

Toward a Streamlined Advocacy Organization Report of the UUWF Restructuring Task Force

In January, 2003 the UUWF Board empowered the President to appoint a task force with the following charge:

- To study the UUWF's historical and current structure, bylaws, purposes, governance and finances;
- To imagine new ways to organize in keeping with the Board's strategic directions including: structuring for ongoing transformation, increasing quality

and quantity of communications, aligning resources with vision;

- To investigate and understand legal possibilities for change within the requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;
- To interview a diverse sampling of UUWF's constituency including past Board members, local UUWF members in congregations, individual members, young adults and

relevant denominational leaders.

- To report back to the UUWF Board in Fall 2003 with observations and recommendations.

Task Force Appointed

Five women were appointed to the Task Force: three former UUWF Presidents, Denny Davidoff, Phyllis Rickter, and Arlene Johnson; the current Secretary of the Board, Patsy Sherrill Madden; and current

Board Member Justice Waidner. Patsy Sherrill Madden and Phyllis Rickter served as co-chairs.

The Task Force studied the present structure, reviewed the current finances, interviewed a cross-section of the membership and several UUA lay leaders and clergywomen with the goal of listening to suggestions, hopes, visions and social justice concerns of women

(Continued on page 2)

Thumbs Up to Restructuring Proposal!

73% of survey participants support UUWF reorganization

UUWF Life Members, Individual Members and local group leaders joined lay and clergy women everywhere in the denomination to strongly endorse the UUWF

Administrative Board's recommendation for significant bylaw changes to be voted at a Special Membership Meeting on Saturday, June 26, 2004, in Long

Congregations do not fare well on their attention to women's issues. Only 38% of respondents gave their congregation an excellent or very good rating in this category.

Beach, CA. The research was conducted during January 2004 by Indianapolis-based Market-Voice Consulting and was financed by a grant from

the UUA Fund for Unitarian Universalism.

By phone, mail and e-mail, 331 survey participants indicated that they strongly/ somewhat support the restructuring proposal.

Individual and Life Members of UUWF are most supportive. Non-UUWF members are less supportive, but mainly because 36% said they did not know enough

about us to have an opinion.

(Continued on page 3)

Respondents: UUWF	
Life Members	60
Individual Members	77
UUWF group leaders	51
Past board members	19
Total	152
Respondents: UUA E-Mail Lists	
Ministers	7%
Seminarians	3%
Other religious professionals	6%
Lay women	84%

Restructuring, *cont. from p. 1*

and youth. The Task Force brainstormed ideas, possible structures, shared enthusiasms, and talked about ways to empower women and youth, which has always been a goal of the UUWF.

At the General Assembly in Boston, June, 2003 a workshop meeting was held to talk about change, some possibilities for action, and to hear the views of women and youth. Over 50 people shared their ideas at 8 am on a Monday! Responses were enthusiastic and helped the Task Force move ahead. At that General Assembly the Task Force also met with District Presidents and individually with countless people.

The Task Force requested and received a grant of \$15,000 from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism to hire a professional firm to design and conduct a comprehensive survey by telephone and online. The grant also partially supported the legal work necessary to make institutional change.

The Task Force's meetings, communications from UU women, and survey results have shown that women like the idea of supporting worthy projects and are willing to contribute to this work.

UU women have identified UUWF's new direction: advocacy.

Affirming the Past - Empowering the Future

In 1963 the Alliance of Unitarian Women and the Association of Universalist Women came together to form the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation. In the succeeding 40 years UUWF has been a service organization primarily for women's groups in local congregations. The Task Force has found that, in the 21st century, Unitarian Universalist women and their groups need fewer services from a national office and are more interested in advocacy of causes affecting women and youth.

The Restructuring Task Force believes that a smaller, streamlined structure will enable the UUWF to increase its effectiveness by putting its energies and financial resources toward actions to affect change.

To make this shift - *to imagine new ways to organize for maximum communication and for best use of resources, the Task Force proposes:*

1. A smaller UUWF Administrative Board. Reducing the size of the Board, to increase efficiency while lowering costs. The five Board mem-

bers to be elected in June, 2004, are a President, Vice President/Clerk, Treasurer, Development/Communications Director, and Chair of the UUWF Grants Panel.

