



## Report to the UUA Board of Trustees April 2012

Just prior to your January meeting, we shared with you a press release announcing that Jessica Halperin had joined the UUA's Multicultural and Witness staffing group as the UUWF Clara Barton Intern for Women's Issues under a new title, Program Associate for Women's Issues.

This UUA staff position was established in 2002 by UUWF's \$200,000 donation and assistance to the UUA in raising a matching amount for the permanent endowment that funds it. In Summer 2010, staffing of the position was temporarily suspended as the UUA revisioned its approach to public policy work. The new internship position moves the position's emphasis from direct advocacy at the federal level to providing resources and opportunities for congregations and their leaders to advocate for issues specific to women.

I was pleased to represent the UUWF board in working closely with the Multicultural and Witness staffing group to help revision the internship position. Since the redefined position was filled in January the board and I have followed that up by working closely with Jessica, supporting her work with UUWF's resources. In addition to making space available to her in our newsletter, we have also arranged for her to post action alerts and other information on our Facebook page, website and list serv. We are also working on ways to connect her with the appropriate women in UUWF-affiliated women's groups in our local congregations.

And as I write this we have just responded to Jessica's invitation to UUWF to sign onto a UUA letter to the House of Representatives' Committee on the Judiciary, asking committee members to oppose the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act.

We look forward to a continued close working relationship with those staffing this internship position, which came into existence because of the passion UUWF members and supporters have for justice and compassion issues unique to women and girls.

### **UUWF at GA 2012**

UUWF has finalized its plans for participation in this year's special immigration justice General Assembly. We will sponsor two events in Phoenix:

- ***UUWF Justice Ingathering*** – a private event to which you and other UUA leadership will be invited – will feature Dr. Cecilia Rosales, Associate Professor and Director of Phoenix Programs for the University of Arizona's Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Publish Wealth. Dr. Rosales will speak about her work on reproductive justice and compassion issues among vulnerable women and girls on the U.S.-Mexico border.

- ***Circles of Reflection: Engaging Women in Justice Work.*** This workshop will focus on using Small Group Ministry to increase the participation of women in immigration, racial and economic justice issues as spiritual practice. Joining me in facilitating this workshop will be Rev. Helen Zidowecki, President of the UU Small Group Ministries Network.

We are also aligning our Equity and Justice and Margaret Fuller Grant Programs with the upcoming General Assembly's theme by commissioning 2012 grant projects that are related to immigrant justice or that celebrate the cultural traditions of immigrant or indigenous women and girls. We plan to announce these at GA, and if you know of any projects similar to those described below, we'd appreciate hearing from you.

Potential commissioned Equity and Justice projects include UU justice initiatives with a direct, positive impact on the lives of immigrant and/or indigenous women and girls. This could be a local congregation working in partnership with a reproductive health clinic serving the unique needs of immigrant women and girls, or with literacy or life skills projects serving the same populations.

Our Margaret Fuller grants support work in UU religious feminisms. We'll be looking for 2012 Margaret Fuller projects that deepen our appreciation and understanding of woman-centered religious beliefs or spiritual practices of immigrant and indigenous cultures.

In addition to enhancing UUWF participation in the 2012 GA theme, both of the above programs are rooted in UUWF mission: advancing justice for women and girls and promoting their spiritual growth.

We look forward to seeing you all in Phoenix and send our best wishes to you for a successful and productive meeting.

Faithfully,



Rev. Marti Keller  
President