



Service Committee

# NEWS

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE

SPRING/SUMMER 2003



*Pictured above: Reannon Peterson, winner of the 2002 Youth Activist Award at General Assembly 2002*

## Join UUSC at General Assembly!

This issue of the *Service Committee News* contains information about our programs and workshops at this year's UUA General Assembly in Boston, Mass. We have many activities planned this year, including a GA workcamp on working together to end racism.

*For more, turn to page 3.*

### INSIDE

**UUSC joins in post-war humanitarian relief for Iraq**  
page 3

**A message from the UUSC board**  
page 6

**Keep Cuba on policy agenda**  
page 7

**Building peace in Africa**  
back cover

## Students choose volunteering for spring break

In March, a group of Villanova University students chose not to take a trip to the Bahamas, the Florida Keys or Cancun for spring break. Instead, they decided to volunteer with the UUSC Just Works Alternative Spring Break Workcamp in San Diego County, Calif.

Now in its sixth year of sponsoring workcamps on Native American reservations, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee organized the 10 volunteers to spend a traditional spring break period with the Luiseño Indians at the La Jolla Indian Reservation. The Alternative Spring Break Workcamp is designed primarily for college students looking for meaningful experiences during their mid-semester vacation period.

The volunteers spent their week working on the La Jolla Indian Reservation, tutoring youth ages 6-14, decorating the reservation's Education Center, and making connections with the La Jolla community and with each other. Local Indian tribal representatives also spoke with the volunteers, sharing their personal experiences and history on the reservation.

### Learning through doing

But it was not the big things that got this group excited about their experience on the reservation; it was the small



*Maura Shaughnessy, a graduate student advisor from Villanova University, assists two first graders with their homework at the La Jolla Education Center.*

things that brought down walls. Whether it was hearing 8-year-old Nicole speak to one of the volunteers, getting Skye to smile when making crafts or being welcomed by a tribe member, those little things were what make this annual workcamp a success for the participants.

"If I had two words to describe this experience they are 'awesome' and 'eye-opening,'" says Dan Gulick of Pennsylvania. "This trip, listening to those on the reservation speak about the culture and their daily lives was very interesting. This will be what I take back and never forget."

Andrea Windt from New Jersey never realized the degree to which oppression continues to narrow the choices that

Native Americans are able to make. When asked how this experience will influence her future plans, she responded, "I want to further educate myself about the American Indians by reading books and doing research. I will share my experience with my friends and family."

Lauren Kostiw of Connecticut, who co-led this group of students from Villanova University, found this to be a wonderful opportunity to truly experience what she had learned through the classroom. "There are Indian reservations all around and before this trip, I have never really known anything about their culture except for what I read in a textbook."

*(continued page 6)*



Nancy Moore,  
UUSC Interim Executive Director

# Human rights during times of crisis

## *A message from the Interim Executive Director*

As this issue of the *Service Committee News* was being produced, the current crisis in Iraq was just exploding. We found our attention turned from our daily work protecting and promoting human rights and social justice in other parts of the world to a rapidly unraveling situation in the Middle East.

Many of our members and supporters have asked what the Service Committee is doing in response to the war in Iraq. I invite you to read our statement below.

### **Protecting human rights defenders around the world**

The ongoing human rights situation in Iraq was known to many human rights defenders in the region and around the world even before the current crisis. Unfortunately, Iraq is just one of many places in the world, including the United States, where the precarious human rights situation can cause security issues to arise for millions of people.

With this in mind, UUSC is renewing its commitment to ongoing programs. We will continue to push for U.S. involvement in promoting a

peaceful solution to the violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We will continue to urge easing the embargo against Cuba that deprives the Cuban people of much needed food and medicine. In our own country, we will continue to seek support for just public policies that improve conditions for women and children living with poverty.

In March, we issued an appeal for support for the humanitarian aid that is so desperately needed in Iraq. You, our members and supporters, have responded generously, as you have time and again. Without the support of our membership, the work we do would not be possible.

