**UUSJ Committee and Task Force Reports for October 4, 2014 UUSJ Board Meeting**(please scroll down-there is a page break between each committee or task force that has submitted a report)

**The following committees had nothing to report since the last meeting:   
Advocacy Oversight Committee  
Gala Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Social Justice Awards Committee**

**Communication – Outreach – Information Technology**Members:       Nancy Sorden, Yaa, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson

Recent Accomplishments:

1. In August Bill & Chair Lavona Grow attended the FUZE conference sponsored by Salsa and learn a lot to be covered later.
2. With Lavona helped organize buses to People’s Climate March.
3. Implemented a responsive eNews template that will respond to the device it is being viewed on and will be reformatted to be readable on that device (e.g. iPhone).
4. Made a copy of the current website and installed it on a test platform to develop a new design for it.

Current Projects:

1. Website redesign – responsive, simpler.
2. Implementing Salsa Quick Donate feature.
3. Refining the responsive eNews template.

Future Plans:

1. Continue website revision.
2. Start gathering materials for UUSJ participation in “Giving Tuesday”.
3. Development of a media calendar.

Requests/Needs:

1. More members to help with media posting and updates.
2. Finance folks, copy writers, to research examples of GivingTuesday appeal letters to draft our own. Need to start immediately.
3. A small budget item to purchase better graphics. Approximately $50 will do.

General Report- Lavona and I (Bill) attended the FUZE conference, sponsored by Salsa, in August and learned quite a bit about making non-profit organizations more successful in fund raising through the use of technology. There are four main areas this knowledge falls into: “Giving Tuesday” and fundraising in general, use of social media, and a good website.

1. “Giving Tuesday” and Fund Raising

“Giving Tuesday” is the day after cyber Monday, the first Monday after Thanksgiving, so “Giving Tuesday” this year will be December 2nd. At the conference we learned that it is the best day, close to year end, for non-profits to raise money. So we will be exploring examples to craft our own pitch for that day and we will be starting soon. There is a feature of Salsa that simplifies donations. Rather than filling out a complicated form each time someone want to donate, with this feature, if they’ve donated before, the form, will be prepopulated with the information necessary for them to donate using their credit card. We also need to create a much simpler donation form that will allow impulse giving especially at events where folks with smart phones can give a quick $10-$30. During the conference it was empathized that people attending a conference, rally, or other event get excited, get caught up in the moment, and are willing to make a small donation impulsively if it is easy to do.

1. Social media, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, are all tools that can drive the very connected younger generation to our website and can be used to motivate them to contribute and to join us. There should be regular postings to each of these platforms in a way that best suits the platform. For Twitter, it was suggested that we not use all 140 characters, that we use short succinct sentences with links to postings on either Facebook or our website, and that we use lots of pictures.
2. That our website be responsive to the devices it is being viewed on which is increasingly smart phones and tablets. That we use lots of pictures, use large fonts, and large buttons to link to specific content. We should also get rid of drop down menus in favor of menus that take you to internal pages with links to all of our content. An example might be replacing our “Issues” menu item with its drop down sub-items of “Immigration”, “Environment“, “LGBTQ”, “Economic Justice” with one called “Our Advocacy”.

**Core Working Group** Date: 9/28/2014

**Names of committee members:** Jim Alcauskas, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Al Carlson, Lavona Grow, John Gubbings, David Strauss

**Mission/role of committee:** To re-establish UU presence at the federal level by transforming UUSJ into the group that advances UU principles by engaging UUs in the National Capital Region in advocacy. The Core Working Group intends to help the Board take the necessary implementation steps toward making this commitment to advocacy a reality.

**Recent Accomplishments**: A core team of the UUSJ submitted on September 15th a grant application for The Fund for UU Social Responsibility of the UU Funding Program (Veatch supported) asking for $20,000. UUSJ included $2000 of our own funds towards the activities of the grant to develop an Implementation Plan for our Strategic Plan. We had two conference calls as of 9/26 and one is scheduled for 10/1. We have agreed to have weekly meetings by phone, with one of these face-to-face.