- 2. To create a UUWF Grants Panel modeled after, but separate from, other denominational grants panels.** UUWF's five-member panel will solicit and promote proposals and award grants to individuals, groups, congregations, districts, etc., for work based on the UUWF mission and purposes.
- 3. That UUWF remain a membership organization open to all persons who support UUWF's mission and purposes and who make an annual financial contribu-**

tion. The proposed bylaw changes allow the Board to continue to extend membership to current group, individual, and Life members and to acknowledge their valuable, long-time support, while giving the Board flexibility in determining future membership needs.

A summary of the survey results is included in this *Communicator*. The enthusiasm for change among the many women who answered the survey questions is encouraging and energizing. The UUWF is ready to embrace the future with confidence and a sense that advocacy work is greatly needed in today's world — work that UU women are also ready to support.

Want to learn more about UUWF's exciting future?

Join us at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, June 25th for our GA workshop:
**Revolution, Transformation, Change:
The UUWF Meets the Future**

- Meet with members of the Restructuring Task Force
- Hear first-hand about UUWF's dynamic transformation
- Find out more about the survey results

Location to be announced

Survey Results, cont. from p. 1

The women who responded were very helpful in defining the work of the proposed UUWF Grants Panel. 40% have participated in a project funded by a UUA Grants Panel or another grants-making organization.

Nearly all (92%) could imagine applying for a UUWF grant as a congregation member.

78% could imagine applying as a member of a congregation-based women's group.

72% could imagine applying as part of a UUA district women's group.

Most respondents (82%)

think the UUWF grants should be a combination of matching grants and outright grants although not the sole funding source. They indicated that they would be likely to partner with a variety of organizations to obtain a UUWF grant.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) said they'd want to partner with local advocacy organizations.

Women address feminist issues through a variety of venues (see chart at right).

Congregations do not fare well on their attention to women's issues.

Only 38% of respon-

dents gave their congregation an excellent or very good rating. UUWF is rated better, at 55% excellent/very good and this rating was similar across respondent groups.

UUWF plans to make the full report available on its website soon. We thank those who participated.

What are the most important issues facing you today?

Women's health issues	32%
Abortion/reproductive rights	28%
Ageism/age discrimination	26%
War	24%
Human rights	23%
Poverty/unemployment	21%
GLBT	20%
Violence against women/domestic violence	16%
Child abuse	11%
Job discrimination	9%

Which national or international advocacy groups do you belong to?

Planned Parenthood	39%
UU Service Committee	34%
Nature Conservancy	21%
Amnesty International	20%
NARAL- Abortion Rights	19%
NOW - National Organization of Women	18%
League of Women Voters	15%
Sierra Club	14%
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice	9%

Summary of Proposed UUWF Bylaw Revisions

A vote on the proposed UUWF bylaws revisions will take place at the Special Membership Meeting in Long Beach, CA, on June 26, 2004. The full text of the bylaws with the proposed revisions will be posted on our website at www.uua.org/UUWF.

Following is a summary of the changes, adopted by the Board at its January meeting pending recommendations from UUWF's attorney, which were subsequently incorporated.

1. The UUWF Mission

and Purposes remain the same.

Mission

The UUWF works to advance justice for women through education and advocacy.

Purposes

We acknowledge and give thanks for the women who came before - those who participated in each women's movement as well as those who created the UUWF.

- We affirm the inherent value of each woman within our community.
- We affirm the importance of women's

voices in our religious quest.

- We link hearts and minds in service of women's truths.
- We pledge action against the religious roots of sexism.
- We pledge to support the diversity of religious feminisms.
- We work to raise consciousness of the linked nature of oppressions.
- We seek justice for all women in the struggle to transform institutions of oppression.
- We highlight and celebrate women's

achievements - past, present and future.

2. The revised bylaws create a smaller, more efficient administration with the goal of freeing up resources.

Membership will be open to all persons who

(Continued on page 7)

Hard copies of the revised bylaws, or a copy as an e-mail attachment, may be obtained by contacting Ellen Spencer at the UUWF Office at espencer@uua.org or 617-948-4692.

Five Candidates Presented for UUWF Election

Report from the UUWF Nominating Committee

The UUWF Nominating Committee — Phyllis Rickter, Arlington, MA, chair; Peggy Abby, Seattle, WA; Denny Davidoff, Westport, CT; Tina Jas, Eastham, MA — presents the following slate of candidates for election to the Board of Trustees at UUWF's Special Membership Meeting, June 26, 2004 in Long Beach California.

President



Nancy Van Dyke
Sea Cliff, NY; member UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, Manhasset, NY.

Professional life: Social worker in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) field. Provides training, workshops and consulting in organizational development.