### **Engaging our members and supporters**

With your support, we are confident that UUSC will continue to realize the promise of the work we do protecting human rights throughout the world. An important part of that work are the ways in which we can engage our members and supporters in participating in advocacy, education and action.

This spring, we launched several exciting new initiatives, including the Free Speech Project and What's Your Profile? You can read all about these initiatives on p. 9. But these, along with our workcamps and existing programs like UUs United for Social Justice and the UUSC Coffee Project, are just a few of the ways in which we want our members to join us in the struggle for human rights.

In November, I joined UUSC as interim executive director while the search for a permanent president is under way. I have been excited and energized by the work of the Service Committee and the dedication of its staff and membership. Although my current position is temporary, I will be staying on as chief operating officer once the president is in place. I look forward to meeting many more of you at General Assembly this year and continuing to build on relationships that I hope will last for many years to come.

Nancy S. Moore

*With your support, we are confident that UUSC will continue to realize the promise of the work we do protecting human rights throughout the world.*

## **U.S. must focus resources on other human rights crises, as well as Iraq**

As the crisis with Iraq escalated last fall, UUSC called for a peaceful, diplomatic resolution to the conflict. We urged our supporters to tell U.S. policy-makers that a unilateral, preemptive military strike was unacceptable.

Throughout the crisis, our thoughts and prayers have been for the safe return of the courageous U.S. soldiers on the front lines and for their families back home, as well as for the innocent Iraqi civilians affected.

Meanwhile, a major concern is that the situation in Iraq will distract the attention of our national leaders from critical human rights situations elsewhere. Moreover, the cost of the Iraqi conflict and now its reconstruction will cripple efforts to deal with persistently high levels of domestic poverty.

In the months ahead, we will urge U.S. policy-makers to work to resolve other major human rights issues such as the situation in the Demo-

cratic Republic of Congo and in Mexico, and the domestic imperative to help low-income working families achieve self-sufficiency.

We also are concerned about the post-war reconstruction of Iraqi society. We are urging that nongovernmental organizations be allowed a leading role in the recovery efforts, and that Iraqi women also have significant responsibilities in the political, social and economic reconstruction of their country.



Kelli Larsen (l) and Joe Lydon (r) were among UUSC staff members attending a recent rally in Boston in support of peace in Iraq.

# Join UUSC at General Assembly 2003

At GA 2003, you can learn more about our work with grassroots organizations around the world and how we are responding to the challenges to our civil liberties here at home.

Stop by the UUSC booth and attend one of our many workshops and other events. And while you are in Boston, take a tour of the UUSC offices in nearby Cambridge.

## Welcome to Boston

*Westin Copley Place Hotel*

*Webster Room*

*Thursday, June 26,*

*9 p.m. to midnight*

UUSC would like to welcome everyone to Boston at our annual reception. Please join us for refreshments and fellowship.

## Special highlights

### Against empire: The threat to democracy from the war on terrorism

Featured speaker:

**Tom Hayden**

*Hynes Convention Center*

*Room 312*

*Friday, June 27*

*4:30-5:45 p.m.*

Tom Hayden is a fellow at the Nation Institute and a professor at Occidental College in Los Angeles. He served in the California Legislature for 18 years, and has been a leader of the student, antiwar, civil

rights and environmental movements since the 1960s.

### UUSC annual meeting and volunteer recognition luncheon

*Sheraton Hotel Independence*

*East/West Room*

*Saturday, June 28*

*11:30-1:00 p.m.*

Join us for UUSC's annual membership meeting and volunteer recognition luncheon.

Tickets are available in advance by contacting UUSC. To defray the cost of the luncheon, tickets are \$15 each. A limited number of tickets may be available during General Assembly at UUSC's booth.

### What's Your Profile?: Working together to end racism

*Hynes Convention Center*

*Room 309*

*Friday, June 27*

*2:45-4:00 p.m.*

Come hear how youth are working to end racism in Boston, Mass., and beyond and how you can bring this model to your community.

### GA Workcamp

*Saturday, June 28*

*8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.*

Join this anti-racism and civil liberties training and activity. Meet in front of the Hynes Convention Center and we will head over to the YWCA.