**Current Projects:** The core group agreed to hire Michela Perrone, a governance and non-profit consultant, for a three hour work session on Board Development and Governance Effectiveness. This work session for the UUSJ Board is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, October 19th. Lavona contacted her to engage her services. Topics and background reading material will be provided following the October 4th Board meeting. There is value in looking to a consultant outside the organization to bring a fresh perspective.

**Future Plans:** The core working group will supervise the execution of contracted actions paid for by the Fund for UU Social Responsibility grant. The current project above is a preliminary step in this direction.

**Requests/needs:** A resolution of support is desired from the UUSJ Board to spend approximately $800 to hire Michela Perrone to execute the idea of a work session on Board Development and Governance Effectiveness.

**Development Committee**

Names of committee members: John Gubbings, Kay Scott, Bob Schurter

Mission/role of committee (1-3 sentences): The Development Committee shall be responsible to the Board for recommending fund raising policies and programs in support of objectives established by the Board of Trustees to carry out the work of UUSJ.

Recent Accomplishments: As the acting and unelected chair of the Development Committee I can report on the application for a $20,000 grant from the UU Funding Program Fund for UU Social Responsibility. The application was done by the core group established at the last Board meeting.

Current Projects: Further review of the Draft Development Plan by Development and Finance Committees.

Future Plans: Get UUSJ Board approval of the Development Plan and Board participation in its implementation.

Requests/needs:

Get more congregations to the “fair share” level and get more individual memberships starting now. Bob Shurter made the following recommendations which the committee endorses:

1. To raise UUSJ visibility we need to press all board members to regularly communicate UUSJ activities and events to their congregations and to make sure UUSJ’s name is prominent in these communications. We need to make sure congregants see regular proof of our activities and get to know who we are in the alphabet soup of organizations that start UU…..

2. To make direct contact with leadership UUSJ needs each member to identify the one or two best people to contact in their congregation’s leadership who would best be able to push the idea of a congregational “fair share” pledge. We need to also learn when in the year they do their budget so that we can make sure we are in front of them when budgets are being prepared. Then the Development Committee plus Lavona and Al needs to divide up the list and personally contact these right people. We should also push for an opportunity to address the congregation at a Sunday Service.

3. To increase individual memberships offer a concrete reward for joining

a. Offer training – or maybe “coaching” or support - to paid up individual and congregational members who want to organize legislative visits? We have expertise in whom in Congress to see on a given matter, how to look up specific legislation, and how to organize and conduct a visit.

b. Set up a “bulletin board” on the UUSJ web site that would allow paid up members who have an issue they are interested in that is not one of the ones UUSJ has selected to facilitate their networking with individuals in other congregations who share their issue interest.

**Economic Justice Steering Committee**

Members: Paul Sturm, Laura Dely, John Gubbings, Ed Kringer, Gene Mulligan and John Horejsi

The initial meeting of steering group for the UUSJ Economic Justice Task Force (6:00 – 8:30 PM; 15 September 2014) was attended by Lavona Grow, Paul Sturm, Laura Dely, John Gubbings, and Ed Kringer; Gene Mulligan and John Horejsi were unable to attend. Ed and Paul are co-chairing the Task Force and Paul facilitated this meeting.

We agreed that as a fledging group, we need to focus on a small number of issues, where we can concentrate our efforts and hopefully increase our chances of success. Following are the issues we agreed to research and from which to select one or two on which to focus our advocacy efforts:

* Raising the current poverty wage to a ‘minimum’ living wage.
* Mandatory paid sick leave for all employees.
* Protections so that employees know their work schedules sufficiently in advance so they can plan things such as childcare.
* Increasing regulations surrounding money in politics (e.g., constitutional amendment; disclosure legislation)

Luckily we have access to someone (Sally Determan) who has volunteered to provide research assistance to the UUSJ Task Forces. Lavona will contact her and ask for the following assistance:

* Names of the legislative assistants who focus on Economic Justice issues for the senators and representatives from Virginia and Maryland.
* Status of all recent legislation on each of the four issues listed above.
* List of potential partner organizations (e.g., Common Cause, Democracy for America) and their current activity on each of the above issues.