UU life: UUWF Life Member; member of both UUCSR and its women's group since 1980. Has been UUCSR president, vice president; vice president of the Veatch Program; member of ministerial advisory and search committees. Member of UUA Large

Church Planning Committee and attendee at three large church conferences. Member of UU Service Committee Congressional Delegation to Honduras and El Salvador. Life Member of UU Women's Heritage Society and the International Association of Liberal Religious Women; member, International Association for Religious Freedom and Partner Church Council.

Family life: Married to life partner, Rick, for 37 years, who "cheerfully shares my personal and professional interests. We are the parents of two adult UU sons." Passions: travel, reading, singing in Willow, an interfaith a cappella group, and activities in the company of women.

Comments: "Dreams about shaping the future of our beloved organization were part of the draw for me when I joined the board in 1998. Now, after crucial decisions by the past three Boards, we have a blueprint to take us into the future. We stand on their shoulders as well as on the shoulders of all of the women who have provided ideas and inspiration. The new work is just beginning, but I am challenged and invigorated by the potential. It is

essential that you join us in that effort!"

Vice President/Clerk



The Rev. Danielle Di Bona
Onset, MA; member, First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middelboro, MA.

Professional life: Currently chaplain for Beacon Hospice, Cape Cod Office, providing spiritual care, pastoral counseling to patients who are at the end of their lives, their families and friends, and staff at Beacon Hospice and patient care facilities.

UU life: Current convener of Ministry Working Group of Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), also served as its vice president for six years; current member UU Ministers Association Nominating Committee.

Family life: Lives with spouse Larry Beck, three dogs (Naomi Jean, Smitty Sue, Poquita Maria) and a cat (Rewrite); she and Larry have two grand-

children, Kevin and Anna; avid herb gardener; participates in dog obedience and agility with Naomi, who is a therapy dog; owner of "Winemakers' Cellar," a business that provides product and equipment to home winemakers.

Comments: "It impresses me that an organization is willing to look at the needs of its constituents, and then make big changes. I am delighted to see a UU organization that is willing to put our money where our mouth is and 'feet on our faith'."

Treasurer



Barbara Prairie
Berea, KY; member, Fellowship of Madison County, Richmond, KY.

Professional life: UUA General Assembly Administrator, 1985 until 2003 retirement. Former Administrator, All Souls Church, Unitarian, Washington, DC; social worker at Planned Parenthood; Director of Religious Education, St. John's Unitarian Church, Cincinnati.

(Continued on page 5)

First post-college "career" was research assistant in biochemistry labs at two universities, followed by "a few years as a stay-at-home mom."

UU life: Cooked, sang, ran board meetings and helped create Renaissance Fair, Groundhog search and various other celebrations at St. John's. As a minister's partner from 1988 until 2002, kept a low profile. Currently newsletter editor and board member of her fellowship.

Family life: Married to retired UU minister Michael Boardman; four daughters (two each), all in their 30s, plus four grandchildren.

Comments: "The restructuring is a thoughtful, creative and courageous direction in which to go. It is exciting to see a 40-year old organization re-form itself to meet the needs of today and important to acknowledge where we've been and why we need to change. The new direction the UUWF is taking will serve not only to advance women's issues, but may also act as a model for other organizations to take a look at their structures. What better way to encourage transformation work in advocacy for women than to transform the organization supporting it?"

Development/ Communications Director



**Arlene Johnson
Tulsa, OK; member of All
Souls Unitarian Church,
Tulsa.**

Professional life: Has owned consulting firm engaged in marketing/public relations, financial development, and conference facilitating for 13 years. Previous experience includes political consulting, campaign management, and management positions in both for-profit and non-profit corporations. Former president Association of Fundraising Professionals, Eastern Oklahoma chapter; current vice president, Association for Women in Communications, Tulsa Chapter.

UU life: Member of All Souls Unitarian Church for 30 years; served in several leadership positions; current chair of the Association Affairs Committee. Board member, Tulsa Interfaith Alliance; vice president, Oklahoma Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. UUWF President (1995-98); also served as UUWF secretary and vice president. Member,

UUWF Restructuring Task Force; participant in the Clara Barton Internship development effort.

Family life: Native of Northern Ireland; married to Wes Johnson, an attorney; together they have two adult children. Arlene has a sister living in London, a brother in Canada and a brother in Northern Ireland.

Thinking about the UUWF restructuring: "I am thrilled and honored to be a part of the UUWF transformation process. The new organization will have the potential to positively impact the work and lives of many women, young adults and children in the future."

