

President's Report to the UUA Board of Trustees January 16, 2018

President's Schedule:

Over the next few months, I will travel to India and Nepal to visit with Holdeen India partners and to attend the International Council of Unitarian Universalists (ICUU) gathering in Kathmandu. In addition, I expect to be at the Senior Ministers of Large UU Churches (SMOLUUC) gathering, Finding Our Way Home (annual gathering of religious professionals of color) and visiting a number of congregations to lead worship.

Highlights for the Quarter:

Some quick highlights of changes and initiatives happening at the UUA

Annual Program Fund:

I am delighted to share that our income from the Annual Program Fund, the contributions that congregations make to the UUA, is up significantly from this time last year, with an increase in both amounts contributed and pledged. Further details are below:

APF Update

- FY18 APF Income is \$204,811 ahead of income received YTD in FY17 (7% increase from last year)
- \$870,823 more in APF income pledged this year vs last year (49 more pledges received year to date). This is a 20% increase over last year.

We believe these increases are due to several factors:

- New President (this expected "bump" was budgeted)
- Greater attention focused on UUA (3 people campaigning to lead helped raise awareness and importance)
- Strong response to Disaster Relief from Congregations
- Greater outreach via BLUU/Promise and Practice
- Meetings with PWR and MidAmerica board members

The UUA is rolling out the New APF for FY19 in three regions (NER, SR, CER). We are working to strengthen the communication of these changes and began the formal communication process in earnest this month (January). The rollout includes robust information packets to congregations, regular open ZOOM hours for people to call with questions, multiple webinars on the changes and we expect to have the updated ask figures going out soon to congregations. The New APF will rollout in PWR and MidAmerica for the FY2020.

The Promise and the Practice Campaign (BLUU Commitment):

I am delighted to share some of our progress on the Promise and the Practice campaign. This year we have received \$616,682 for the Promise and Practice campaign. This includes a portion of the generous gift to match congregational giving that reaches the threshold of at least \$10/member. We are hopeful that congregational giving goes way up for this campaign over the next several months and hope Board members will ensure their congregations will be among those that pledge sufficiently to meet the match. In addition, we need to find ways for the Board to help drive this effort. For example, Board members could write to congregations in their areas, constituent groups and make congregational phone calls to congregations we have not heard from yet.

Carey and I have also talked with the co-Moderators about rolling out a series of letters amplifying the campaign, including from the co-Moderators.

Here is more specific information about what we've received from congregations toward the campaign and the communication strategy rolling right now for the campaign:

- 58 congregations have submitted pledge gifts (\$61,519.94)
 - 11 congregations are match eligible (\$23,025.75)
- Pending Outreach Efforts
 - Special attention to highlight next major date of 2/4/18 (BLUU Sunday)
 - Weekly outreach to congregations that have given with special language for congregations that are not eligible for the match
 - Regular communication with Congregational Life Staff to show participation breakdown by region
 - Creation of complimentary poster, customizable flyer, and minister/lay leader talking points - will be distributed by 1/22/18
 - Social media marketing with updated memes and posts
 - Website updates with online pledge and gift submission forms
- Important Campaign Dates:
 - 2/4/18- BLUU Sunday
 - 6/30/18- Deadline to submit pledge for BLUU Campaign
 - 6/30/19- Deadline to submit gifts for BLUU Campaign

Institutional Change at the UUA:

The work of institutional change and dismantling white supremacy continues at the UUA. In addition to the review of updating of personnel and hiring policies (more information in the monitoring report) with the lens of inclusion and dismantling white supremacy, which has been a focus for Carey McDonald and Rob Molla over the last 4 months, there are a few other highlights about our institutional change work to share from this last fall. The UUA staff participated in a fourth white supremacy teach-in this fall. The firm Cook Ross <https://cookross.com/> which works with organizations to create inclusive leadership and cultures is working with the UUA in a pro-bono capacity and will be working specifically with Taquiena Boston, Special Advisor to the President for Equity, Inclusion and Change, and Carey McDonald. We are just beginning our conversations on this work but are delighted to have the outside partnership and professional support to initiate and create change at the UUA.

Additionally, Taquiena Boston has been interviewing staff about the culture of the UUA, how they see white supremacy operating and where they identify obstacles and opportunities. These will be important insights not only for Leadership Council, but also for Cook Ross to have in their work with us. There have been ongoing regular meetings of UUA staff of color since this Spring, and this January, there was the first ever UUA Staff of Color all day retreat, organized by a planning team that included staff of color from across the organization. At the retreat, in addition to relationship building, individuals shared feedback and stories around culture and micro-aggressions at the UUA which will be compiled as helpful feedback to Leadership teams at the UUA.

Focus on Strengthening Covenant and Relationship

In January, the Congregational Life staff was in Boston for the annual “Big Alignment Meeting.” Prior to this meeting, Carey McDonald, the Regional Leads, and I created a strategy document that looked at what it would mean if tried to elevate and strengthen the sense of covenant and relationship among congregations and the UUA. At the BAM, we dug into details with CL staff, and got a lot of engagement and enthusiasm for understanding how the CL staff might hold primary responsibility for nurturing and facilitating the relationship with the UUA. We recognize this as a critical conversation with more work to be done given the changes with respect to regionalization.