

Lifespan Faith Development
UUA Board of Trustees Report
January 2009

Office of the Director

Judith A. Frediani, Director, Lifespan Faith Development & Tapestry of Faith
Adrienne Ross, Tapestry of Faith Project Manager, Office Manager
Alicia LeBlanc, LFD Administrative Assistant

Liberal Religious Educators Association Fall Conference

Judith Frediani, Susan Lawrence, Aisha Hauser, Mara Dowdall, Gail Forsyth-Vail and Jessica York attended the LREDA Fall Conference in Albuquerque, NM in October. Rebecca Parker was the keynote speaker and the theme – Building a Multigenerational Faith – was of particular interest to us in LFD. We processed this theme through workshops, worship, and small group ministry, and took the opportunity to meet with Program Consultants, the LREDA Integrity Team and the gathering of First Time Attendees. Staff also presented on the multigenerational features of Tapestry of Faith. At Sunday night's banquet, we were pleased to present the 2008 **Angus H. MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education** to Dr. Helen Bishop.

Staff Update

We were very pleased to welcome religious educator **Gail Forsyth-Vail** to the staff of Lifespan Faith Development as Adult Programs Director November 3. It is hard to believe she has been here only a matter of weeks. See her report below.

We are also very pleased to have **Rev. Dr. Monica Cummings** join the staff of Lifespan Faith Development as Program Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color. Monica began half-time while she concludes her current congregational ministry, but she will begin full-time in February. Please see the Youth Office report below for more.

Children's Programs

Aisha Hauser

Children and Families Program Director

Since joining the UUA staff in June, I concentrated on writing and editing Tapestry of Faith curricula. Susan Lawrence and I co-authored Wonderful Welcome (grades K-1) and co-edited Windows and Mirrors (grades 4-5).

I have found attending monthly LREDA New Jersey cluster productive because I engage in discussions about Tapestry of Faith and how it is actually used in congregations. The feedback has been very positive. In addition, I have provided consultation through email and phone communication with religious educators and district staff about Tapestry and other faith development issues. See the complete Tapestry status report below.

Susan Lawrence, Managing Editor

I have focused on developmental editing and preparation for publication of two Tapestry of Faith children's curricula, *Windows and Mirrors* (grades 4/5) (with Aisha Hauser) and

Faithful Journeys (grades 2/3). By February, we will have seven children's programs available online including Amazing Grace (grade 6).

I was privileged to attend my first LREDA Fall Conference in October and exchange ideas with members of a key Tapestry of Faith constituency. It was invigorating to hear first-hand the excitement about programs we are producing.

As more curricula enter the Tapestry of Faith pipeline and our volume of manuscripts grows, I am working with our Project and Office Manager, Adrienne Ross, to centralize and manage our electronic and hard copy resources from author applications to core stories and activity ideas to our evolving style guide.

Children's Curricula

A total of 25 congregations have field tested the three Living Faith curricula released in January, 2008: *Creating Home* (Grades K/1) by Jessica York and Christy Olson, *Moral Tales* (Grades 2/3) by Alice Anacheka-Nasemann and Elisa Pearmain, and *Toolbox of Faith* (Grades 4/5) by Kate Tweedie Covey (formerly Erslev).

Currently, eight congregations are field testing the Seeking Truth curriculum, *Wonderful Welcome* (Grades K/1), co-written by Aisha Hauser and Susan Lawrence, which was posted online in September.

In January and February, 2009, congregations will field-test two more Seeking Truth children's curricula: *Faithful Journeys* (Grades 2/3) by Alice Anacheka-Nasemann and Lynn Ungar and *Windows and Mirrors* (Grades 4/5) by Gabrielle Farrell, Natalie Fenimore and Jenice View. *Faithful Journeys* highlights stories about historical and contemporary Unitarian Universalists to strengthen children's faith identity and sense of *agency* to connect with others empathetically and live out our Unitarian Universalist Principles. *Windows and Mirrors*, as the title suggests, guides children to look closely both *inward* at themselves and *outward* at the communities to which they belong, especially their Unitarian Universalist congregations. The program leads them to bring critical and compassionate lenses to their lives, guiding them to find affiliation with others who may at first seem unlike themselves; and helping them move out from "me" to "we."

We are in the final phases of selecting authors for Grades K/1, 2/3 and 4/5 programs in the Beloved Community series.

