



BLACK LIVES of UU

Summary of Funding Allocation from the Advance Provided by the Unitarian
Universalist Association to Black Lives of UU

September 30, 2016

In May 2016, Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA, notified the Organizing Collective of Black Lives of UU that the Association would assist with (1) bringing more Black Unitarian Universalists to General Assembly 2016 and (2) convening Black Unitarian Universalists at a stand-alone conference within the next year. It was our understanding from the beginning that what became known as the \$60,000 grant was a guarantee of support based on the assumption that the UUA would be reimbursed from the Saturday morning special offering at GA for BLUU.

In his notification letter, Rev. Morales asked that the Organizing Collective provide a brief summarization of the how the grant funds were used thus far. That is the purpose of this document.

In total, prior to General Assembly and the special offering, BLUU received a total of \$63,300 via the UUA:

\$10,000	James Reeb Fund
10,000	Anonymous Donor
3,300	Program Development Group Grant
30,000	UUA Grant/Advance

<u>10,000</u>	UUA Grant/Advance
\$63,300	Total

The total of the special Saturday offering exceeded \$100,000. The UUA wrote a check to Unity Church-Unitarian for the total amount raised less the \$40,000 advanced above.

Along with our fiscal agent Unity Church-Unitarian we coordinated a report detailing our expenses using the following categories:

- ★ GA Program: speakers, rental equipment, supplies, musicians, consultants, etc.
- ★ GA Healing/Worship Space: supplies, refreshments, rental equipment, staffing.
- ★ GA Outreach: Informing Black UUs about the ability to attend GA with the help of BLUU
- ★ GA Attendees: registration, housing, transportation, incidentals
- ★ Organizing: Staff compensation, professional fees
- ★ Outreach: Work to publicize Black Lives of UU & expand our reach into the lives of more Black UUs
- ★ Travel: transportation housing and meals for musicians, staff and members of the Organizing Collective
- ★ Miscellaneous: incidental costs

The parts of the Unity report that are most relevant for the purposes of this summary are the GA Attendee expenses and the Travel Expenses.

The total amount spent on GA Attendee expenses was \$30,823.69. The total amount spent on Travel was \$15,792.56. The total for GA Attendee expense and Travel is \$46,616.25 — an amount that exceeds the \$40,000 provided by the UUA in advance of GA by more than \$6,000.

We initially thought that covering the cost of registration alone would have been sufficient to encourage greater participation by Black Unitarian Universalists at GA this year, but we quickly found out that was not the case. There were Black UUs who wanted to attend, but made it clear that in addition to having their registration comped, they also needed partial or full support for housing, travel, and meals. This is the reason we went back to the UUA and requested an additional \$10,000 over and above the \$30,000 check it had cut in May.

What we accomplished specifically at GA 2016:

- Designed and executed a four-part track of 10.5 hours (this includes one program slot that was broken into three groups)
- raised over \$100,000 to support Black Lives work within our UUA
- provided the first ever explicitly Black Healing Space at General Assembly
- led closing worship at General Assembly
- provided intentional access to GA for Black Unitarian Universalists, many for the first time, including meeting registration, housing and transportation needs for 61 Black UUs

In addition to the extensive work at GA led by the Organizing Collective we also:

- Held a leadership retreat in Denver to do the planning for General Assembly
- Created the BlackLivesUU.com website
- Launched the Support for Black Organizers initiative
- Joined Standing on the Side of Love in planning, marketing and executing the #ReviveLove Tour
- Joined All Souls NYC in celebrating the three founders of the Black Lives Matter Network
- Created and moderated the closed Explicitly Black UU Facebook group
- Appeared on Church of the Larger Fellowship's The VUU podcast each month promoting our efforts and the needs of the Movement for Black Lives
- Added two new members to the Organizing Collective - Dr. Takiyah Nur Amin and Dr. Royce James

- Announced the first Black Lives of UU Convening, scheduled for March 9-12, 2017 in New Orleans, LA

We want to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported Black Lives of UU programming at GA:

- Taquiena Boston responded affirmatively when the newly-formed BLUU Organizing Collective needed support to plan for the Black Lives Track and Closing Worship at GA. Multicultural Growth and Witness got us to Boston for our planning meeting last August, and through an anonymous donor, supported our GA programming.
- Susan Leslie was essential to spreading the word about scholarship support to Black UUs getting to the Movement for Black Lives Convening in Cleveland July 24-26, 2015. It was at the Convening that the seeds of BLUU took root.
- Rev. Mary Katherine Morn graciously offered to take fund-raising off our to-do list regarding GA by encouraging us to look for funds already within the Association and facilitated our access to the James Reeb Fund.
- Lesley Murdoch supported our transfer of monies from the James Reeb Fund to Unity Church-Unitarian.
- Jan Sneegas was key to the success of BLUU programming at GA from start to finish. From logistics and scheduling assistance to budgeting and troubleshooting, Jan was very much our ace!
- Moderator Jim Key and the UUA Board provided the platform upon which we were able to raise money at GA.
- Rev. Jan Eller-Isaacs and the staff of Unity Church-Unitarian -- particularly Michelle Hill and Song Thao -- were crucial in facilitating the processing of checks that made a tremendous difference with our ability to focus on the needs of Black UUs coming to General Assembly.
- We would also like to give special thanks to Rev. Rob Eller-Issacs for his support of our work as an Organizing Collective. The importance of his exemplary allyship, focused on trusting our vision and doing all he could to help us accomplish our goals cannot be overstated.

We have one concern that we raise: By publicizing the \$60,000 allocated as a “grant”, the UUA left many people with the impression that BLUU had been given

that much even before the \$100,000 was raised at GA itself. Some of the work we are doing now includes clarifying that we don't actually have \$160,000 to work with. As we look ahead, we would like to work jointly with our UUA to craft messaging that is as clear as possible so that donors and other partners understand our situation and are inspired to contribute accordingly.

As requested, we are providing the following links to videos created by our BLUU videographer, Adja Gildersleve and the recording of the UUA GA 2016 Closing Ceremony:

- [Black Lives of UU - General Assembly 2016 Recap/Reflections](#)
- [Black Lives of UU - Convening 2017 Promo](#)
- [Closing Ceremony - General Assembly 2016](#)

By October 15, we will have photographs and captions that Stewardship and Development can use in support of BLUU fundraising efforts.

We are grateful for our partnership with Rev. Morales and with our UUA that made the breakthroughs at General Assembly possible. We know, for example, that we are going to need considerable support to have the BLUU Convening come together as powerfully as we are imagining.

We look forward to further collaboration in the days, months, and years ahead.

For any questions regarding this report, please contact Rev. Carlton Elliott Smith via email: carlton@blacklivesuu or by phone at 703.577.0799.