## Other UUSC events

### UUSC Human rights forum: Civil rights today

*Hynes Convention Center*

*Room 311*

*Friday, June 27*

*8:45-10 p.m.*

### Taking stock at the global level: Social activism and corporate accountability

*Hynes Convention Center*

*Room 206*

*Saturday, June 28*

*1:30-2:45 p.m.*

### U.S. policy to Cuba and UU youth involvement

*Hynes Convention Center*

*Room 309*

*Sunday, June 29*

*5:15-6:30 p.m.*

### UUs, coffee and human rights

*Westin Copley Place Hotel*

*North Star Room*

*Saturday, June 28*

*5:15-6:30 p.m.*

*Westin Copley Place Hotel*

*Great Republic Room*

*Sunday, June 29*

*2:30-3:45 p.m.*

These are just a few of the events UUSC has planned for General Assembly. Visit our Web site, [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), call 617 868-6600 or e-mail [ga@uusc.org](mailto:ga@uusc.org) for more information.

*Responding to the wishes of many of our members and supporters, we are accepting donations for Iraqi relief.*

## UUSC accepts funds for post-war humanitarian relief in Iraq

As the war in Iraq was winding down, UUSC was gearing up to help in the post-war humanitarian relief effort. Responding to the wishes of many of our members and supporters, we are accepting donations for Iraqi relief.

Although UUSC does not have programs in the Middle East, we are using our interna-

tional connections to identify nongovernmental relief agencies that will distribute aid, including food, medicine and supplies, in a manner consistent with our principles to protect the human rights of oppressed people. For updates, visit our Web site at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

If you would like to contribute through UUSC to the relief effort in Iraq, please make your check payable to Iraq Relief Fund and mail to:

Iraq Relief Fund  
Unitarian Universalist  
Service Committee  
P.O. Box 845259  
Boston, MA 02284-5259



Barbara Karg (r), a member of Pacific Unitarian Church in Ranchos Palos Verdes, Calif., picked coffee with another delegation participant.

# Delegation promotes human rights dimensions of fair trade

by Allison D. Kent, Associate for Programs

As part of the UUSC Coffee Project, four Unitarian Universalist activists spent eight days visiting coffee cooperatives in Nicaragua and learning about the human rights implications of fair trade.

Burns Fisher of the UU Church of Nashua, N.H., described meeting the small coffee farmers as “one of the most moving experiences of my life.” He saw firsthand the vast difference between the communities where farmers are organized into democratic cooperatives to sell to the fair trade market and those where they are not.

“The consistent living wage price that fair trade purchasers pay means that farmers can afford to think about longer term sustainability issues,” explains Mr. Fisher. “They can afford the short-term reduced yield of switching to organic and shade-grown farming methods.”

The UU activists and representatives from other faith communities joined UUSC staff and staff from the fair trade organization Equal Exchange in increasing their understanding of how the fair trade system improves the

lives of small-farm coffee growers and their families.

The delegation visit was organized by Equal Exchange, a 100 percent fair trade company that buys its coffee, tea and cocoa from small farmer cooperatives. Witness for Peace provided the logistics in Nicaragua.

## UUSC helps farmers claim their rights

The UUSC Coffee Project is a partnership between Equal Exchange and UUSC. To date, over 350 UU congregations from across the country have joined the project, and last year they purchased over six tons of fairly traded coffee through their partnership with UUSC. A percentage of the proceeds of the sale of coffee, tea and cocoa come back to UUSC. These funds are used by the Service Committee to provide grants for human rights initiatives in coffee growing regions.

The UUSC Coffee Project comes at a critical time for small farmers. Since world coffee prices have fallen to their lowest point in decades, thousands of small coffee farmers have been forced to give up their farms and cannot provide basic necessities for their families. Through the UUSC Coffee Project, small coffee farmers are guaranteed a fair price for their product and can meet their families’ needs.

## Expanding opportunity

Although the cooperatives that sell to the fair trade market have benefited enormously from the fair coffee prices, delegation participants learned that many of them sell more

than half of their coffee conventionally at market prices. The cooperatives want to sell more to the fair trade market, and coffee farmers who are not yet organized would like to do so, but this can only happen through increased demand for fair trade products.

