are also promoting a youth option for an experiential border justice program to Arizona/Mexico.

Climate Justice Training

As part of our contribution to Commit2Respond, we are offering a training this coming summer for young adults who are ready to move from being activists to organizers around climate justice. This training is designed to infuse new members and energy into an existing Young Adult Climate Justice Network that was founded by Ministry for Earth. We also expect to devote staff resources to the support of this network on an ongoing basis, and to repeat the training annually if there is sufficient demand.

Experiential Learning Journeys:

In FY2014 we ran only about 50% of our scheduled programs due to low enrollment; this year, with a larger roster of scheduled programs, we are on track to run about 65% of them – not as close as we'd like to be to 100%, but getting closer! We continue to run programs to the Mexico/Arizona desert, to India with the UUA Holdeen India Program and to Haiti with MPP. In the first half of this year we began a discernment process with our Haiti partners and with UUSC staff to re-imagine our Haiti program now that the eco-villages are near completion.

We will pilot a new program in April with the Lummi Nation in Washington State, focused on climate justice and solidarity with First Nations. And for the first time this year we partnered with Standing on the Side of Love to offer a clergy Border Witness Program in October, in which 24 ministers joined us to deepen their own ministry around immigration justice. Based on this success, we plan to offer two clergy/seminarian programs next year.

Young Adult Internships

Last summer we had 15 young adult internships in justice organizations in the US and abroad. This summer we will have capacity for 24 placements, and have already received 37 applications. We continue to strengthen our support and reflection framework for these placements, offering weekly infusions of meditations and readings to invite reflection as the interns engage in the hands-on work of their host organization; and we assign chaplains from among our Program Leaders to offer support and encouragement through the summer.

Study Resources

We have strengthened our Study Guide by adding place-specific resources and reflections for Haiti, India, the Border Witness program and our new First Nations program with the Lummi nation. We also developed new stand-alone immigration justice resources for use by the clergy who joined us for the October Border Witness, and are working on similar stand-alone resources for climate justice and beyond, for use in congregations.

Staff changes

In January we were very pleased to welcome Hannah Hafter as our Senior Associate for Service Learning Programs. For the past four years Hannah has worked for the Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center (SEAHEC) as their Border/Bi-national Health Program Coordinator. Fluent in Spanish, she has been a core volunteer with No More Deaths in Tucson for seven years, providing direct aid to migrants in the desert, leading groups such as those sent by CSJ, and overseeing the research and release of two groundbreaking reports on human rights violations. She has conducted leadership and advocacy trainings in diverse communities, and brings to CSJ a terrific grounding in popular education, service learning programs and curriculum development. She was raised as a UU in the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, VT.