Laura offered to contact the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to see what plans they have (and how we might assist) for actions like those recently held in Maryland and the District. Laura also agreed to make phone calls to legislators’ offices to identify contacts not only for economic justice, but all four UUSJ issue areas (supplementing what Sally may do for us).

Lavona offered to contact Pam Sparr, the associate director for advocacy, activism, and engagement in UUSC's Programs, Advocacy, and Action Department to obtain the contact information for the UUSC lobbyist here in DC. She will also set up a meeting with Jess to discuss UUA’s efforts as well as the status of the CSAI-Escalating Inequality materials.

We agreed to correspond regularly via email, meet via telecon at least once a month, and meet face to face quarterly.

**UUSJ Environmental Steering Committee Report** 29 Sep 2014

Greater Regional UUs on Environmental Justice and Climate (Name TBD)

MEMBERS: Doris Marlin, Eric Goplerud, many others

MISSION & ROLE (TBD): Regional UU Collaboration on Environmental Justice and Climate  
  
RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Sept 13, 2014 - Quarterly Meeting held at UUC Fairfax,

Topics: The People's Climate March, Purpose, Connection to the UN 2015 Paris Global Climate Treaty, emphasis on the need for a FAB Global Climate Treaty (Fair, Ambitious, Binding), Information provided on UUSC Initiative Commit2Respond, Discussions about future actions related to Faith initiatives Global Climate Treat, How congregations can go green with Interfaith Power & Light, GWIPL .

Sep 19 - 21, 2014: Multi-Faith Buses to The People's Climate March in NYC. www.peoplesclimate.org sponsored by 350.org and the National Resources Defense Fund.

Multi-Faith buses was a collaboration project between UUSJ & GWIPL. Individuals participating was approximately 190 with some only traveling one-way either to or from NYC with the group. Approximately 7 UU congregations participated with approximately 32 UUs traveling via the Multi-faith buses, and many more who traveled on their own. Approximately 28 different faith groups were represented. Approximately 24 separate organization, and many individuals not associated with a faith group or organization.

The purpose of the march was to sound the alarm to world leaders on the critical nature of climate change and the urgency to take immediate action. World leaders were meeting at the UN for a special summit to propose bold actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as part of the many steps and challenging negotiations building to a Global Climate Treaty in 2015 Paris. 400,000 - 600,000 participated in a ethnically and age diverse representation of the movement. Over 2600 other events were held worldwide for the same purpose. The event was well covered in the global media in spite of competition with the US military actions beginning in the middle east, the Ebola Outbreak, and the IS terrorism making headlines.

An estimated 1500 UUs participated with UUA President Rev. Peter Morales participating. Several UU events were held in NYC as part of the many supporting events raising the awareness of Climate Change being a Moral issue.  
  
CURRENT PLANS: Welcoming Event for the Great March for Climate Action, Nov 1, 2014 to Washington DC.

A group has been marching across the country to raise awareness for Climate Action. They are the Great March for Climate Action and left Los Angeles on March 1, 2014. UUMFE has been associated with the march, and Michael Dowd and Connie Bartow have been traveling ahead of the marchers speaking at UU and other faith congregation. They are scheduled to speak at many local UU churches during the weeks ahead of the marchers arrival in Washington DC.

Doris Marlin with All Souls Church has scheduled them for a speaking engagement on Nov 1st as part of a Marchers welcoming event. However with All Souls Church under renovation an alternate site that is compatible with the march route is being sought.

Collaboration with UUSJ and GWIPL is envisioned for the event. Support needed with be promotion of the event, meals and volunteers to serve meals, participation in the march, possible hosting locations for the marchers.

Plans for Nov 1 are being developed.

FUTURE PLANS: Next Meeting is Jan 10, 2015, hosted by UU River Road.

**Finance Committee**

Names of committee members: Jim Alcauskas, John Gubbings (Treasurer), Ethel Gilbert, Bob Shurter

Mission/role of committee (1-3 sentences): The Finance Committee shall recommend to the Board policy for effective and efficient management of UUSJ. It shall review, evaluate and make recommendations to the Board with respect to all business functions of UUSJ including, but not limited to, budget, business records and systems, business planning, and auxiliary enterprises, except for those duties assigned to the Development Committee by these Bylaws.