Mr. Fisher encouraged UU congregations to help increase the demand for fair trade coffee, tea and cocoa, explaining, “If every UU church served fair trade coffee during its coffee hour, and if each of us bought fair trade coffee for use at home - and maybe asked our local supermarkets, cafeterias and restaurants to sell fair trade coffee - it will make a huge difference. As demand and income increase, co-ops can expand.”

Based on what she witnessed in Nicaragua, Barbara Karg, a member of Pacific Unitarian Church in Ranchos Palos Verdes, Calif., asserts, “I believe the fair trade model can bring stability and viability to the coffee growing regions. By supporting the fair trade economic model, we are living out our commitments to justice in the context of the global economy.”

“UUSC has a proud track record of helping grassroots, community-based groups like the cooperatives promote and protect their human rights and to promote sustainable and interdependent relations between local groups and UUs,” explains Nancy Moore, UUSC’s interim executive director. “The UUSC Coffee Project promotes not only the economic rights of small coffee farmers, but also their civil, political and social rights.”

## EDUCATE, ORGANIZE AND ADVOCATE!

In addition to purchasing Equal Exchange coffee, tea and cocoa for your church fellowship hour or for use in the home or office, there are other ways to promote fair trade and human rights. For example:

- Offer coffees, teas and cocoa for consumption or sale at a community events.
- Urge other local organizations to buy fair trade coffee, tea and cocoa.
- Encourage local grocery stores, supermarkets and cafes to sell fair trade coffee and other products.

For more ways to get involved, visit [www.uusc.org/info/coffee-project.html](http://www.uusc.org/info/coffee-project.html) or contact Kelli Larsen at UUSC by calling 800 388-3920 or e-mail [klarsen@uusc.org](mailto:klarsen@uusc.org).

## *A message from the Board of Trustees* **UUSC strengthens commitment to programs and members**

### **Dear Members and Friends of UUSC,**

Sometimes you may ask, will justice ever be done? With tensions running very high across the United States and around the world, we express concern for friends and strangers, for less hostility and division, and for more accord and peace.

We want justice! As you know, UUSC has been working to bring greater justice to our world since 1939. And, as a committed and talented group of volunteers, the Board of Trustees is working to strengthen UUSC so together we can accomplish even more. Certainly, the world needs us.

As this issue of the *SCNews* relates, much is happening! Our programs are the heart of our work, and they need continued strengthening. Last summer and fall, we took a good hard look at our both our national and international efforts. We developed new

monitoring criteria for our program partners. And, the board's committee on new program initiatives made its recommendations, about which we are very excited.

### **Strengthening UUSC's staff and programs**

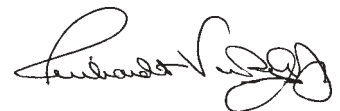
Nancy Moore, UUSC's interim executive director and a UU herself, has been accomplishing much by rallying the management team and building staff cohesiveness in preparation for arrival of a new president. The Search Committee for President has been actively working to identify a strong and active leader to head this great organization, and we have several wonderful candidates at this time.

In working to continually improve our performance in all areas, the UUSC board engaged a consulting firm to complete an organizational study late in 2002. Examining program, management, fiscal, governance and development

dimensions, the consultants made very helpful recommendations for change and improvement. Both staff and trustees have worked together on short- and long-range action plans to implement these recommendations.

Your confidence in our work is very important, and we thank you for your contributions to ensure justice. We very much need your continued support and encourage you to increase your giving during these difficult times. If you will be at General Assembly in June, we invite you to participate in our activities and learn more about what we are accomplishing.

With all best wishes,



Reinhardt Van Dyke, CSW  
Chair  
UUSC Board of Trustees



William Brach

## **In memoriam**

### ***William Brach, UUSC board member, activist, benefactor***

William L. Brach, a long-time volunteer leader, social justice activist and former board member for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, died May 6 at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, N.J. He was 78.