Youth Programs

Jessica York

Youth Programs Director

October was a month full of conferences. In addition to the LREDA Fall conference, I attended "Building Bridges Instead of Barriers", a Town Hall Interfaith Dialogue held in Atlanta. Andrew Young, Eboo Patel, and Laurie Patton formed the panel for this discussion sponsored by 100 People of Faith. I was in Atlanta to attend the Emory University Candler School of Theology's Fall Conference "Re-Envisioning Leadership for a Hope Filled Future". The conference involved keynote presentations by author and child advocate Marian Wright Edelman, Eboo Patel of the Interfaith Youth Core, and Reverend Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals. At least ten UUs were present. Working as a group, we attended different workshops and shared our experiences with each other. I attended two workshops that will be useful to me as I

developmentally edit a program on character development for youth. One workshop, presented by Morehouse College, offered model I hope to use in a youth curriculum – a model for nurturing ethical leadership created by Dr. Walter Earl Fluker.

While at the conference, I met with members of the Interfaith Youth Core and staff of The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center to explore supporting each other's work. I will be presenting a workshop on Tapestry of Faith at RE Week at The Mountain in July 2009.

I appreciate the Association's policy of providing a paid day off for staff to work for the elections in November. I took the opportunity to work as a poll watcher. Thank you.

Adult Curricula

Gail Forsyth-Vail

Adult Programs Director

I have had a lot to learn since beginning my work at the UUA on November 3. Staff members have been gracious and helpful as I learned about systems and resources that support my adult curriculum work. I was pleased to be able to attend a staff group retreat in November, where I had a chance to get to know both the people and the portfolios of all members of the staff group.

I inherited four *Tapestry of Faith* manuscripts in process and have been supporting and advising authors of those manuscripts and editing the work. I updated a list of available resources for adult programming, including both Beacon Press material and UUA-developed material, and have already found the resource list useful in answering questions from congregations. I also previewed and critiqued a manuscript for a Skinner House publication.

Office of Youth Ministries

Mara Dowdall, Interim Director

Monica Cummings, Program Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color

Jeremie Giacoia, Program Associate for Youth Ministry

India McKnight, Program Associate for Youth Ministry

Sarah Prager, Office Administrator

YOUTH MINISTRY IMPLEMENTATION

October Working Group Meeting

The Youth Ministry Working Group met October 3-5, 2008 in Waltham, MA. This was the first meeting for the new members selected over the summer. In addition to familiarizing new members with the process thus far, the bulk of the weekend was spent examining and discussing a synthesis document compiled by Youth Ministry Office staff to serve as a starting point for conversation and a basis for recommendations. This document was based on the findings of the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth, the recommendations of the Summit, the results of the Roundtable on Theological

Education and the goals and values identified at past Youth Ministry Working Group meetings. These discussions will give the group a solid grounding as it enters its second meeting and moves toward making concrete recommendations for the April Board Meeting.

Also discussed in October was the age-range for Youth Ministry. There was general agreement that the high-end of the range should be brought down to 18 from 20, although details and a final decision were not made. That conversation will be continued at the next meeting. The report from this meeting is available at:

<http://www.uua.org/members/youth/youthministries/workinggroup/index.shtml>

In December, Working Group youth member Beatriz Bianco, who was chosen to join the group last summer and who had been unable to attend the October meeting, stepped down citing scheduling and time-commitment conflicts. The next meeting of the Youth Ministry Working Group is scheduled for January 9-10, 2009 at the UUA. The final meeting will take place the weekend of February 27, 2009 in the Boston area.

Ministry to Youth of Color: Staff Update

In exciting news, Rev. Dr. Monica Cummings has joined the Youth Ministry Office staff team as Program Associate for Ministry to Youth and Young Adults of Color. The hiring team for this position was greatly impressed with Monica, and we are delighted that she is bringing her many gifts to this vital new ministry. Monica's position is officially housed in the Youth Ministry Office of the LFD staff group, but her work also straddles the Young Adult Office and she is co-supervised by Nancy DiGiovanni, Acting Young Adult Ministries Co-Director. Monica, who began her tenure at the beginning of November, is currently working half-time, as she wraps up her ministry at the First UU Church of Los Angeles. She will begin full-time at the beginning of February. Since starting, Monica has attended the DRUUMM Retreat in her new capacity, has begun working with the leadership of DRUUMM YaYA (Youth and Young Adults), and has been networking with other youth and young adults of color.