UUWF Grants Panel Chair



**Linda Lu Burciaga,
Phoenix, AZ; member,
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Phoenix
(Paradise Valley).**

Professional life: 25 year career as a social worker with children and adolescents (probation, mental health) - last nine years for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.

UU life: Massachusetts Bay District Coordinator for 2003 Boston General Assembly; during past 34 years has been an active member of three congregations. Other Mass. Bay District Offices: vice president, Nominating Committee chair; co-networker for district Partner Church Committee. Panel member, UUA Fund for a Just Society; chair, Fund for Unitarian Universalism; chair of Music and Intern committees at First & Second Church; chair of Denominational Affairs Committee at First Parish, Arlington, MA, and at First Religious Society, Newburyport, MA.

Family life: Married to the Rev. John Burciaga, minister of The UU Congregation of Phoenix. Her two adult children, Jeneanne, 35 and Jason, 32, reside in the Boston area with Jeneanne's two children (her grandchildren), Taylor, 15, and Tommy, 7, and Jason's partner, Tim. "John and I 'parent' two adorable cats, Zora and Sheri, Persian Himalayans, age 3.

Comments: "As with so many things in our personal lives, change ('restructuring') can be a most positive growth experience in organizations, too. For over 100 years, Unitarian and Universalist women have supported and encouraged each other. In

(Continued on page 6)

addition, they have dealt with a myriad of issues which have touched women's lives, issues of feminism, clergy sexual abuse, violence against women, revision of the UUA's Principles. Equally important has been the efforts of so many local congregations that have reached out to women in the churches.

"Just as women's lives have changed, so also must their organization - the UUWF - which has long supported them. These are exciting times and I look forward to participating, along with all of you, in the journey."

UUWF Grants Panel

The Nominating Committee also presents the first UUWF Grants Panel:



Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley
Tampa, FL; member, Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa, FL.

Professional life: Parish minister and minister of religious education currently serving Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Tampa; has also

served as minister in Austin, Texas, and New York City. Served as Adult Programs Director and Anti-Racism Field Consultant for the UUA. Prior to becoming a minister, served as Program Officer for the Veatch Program (UU Congregation at Shelter Rock), and as Director of Public Affairs of UU Service Committee. Has served as consultant, trainer, retreat and workshop facilitator for many UU organizations.

UU life: A UU for more than 20 years; a minister for more than 10. Served on UUA Commission on Appraisal; UUWF Board (1982-83); UU Ministers Association CENTER Committee; and a variety of UU committees and task forces. Authored/edited articles, books and curricula, including **Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue** (co-editor); **Essex Conversations** (chapter author); and **Weaving the Fabric of Diversity** (chapter editor).

Family life: The fourth of 10 children, Marjorie is married to the Rev. Clyde Grubbs, a minister of the Treasure Coast UU Congregation. Her daughter, Talibah, lives and works in New York City.

Comments: "I am excited that UUWF is reinventing itself with an exciting plan of revitalization."



The Rev. Liz McMaster,
Philadelphia, PA; member, Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration in Mt. Airy, PA.

Professional life: Homemaker (1952-72) before entering the ministry. Director of Metro Atlanta Voluntary Action Center (1972-76); Director of project of the metro Atlanta Council for Children (1977-79); consultant to non-profit agencies in effective volunteer use (1979-83); Regional Representative, National Alliance of Business (1983-85). Entered Harvard Divinity School 1985, received Masters of Divinity 1988.

UU life: Active member of UU Congregation of Atlanta (1962-85). Served on the board, Social Justice Committee, Intern Personnel Committee, Ministerial Search Committee. Chaired Cliff Valley School organizing committee. Has served churches in North Carolina (extension ministry), Florida (parish minister); and Colorado, Virginia, New Mexico and Pennsylvania (interim minister). Served eight years on the UU Funding Program (Just Society and UU Social Responsibility panels); president UU

Ministers Association MD District; UUMA's Socially Responsible Investing Task Force.

Family life: Married and divorced twice; raised three children of first husband; son committed suicide in 1986 (age 29). Has two daughters - Libby and Janet. Libby and her partner, Judith, are the parents of Grace (age 12). Janet and her husband, Cesar, are the parents of Danilo (age 2). "My joy this year is in living near Libby, Judith and Grace; my plans for the future are to move to Albuquerque to be near my other family (Janet, Cesar and Danilo)."



Janet Prince
New Castle, NH; member, South Church Unitarian Universalist, Portsmouth, NH.