Mr. Brach, a prominent New Jersey lawyer and Democratic Party leader, served on UUSC's Board of Directors for six years in the 1990s. He was the founder and driving force of the New Jersey UU Network of Promise the Children, which was a major part of UUSC's 10-year national program that included state networks to help improve the

lives of children living in poverty. He developed and guided the New Jersey State Network to become an influential force throughout the state on children's issues.

In 2000, Mr. Brach was honored as the recipient of the Service Committee's annual Social Action Leadership Award in recognition of his many years as a tireless and productive advocate for human rights. He also was a major benefactor and fundraiser.

As a New Jersey attorney, he was a leading authority on housing, urban renewal and land use issues, and was an

advocate for civil rights and affordable housing. He also served as a member of the local, county and state committees of the Democratic Party in New Jersey, and was a delegate to the 1976 Democratic National Convention. He was honored by the Montclair Democratic Party for lifetime achievement, and received a similar recognition from the Montclair NAACP.

Mr. Brach is survived by his wife, Nancy, three daughters and a son, and two grandchildren. A memorial service was held May 11 at the Unitarian Church in Montclair.

**REGISTER NOW  
FOR UPCOMING  
UUSC WORKCAMPs**

Three more workcamps are scheduled this summer and fall.

- The summer season will begin with a workcamp held in conjunction with the annual General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston from June 26-30. The day-long workcamp will be related to projects started by youth who are participating in UUSC's What's Your Profile? anti-racism training.
- For the second year, the Service Committee is offering two weeklong workcamps dealing with migrant farm worker issues in North Carolina and how they are organizing for change. Through workshops, service activities, and visits to farm worker camps, each workcamp will offer participants a unique perspective into the history and current living and working conditions of migrant farm workers in the Greenville, N.C., area. The dates are July 14 - 20, 2003 and July 28 - Aug. 3.
- New dates! A new workcamp will be held Oct. 15-19 on the Arizona/Mexico border. UUSC is teaming with BorderLinks, an Arizona-based nonprofit organization, to offer this exciting educational experience for volunteers to enable them to gain an understanding of the unique issues facing those who live along the U.S.-Mexico border.

To register for a workcamp or for more information, please contact Kelli Larsen at 800 388-3920, or by e-mail at [justworks@uusc.org](mailto:justworks@uusc.org).

## Alternative Spring Break provides time for service, learning

*(continued from page 1)*



*Villanova junior Brian Cullen works with 12-year-old Skye on an after-school craft project.*



*First grader Henry shows his completed project.*

### Bringing learning home

The volunteers had a chance to meet with Lupe Lopez, a representative from UUSC's partner organization, Alianza Indigena, a group based on Irvine, Calif. The organization dedicates itself to combating the discrimination faced by indigenous groups in the United States. She spoke on the topic of using Indians as sports team and school mascots.

"What do you say to an opposing team, when the mascot is an Indian? You chant 'kill the Indians.' How

do you think that makes an Indian feel?" Ms. Lopez encouraged volunteers to take up the issue of the banning the use of Indian mascots back home after their participation in the workcamp experience.

John Dawson, a senior from Delaware, says his experiences influenced him to combine policy work with his graduate studies in environmental engineering next fall. "As a future policy-maker, I hope to take up Indian issues as one of my causes."

Since 1996, more than 2,000 people from around the country have participated in UUSC workcamps dealing with issues of racial, social and economic justice. With the success of the church-rebuilding workcamps, the program grew to include working on Native American reservations, in inner cities with communities of color, and with migrant farmer workers in Washington state and more recently in North Carolina.

*Written by Eileen Harrington*

*Eileen Harrington is a former program associate at UUSC. She left UUSC in March 2003 to join the Peace Corps.*

## Think of us ... last

### Consider a planned gift to UUSC

When it comes to estate planning, it is important that you ensure that your own financial needs are met. And, of course, you want to take care of your loved ones. But once these vital issues are addressed, you may want to consider how your values are reflected in your estate plans.

It is our hope that UUSC is an important part of how you choose to put your values into action - through advocacy, education, participation and financial support. We hope that you will choose to ensure that the next generation continues your fight for human rights and social justice.