Recent Accomplishments: The Finance Committee has not met since the last UUSJ Board meeting.

Current Projects: Assist in review of the Draft development Plan.

Future Plans: There are none at present - awaiting a new Finance Committee Chair.

Requests/needs: A new Finance Committee Chair is needed.

**Immigration Steering Committee  
 No separate report was submitted by the committee. Below are excerpts from the committee minutes. For fuller information you may request full minutes.**

Members: Dean Wanderer (Chair), Patti Absher, Lavona Grow, John Gubbings, David Strauss, Georgia Pourchot, Marilyn Baker, Jim Alcauskas

A face to face meeting was held on June 4 at the UU Congregation of Rockville, and a phone meeting was held on July 13.

Plans were begun for visits to Capitol Hill. A planned Hill visit in July had to be cancelled.  
  
Connections with the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations will be pursued.   
  
A letter writing campaign for visibility, at each congregation on a particular Sunday all writing letters at the same time may be promoted in the future.

A How to Do Advocacy session could be taken by the committee to various congregations.

The Greater Washington Immigration Film Festival in October 2014 has received a UUSJ Social Justice grant. Many of the people on the UUSJ Immigration Committee are currently working on the Film Festival.

Special Report On: “Pray for Relief” Faith Summit on Stopping Deportations

and related events July 30, 2014-August 2, 2014

Submitted by Cyn Snavely, Administrator and

Lavona Grow, Board Chair

At the 2014 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) was passed saying in part, “Be it resolved that the 2014 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon the member congregations of the UUA, their individual members and friends and affiliate organizations, to support the Faith Summit by sending a delegation to Washington DC July 31 – August 1, and by encouraging that delegation to consider participating in planned civil disobedience, with the goal of persuading President Obama to take executive action to stop the deportations.” [Full reading here.](http://www.uua.org/statements/statements/296757.shtml)

Unitarian Universalists, Evin and Melissa Carvill-Ziemer said, “The thought of vulnerable children deported back to the violent and resource poor circumstances they fled breaks our hearts. That is why we went to Washington, DC to participate in the “Pray for Relief : Not One More Family Separated” Action and Faith Summit on Stopping Deportations. We were there to urge President Obama to stop the deportations.”

Due to a chance encounter at General Assembly between Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ) co-chair, Lavona Grow and UUA Congregational Advocacy and Witness Director, Susan Leslie at General Assembly, Lavona was invited to participate in a meeting of UU leaders to discuss the status of immigration programming in congregations and to discuss plans for engagement in the upcoming Faith Summit. As an outcome of that meeting, UUSJ became actively involved in helping with the UU involvement in the July 31- August 2 events working closely with Susan Leslie.

UUSJ helped to find people to provide home hospitality to those UUs coming to the DC area for the events. Sixteen people offered home hospitality. A couple of those offers needed to be withdrawn due to family circumstances, and a couple were too distant and were not used.

UUSJ provided metro cards for the use of some of the Mothers of Dreamers to facilitate their travel between their home hospitality and the events.

UUSJ took the lead in organizing a “UU In-gathering” with dinner and a program on the evening of July 30th for UUs coming into the region for the events. Universalist National Memorial hosted this event. UUSJ involved Beacon House Community Ministries and The Sanctuaries in the program. Donations for the meal were solicited, and UUSJ covered the difference in the dinners’ cost.

UUSJ advertised the July31 action of civil disobedience at the White House. Two ministers of UUSJ member congregations were among those arrested; Rev. Linda Olson-Peebles of the UU Church of Arlington and Rev. Amanda Poppei of the Washington Ethical Society. One hundred and twelve faith leaders and immigrant activists were arrested. We believe that thirty-three of those were Unitarian Universalists. Members of UUSJ member congregations; Bull Run UUs, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, Cedar Lane UU Church, Goodloe Memorial UU Congregation, River Road UU Congregation, and the UU Church of Arlington participated as witnesses and in providing transportation from jail for those arrested.