Professional life: President Prince Communications, a human resources communications consulting firm she founded in 1981. Prince Communications works with Fortune 500 companies to help them communicate more effectively with their employees in areas of benefits, compensation, performance management, work/life balance,

(Continued on page 7)

organizational and cultural change.

UU life: “Walked into the Portsmouth, NH church five years ago and wept every Sunday for a month!” Served on Personnel Committee; elected to Board of Trustees (now in second term); currently serves as vice chair of Board. Joined Outreach Associates (a committee of three) in 2003 for a two-year term.

Family life: Married to Peter Bergh, a Master Maine Guide when not writing copy for Prince Communications. They have a 13-year-old daughter, Hadley, in the seventh grade, and Springer Spaniel named Nellie. They spend winter weekends in a small town in New Hampshire White

Mountains, where their daughter is a competitive ski racer.

Comments: “I am at a professional crossroads. I am scaling back my firm, and creating time for new opportunities. While I search for and create my path, I know that Unitarian Universalism will become an increasingly important part of my life. I welcome the opportunity to join the UUWF Grants Panel.”



Justice Waidner
Tulsa, OK; member, All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa.

Professional life: Deputy Director of Regional AIDS Interfaith Network of Oklahoma; two years as an AmeriCorps member with National AIDS Fund, as an HIV Educator and Tester/Counselor working primarily with high-risk women and youth at Planned Parenthood of Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma. Graduate of Hampshire College in Amherst, MA with a concentration in Literary Journalism and Gender Studies.

UU life: Current member UUWF Board; active in YRUU and C*UUYAN for the last 13 years. Secretary of Southwest District.

Family life: The youngest of eight children; considers herself “incredibly lucky to have an amazingly strong and

progressive feminist as my mom. She is my life-long role model.”

Comments: “I am both excited and honored to be nominated to the UUWF Grants Panel. I strongly believe in the power that comes from giving women the resources necessary for their voices to be heard and their creativity fueled. This is the embodiment of ‘Faith in Action’.

“Fusing gender justice and Unitarian Universalism is one of my greatest passions. I have served on the UUWF Board for four years. Being involved with the UUWF during this time of transformation has been an exhilarating experience. I am proud of the remarkable history and visionary leadership.”

Bylaw Revisions, cont. from p. 3

support UUWF's mission and purposes and who make an annual financial contribution (see *Toward a Streamlined UUWF* page 1).

The Administrative Board will become the Board of Trustees and will be reduced from 12 to a maximum of five and minimum of three members, the three to five range adopted upon advice from legal counsel to allow flexibility in filling vacancies. Candidates for the first Board

of Trustees, presented in this issue of *the Communicator*, were selected by UUWF's existing Nominating Committee and will be elected at the Special Membership Meeting in June in Long Beach. Subsequently, the Trustees will nominate and elect the Board.

The revised bylaws also provide for the UUWF Grants Panel of five members, which will include the Trustee serving as UUWF Grants Panel Chair. The Nominating

Committee has appointed the first Grants Panel, which is presented in this issue of *the Communicator*. Subsequent panels will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The Margaret Fuller Awards for Religious Feminisms will continue to be administered by a separate Margaret Fuller Committee, which will continue to be appointed by the Board.

3. Meetings **An informational**

session for members will be held in conjunction with each UUA General Assembly.

Triennial meetings are discontinued; Official Membership Meetings may be convened by the Board of Trustees as needed.

4. The bylaws may be amended by a four-fifths affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees, and may be amended no more than once each calendar year.



the **Communicator**

the newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

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Special UUWF Continental Membership Meeting

Saturday, June 26, 2004 • 1:30-4:30 PM
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Long Beach, CA

Preliminary Agenda:

- Ingathering and Welcome
- Report from the President
- Report from the UUWF Restructuring Task Force
- Presentation of Revised Bylaws
- Election of Board of Trustees
- Presentation of UUWF Grants Panel
- Closing

The Special Meeting is being held during the UUA General Assembly and is located in GA hotel. You will not need to register for GA in order to attend the UUWF Special Meeting.

To make the meeting accessible to as many members as possible, there is no fee for attending. While no advance registration is required, please help us prepare to welcome you and anticipate our space needs. Let us know if you're planning to attend by contacting Ellen Spencer at the UUWF Office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108; 617-948-4692; espencer@uua.org.

If you can't attend, your voice can still be heard by using the proxy to be mailed in May to all members with the Official Call to the Meeting.