Through life-income instruments like charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts, UUSC could help you fulfill your financial goals for yourself or your loved ones - with some possible tax advantages.

In any case, the Service Committee hopes that you will think of us... last.

For more information, please contact David Riley, associate for development, at 617 868-6600 or e-mail [driley@uusc.org](mailto:driley@uusc.org).

# Join UUSC in keeping Cuba and other key issues on the U.S. policy agenda

## ACTIVISM PROMPTS NEW DIRECTIONS FOR A FAILED POLICY

A new bipartisan consensus in the U.S. Congress on the need for new directions in Cuba policy has emerged since 2000 thanks to policy advocacy by diverse groups - including UUSC and its supporters, faith-based groups, other nongovernmental groups, many professional associations and the American Farm Bureau. Write, call or send a fax to your senators asking that they:

- Join the Senate Working Group on Cuba if they have not done so already.
- Join efforts to lift the ban on travel to Cuba.
- End the use of food sales as a political tool by permitting expanded private U.S. sales to Cuba.
- Express concern over the Cuban government arrest and sentencing of dissidents.
- Work toward normalization of diplomatic relations that could diffuse bilateral tensions that contributed to the arrests.

Write to:  
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.  
20510 or congressional  
switchboard at 202 224-3121.

Visit the UUSC Web site, [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), for a list of senators on the Cuba Working Group and updates on legislative action to continue to ease the U.S. embargo. You can also send a message by e-mail or fax directly through our online Legislative Action Center.

With the attention of the Bush administration focused heavily on Iraq, UUSC reiterated its commitment to address international conflicts through the rule of law and the United Nations. Working in coalition with national organizations, we also redoubled efforts to keep other critical foreign policy issues on the agenda of policy-makers.

From Cuba to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mexico, issues vital to women, human rights advocates and peace proponents risk being pushed to the back burner. UUSC's coalition work in 1999-2000 with the late Senator Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., and Senator Sam Brownback, R-Kan., to secure passage of a landmark bill to combat trafficking in humans reminds us that our voices count and can influence which issues command the attention of law-makers.

### Possibility for change continues to grow

This year, despite an adverse political climate in Washington, we see the real possibility that the U.S. Congress may build on past legislative successes on Cuba and further relax our government's punishing unilateral economic embargo of the island nation. Since the successful 1999 amendment of then-Senator John Ashcroft, R-Mo., to ease restrictions on private U.S. sales of food and medicine to Cuba, UUSC has worked in an increasingly diverse coalition whose cumulative efforts contributed to a shift in congressional views on Cuba.

Drawn by the nearby market potential for their constituents' agricultural products, Ashcroft - and after him, fellow Missouri legislator, Congresswoman Joanne Emerson, Senator Chuck Hagel, of Nebraska, and many others - contributed to incre-

mental legislative victories culminating in 2000 in the first positive reform of the U.S. embargo of Cuba in over 40 years. These sales are more limited than need be, because Cuba must pay in limited hard currency rather than access the private credit that normally facilitates such business transactions.

Throughout these policy debates, UUSC staff in Washington, D.C., continued to analyze the legislative and political situation, work in coalition on shared advocacy strategies and visit target congressional offices. UUSC shares information on partner views with elected officials and distributes action alerts and related information through the UUSC Web site and other outreach activities. UUSC members and supporters in politically important states or districts who have indicated specific interest may be contacted by UUSC when critical decisions in Washington make their voices especially important. These UUSC activities draw on the energies of supporters engaged in many different ways to change U.S. policies to Cuba, as well as to other countries, including our own.

For example, the voices of American travelers - including voices of American Farm Bureau members, professional associations, medical personnel and academics or tourists wanting to cycle, learn or

simply sit in the sun - continue the "drum beat" that keeps Cuba on the political agenda. In pushing for repeat votes by the full House in 2001-2002, fiscally conservative Rep. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., gave visibility to evolving sentiment on Cuba in the House of Representatives.