UUSJ advertised the August 1 training day. Lavona Grow, UUSJ co-chair; Cyn Snavely, UUSJ administrator, and Liz Alcauskas, of the UUSJ member congregation, Bull Run attended.

UUSJ advertised the August 2 march to the White House. About twelve local UUs participated including several from UUSJ member congregations; the UU Church of Arlington and First Unitarian Church, Baltimore, Goodloe Memorial UU Congregation and the UU Congregation of Fairfax.

This was the first large coordinated effort between UUSJ as a local UU entity and the UU Witness Ministries Office. We expect that there will be more such efforts in the future.

Three UUSJ members from the UU Church of Arlington and the UU Congregation of Rockville attended a Dreamers’ Moms’ vigil on August 29 at the White House.

**Program Committee**

**Names of committee members**: Martha Ades, Nancy Boardman, John Grubbing, Pat Karlsen (Chair), Marsha White

**Mission/role of committee** (1-3 sentences): organize programs for UUSJ around UUSJ’s priorities, both as primary sponsor and in collaboration with other organizations.

**Recent Accomplishments**: completed co-sponsorship of VICPP program “Paycheck to Paycheck” at UU Church of Arlington on Sun/Sep 28.

**Current Projects**: sponsoring “A Wider Welcome - A Bolder Justice: Beyond Partisan Division” at Accotink UU Church on Sat/Oct 4. Working on a briefing for the UUA Study action Issue, and preparing to disseminate details to be released by UUA Nov. 1.

**Future Plans**: this working draft chart was crafted at our August 16, 2014 teleconference and updated 30 Sep 14:

**Proposed UUSJ Annual Program Calendar (as of 30 Sep 14)**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date/Time/Place** | **UUSJ Focus Area** | **Lead/Partner** | **Comments** |
| Sep 13/UU Congregation of Fairfax | Environment | UUSJ/COMPASS | Doris Marlin/All Souls; area meeting leads up to trip to NYC global action; Joelle/IPL = key speaker; breakouts. |
| Sep 28/UU Church of Arlington | Economic Justice | VICPP/ Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy | Publicize; film *Paycheck to Paycheck*; |
| 4 Oct | Advocacy | UUSJ | A Wider Welcome - A Bolder Justice: Beyond Partisan Division; Revs Scott & Anya Sammler-Michael & Paul Roche; date, time, and place TDB |
| End of Oct/early Nov | Immigration | Greater Washington Film Festival Steering Committee | <http://www.immigrationfilmfest.org/>  Various locations; promote via web site; UUSJ to help provide post-event activities and advocacy opportunities |
| Pending |  | UUA Washington Office | Reception/breakfast meeting at office for area SJ-inclined ministers; talk to them about UUSJ programs |
| mid-November or Dec 6 | Economic Justice | UUSJ/ UUA Washington Office; maybe JPD | Briefing/teach-in on the CSAI and GA SJ issues |
| Jan-Feb |  | Lead: A Wider Welcome - A Bolder Justice: Beyond Partisan Division | Revs. Anya & Scott; Time, date & location(s) pending; plan for Towson/Columbia/Baltimore |
| Nov? | Economic Justice | Possibly partner with UU MD Legislative Ministry | Steve Buckingham; they cover all of the same issues that UUSJ has as priority issues |
| Jan-May | Environment | UUSJ/COMPASS | Quarterly meeting; TBD |
| Mar-May | Doing Congregational based SJ work; and Lobbying How To’s | UUSJ and UUA Washington Office | Baltimore- Part I  Baltimore- Part I in AM; Part II in PM  Central VA/MD- Part II |
| Spring? | Annual JPD/Central Eastern Group/Cluster Conference? | Offer program? | Lavona will talk with Paula Jones-Cole |
| April | UUSJ Gala Awards | UUSJ |  |

Requests/needs:

1. Add 3-4 active members.
2. Receive direct input and collaboration with and from issue chairs on programming; it would be ideal to have one program for each UUSJ focus area.
3. Work on advertising/communications templates and plans to better craft and target information on programs to key groups.
4. We need to revisit, revamp, and streamline old checklists, timelines, and sign-in rosters for ease of future programming.