



## Report from the UU Women's Federation: GA 2010

*... advancing justice for women and girls and promoting their spiritual growth*

In this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Unitarian Universalist Association the UU Women's Federation is also looking forward to 2013, when we will celebrate our organization's own Golden Anniversary. That year will also mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Roe v Wade, the landmark Supreme Court decision on abortion that is all the more important in the face of continued threats to reproductive rights: among them this year's proposed federal funding cuts to Planned Parenthood and Title X. In March the UUWF Board joined the UUA in issuing a statement in protest of this proposal.

The surveys we did during our 2004 restructuring revealed that reproductive rights remain a priority issue among UU women, and as indicated in our statement, the UUWF has a long history of activism in this area. In light of this it is especially appropriate that during this GA week we will present our [Ministry to Women Award](#) to Rev. Debra Haffner, recognizing her for her long-time and outstanding work in the areas of sexual education, reproductive justice and sexual abuse healing in support of women and girls. We are honoring her in particular for her leadership as Co-founder and Executive Director of the [Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing](#), an organization that has become a leading resource for faith leaders, congregations, denominational bodies and sexual and reproductive health organizations who seek comprehensive information.

Our [two workshops during this GA](#) focus on the first of three goals our Board has selected as top priorities over the next three years: **1 - strengthening our connections with and support of women's groups in local congregations.** One workshop, "How UU Women Gather in 21st Century Congregations," highlights several different congregationally-based women's groups, their commonalities and their diversity, and how they deepen their connections to their religious communities.

Our second GA program slot is a look at "Justice Work for and by Women," an opportunity for attendees to learn about UU projects in the U.S. that affect positive change in the lives of women and girls, funded through UUWF's [Equity and Justice Grants program](#). We've also invited the [International Convocation of UU Women](#) to share with us accounts of similar work they support abroad. One outcome we hope for is the encouragement of more of these projects in congregations throughout our Association.

Our board will also use GA week for work on the second three-year priority: **2 - to be intentional in promoting diversity in our leadership: racial and ethnic, age, geographic, sexual orientation, and theological.** We have openings on two of our grants panels and one on our [Board of Trustees](#). We have been exploring best practices, including that of the UUA Nominating Committee, as we fill these crucial volunteer roles, and we are also looking at our nominations process in general. While in Charlotte we will be interviewing prospective volunteers, both for the positions currently available and to establish connections with individuals who may be interested in serving the UUWF in the future.

We are very pleased with the work we've already done on the third of our three-year priorities: **3 – clarifying and streamlining the application process for all three of our funding programs (our [Margaret Fuller](#) and [Equity and Justice](#) grants programs and our [Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley Scholarship Program](#)).**

Taking as a template the application guidelines posted on the UUA website for individuals seeking grants from the UU Funding Program, we have modified our applications and criteria so that they are more parallel for the three programs and include guidelines, restrictions, grant award sizes, how to apply (including budget forms), and history and background information on each of the funding programs. This includes sample projects that have received funding, those demonstrating what we consider to be best fit and best outcomes. The updated forms were posted on our website in early January, well in advance for the March 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for 2011 applications for all three funding programs.

During the summer, we plan to re-evaluate the applications received this year, to see how successful the new applications were in soliciting the specific information our grants panels need to select recipients of funding. If necessary, we'll revise the applications and post them on our website in the fall.

### **Leadership Transition**

The year was also one of leadership transition for the UUWF. Several of our dedicated volunteers completed their current terms of service with us, and we thank them for their hard work and for the energy, talent, and wisdom they so generously shared with us. Rotating off our board were President Linda Lu Burciaga, Newburyport, MA, who previously served as Equity and Justice Grants Panel chair; Vice President/Development Catherine Onyemelukwe, Westport, MA; and Vice President/Funding Programs Luz Bravo-Gleicher. Also completing their service with us in 2010 were Elizabeth Fisher, Richmond, CA, and Rev. Leslie Takahashi Morris, Pleasant Hill, CA, a member of our Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley Scholarship Panel.

Our farewells were paired with the words of welcome we extend to those who joined us in our UUWF work in 2010-11. New to our board are Kirstie Lewis, Ph.D., Bellevue, WA, Vice President/Funding Programs and Rev. Terry Davis, Atlanta, GA, Vice President/ Development.

Joining our funding panels were Betsy Darr, San Francisco, CA, and Janet Nortrom, Milwaukee, WI, to our Margaret Fuller Panel; Jacqueline Duhart, El Cerrito, CA and Juliana Keen, St. Paul, MN, to our Equity and Justice Panel; and Jodi Theran, El Cerrito, CA, to our Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley Scholarship Panel.

None of the UUWF's work would be possible without the continued support of members and friends, whose generous gifts of time and money were gratefully acknowledged in our 2010 Annual Report. I am sure you will be familiar with many of the names listed there. If yours is not, I encourage you to stop by our booth this week or visit us at [www.uuwf.org](http://www.uuwf.org), where you can become part of the circle of UU women and men working to advance justice for women and girls and promote their spiritual growth.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Marti Keller".

Rev. Marti Keller

President