In winning bipartisan majorities in votes both years, the freshman legislator showed that a majority in the House no longer want an isolationist policy. He helped make Cuba policy reform a "safe vote" for fellow Republicans and achieved progress toward the goal of gaining enough votes to make the Cuba reform legislation veto proof. Votes in the House this summer are expected concerning the right to travel to Cuba and the lifting of restrictions on access to private credit in sales by U.S. farmers.

### A more humane policy

Another indication of positive forward movement in Congress toward a more humane policy to Cuba is the formation of informal "issue caucuses" in Congress that give visibility, focus and greater organizing capacity to work on Cuba. Rep. Flake is co-chair of the bipartisan congressional Cuba Working Group. The group, formed in April 2002, has grown to 50 members and is committed to seeking a new approach to policy to Cuba. Credibility in

*(continued on page 10)*

As the *Service Committee News* went to press, UUSC joined other nongovernmental groups in a letter to the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, D.C., criticizing the arrests and sentencing of Cuban dissidents. These actions violate international human rights standards and, together with actions by the U.S. gov-

ernment, contributed to a serious setback in bilateral relations. In addition to lifting of the U.S. embargo, UUSC supports normal diplomatic relations between the two countries, which would enable both governments to better address disagreements and prevent escalation of tensions.

# Investing in human rights

## *Advocacy for corporate accountability*

Thanks to an endowment made possible by our members and supporters, UUSC is able to use its role as an investor to press certain businesses to improve their records on social responsibility.

Through our Investment Committee, we are careful to invest in companies that fit a socially responsible profile. But we also use limited amounts of investment funds to enable us, as shareholders, to influence other corporations to improve their human rights records.

### **Taking a new step**

This year, we have worked with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility and Walden Asset Management to take a new step in pressing for corporate accountability. UUSC has cofiled shareholder resolutions in the past, which seek to put issues related to

to shareholders by October 2003 (omitting proprietary information and at reasonable cost).

“We had heard that Merck & Co. had joined other drug-makers in further reductions of prices for HIV/AIDS medicines in the poorest and hardest hit countries, and we welcomed this new action,” explains Mr. Gunning. “Nonetheless, we called on the company to provide a greater response to the health crisis in developing countries. We believe that more concrete action on the part of pharmaceutical companies is an important part of the world’s response to this global tragedy.”

### **Negotiating for change**

After filing the resolution, which was supported by a number of co-filers, UUSC engaged in a series of conversations with company representatives. Following a meeting in January, UUSC and the co-filing organizations decided to withdraw the shareholder resolution because Merck representatives provided UUSC and the co-filers with information about its support of the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It also assists employers in developing countries with technical advice about providing health care to their employees and their families who suffer from HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria.

“This was a real victory, not for UUSC, but for the program partners with whom we work and for the people that we serve around the world,” states Nancy Moore, interim executive director at UUSC.

### **Other shareholder work**

In addition to the work with Merck & Co., UUSC co-filed four resolutions in which other organizations were the primary filers. These include a:

- Human Rights Standards resolution requesting that Exxon Mobil Corporation

review its policies related to human rights and adopt a human rights policy based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Global Human Rights Standards resolution requesting that Wal-Mart Stores commit to the full implementation of human rights standards based on International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions by its international suppliers and in its own international production facilities, and commit to a program of outside, independent monitoring of compliance with these standards.
  - Vendor Standards Report Request resolution requesting TJX Companies to amend the company’s buying and standard purchase contracts to reflect implementation of a code of conduct based on ILO standards and to set up monitoring and reporting procedures.
  - An ILO Human Rights Resolution urging Unocal to adopt and implement an enforceable company-wide employee policy based on the ILO declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and prepare a report concerning the implementation of this policy.
- The shareholder resolution was filed with Unocal by the Amalgamated Bank LongView Collective Investment Fund with UUSC and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers as co-filers, and the results were phenomenal. For a number of years, UUSC has cofiled resolutions calling for Unocal to stop supporting governments that participate in forced labor of its citizens, governments like the Burmese military junta.