Social Justice Roundtable

The Social Justice Roundtable is being scheduled for the late spring of 2009. With the support/input of Judith Frediani and Mara Dowdall, lead coordinators Jessica York and India McKnight will be inviting a pair of youth and adult facilitators as well as a team of 12 to 15 participants to discuss social justice and service opportunities for UU youth. This group will make recommendations for youth at the congregational, district and national levels.

Collaboration with Young Adult Ministries

The YMO staff continues to meet monthly with the Office of Young Adult Ministries. In addition, Mara Dowdall, Nancy DiGiovanni, Erik Kesting, Judith Frediani, and Tracey Robinson-Harris are meeting to explore youth and young adult staffing structures for next year within the LFD staff group. This team plans to have a proposal in time for the FY 2010 budget cycle.

Communication

The inaugural edition of “Youth Ministries Updates,” a newsletter of the Youth Ministry Office, was distributed electronically in early December. The office will continue to provide these monthly updates for at least the remainder of the interim year. Newsletters can be found at www.uua.org/youth.

ONGOING SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

General Assembly/UU University

Members of the YMO staff and Will Delphia, one of the Youth Caucus deans, participated in the General Assembly UU University program planning meeting on November 17–19, 2008. During the meeting, Mara Dowdall, India McKnight, Jeremie Giacoia and Will Delphia facilitated a conversation with the UUU coordinators and deans around the inclusion of youth in the planning, facilitation and attendance of UU University Programming. The deans of each of the six UU Tracks were able to brainstorm possible means of multigenerational inclusion in their particular programming. As the Program Associate responsible for GA, India will maintain ongoing communication with the UUU planners to provide assistance and to share this opportunity with the larger youth community.

The Youth Caucus staff application deadline was extended from December 1 to December 15 to allow for additional applications. Staff will be selected from among the applicants by the end of January. Youth Caucus staff will attend GA Pre-site in early April, when they will have a chance to meet with the GA Planning Committee, bond with one another, and plan for this year’s Youth Caucus.

The Chrysalis Program

This fall, there were four separate Chrysalis Trainings held. Basic Advisor Trainings were held in both the St. Lawrence District and the Pacific Central District. A Spirituality Development Conference was held in the Metro New York District, and a Chaplain Training was sponsored by the Southwest Conference. Three additional trainings are scheduled for the month of February: The Heartland District will be hosting a Spirituality Conference, the Ohio-Meadville District will host a Basic Advisor Training, and a Leadership Development Conference will be held in the Clara Barton District. Due to time constraints and the possible re-envisioning of the Chrysalis program, the YMO has decided not to host a “Training of Trainers” this fiscal year, but is planning to compile the necessary information and recommendations for the incoming staff so that such training could readily be hosted next year.

**Lifespan Faith Development
Travel Schedules
November – March 2008**

Judith A. Frediani

January 9-10	Youth Ministry Working Group	Boston, MA
February 27-29	Youth Ministry Working Group	Location TBD
April 9	Ballou Channing RE Roundtable	BCD
April 24-25	Youth Ministry Social Justice Roundtable	Boston area

Aisha Hauser (based in North Haledon, NJ)

January 26-29	LFD Staff Group Meetings	Boston, MA
March 5-8	Religious Professionals of Color Retreat	Atlanta, GA

Jessica York (based in Birmingham, AL)

November 16-20	LFD Staff Group Meetings	Boston, MA
January 19-23	LFD Staff Group Meetings	Boston, MA
March 5-8	Religious Professionals of Color Retreat	Atlanta, GA

Monica Cummings (based in Kenosha, WI)

February 2-13	Meetings in Boston	Boston, MA
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Mara Dowdall

January 9-10	Youth Ministry Working Group	Boston, MA
February 27-29	Youth Ministry Working Group	Location TBD
April 3-5	General Assembly Pre-site	Salt Lake City, UT

Jeremie Giacoia

January 9-10	Youth Ministry Working Group	Boston, MA
February 27-29	Youth Ministry Working Group	Location TBD

India McKnight

January 9-10	Youth Ministry Working Group	Boston, MA
February 27-29	Youth Ministry Working Group	Location TBD
April 3-5	General Assembly Pre-site	Salt Lake City, UT

Sarah Prager

January 9-10	Youth Ministry Working Group	Boston, MA
February 27-29	Youth Ministry Working Group	Location TBD