## **HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED**

Whether or not you own stock in a company, there are a number of ways to press for corporate accountability. Visit our Web site, [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), regularly for new advocacy suggestions for socially responsible investing.

social justice on the agenda of a corporation’s annual meeting. This year for the first time, however, UUSC took the lead in filing a shareholder resolution.

Jim Gunning, a member of the UUSC Board of Trustees and chairman of its Finance Committee, spearheaded the effort with UUSC Program Department staff members to call on the pharmaceuticals giant Merck & Co. “to establish and implement standards of response to the health pandemic of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in developing countries, particularly Africa.” The resolution further called on Merck to make a report of such standards and their implementation available



These students from Cambridge, Mass., participated in a recent *What's Your Profile?* workshop.

**New program engages youth in exploring issues of racism**

UUSC launched the pilot program, *What's Your Profile?*, in March. Sixteen teens are working together to learn about the issue of racism, their roles in helping to promote racial understanding, and ways to document and/or explore the effects of racism within our society through photography, interviewing, journaling and essay creation.

Participating youth represent the Follen Church Society of Lexington, Mass., and the First Parish Church of Groton, UU, in Groton, Mass. The youth from local community based groups represent the Leaders in Action program of Cambridge, Mass., and the Student Achievement Program from Dorchester, Mass. They met on a biweekly basis during the spring and participated in workshops, received skills training, and subsequently completed assignments in monthly sessions.

Interested in learning more about *What's Your Profile?*? Here's how:

- Join us for a workshop at General Assembly 2003 in Boston, Mass. The workshop, "What's Your Profile? Working Together to End Racism" is scheduled for

Friday, June 27, 2:45-4 p.m.

- A *What's Your Profile?* trainers manual and companion workbook will be available by September 2003. Support in designing your local project will be available from UUSC staff. For more information, contact the UUSC Programs Department at 617 868-6600.

**UUSC launches Free Speech Project**

In response to the continuing threats to civil liberties presented by the war against terrorism and now the war on Iraq, the UUSC is launching a new initiative to enable UUs to investigate these challenges and to protect against erosion of our constitutional rights.

In times of international crisis, America's constitutional and civil liberties – freedom of speech, assembly, dissent, privacy – have often come into conflict with national security interests. They do so now in the post-Sept. 11 world shaped by the USA Patriot Act and other responses to terrorism.

As part of our mission to affirm human rights and advance justice throughout the world, UUSC is rolling out a new domestic initiative, the Free Speech Project. The project provides an opportu-

nity for direct study and action in the community to monitor the media and interview local opinion leaders about their observations, concerns and experiences on protection, enforcement or erosion of civil liberties and rights. The findings will be analyzed locally and reported to UUSC for development of a national report and paper on the state of civil rights.

A facilitator's manual and study and action guide will be ready for distribution by mail in the fall. All materials are available at no charge.

If you are interested in participating in the Free Speech Project, please call Jackie Ladd at 800 388-3920, ext. 218, or [jladd@uusc.org](mailto:jladd@uusc.org)

**UUSC and supporters urge U.S. officials to press for peace in the Congo**

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee thanks every individual and members of congregations all over the country who wrote letters and signed petitions directed to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and Senator Russ Feingold, chairman of the

Senate Africa subcommittee. As of April, we collected 528 petitions and 128 people have written letters to Secretary Powell.

UUSC supporters urged the U.S. State Department to take a more forceful role in bringing peace to the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has been embroiled in a war involving six different nations for approximately four years. We undertook this initiative to commemorate International Human Rights Day (Dec. 10) by standing with the people of the Congo, women and children, who suffer some of the most horrendous human rights abuses in the world.

We look forward to working with you on other actions in the months to come related to bringing peace to the Congo. We still urge people to write letters and sign petitions through June 30, 2003, as this is a long process that we can all contribute to in order to make lasting and effective changes. For more about this effort visit [www.uusc.org/news/congoaction110802.html](http://www.uusc.org/news/congoaction110802.html).



UUSC honored the life and work of Irving Rector at its 21st annual human rights conference at Neighborhood Church on March 29. Kris Ockershauser gave a moving tribute to Irv's work for UUSC. She was joined by Bill Docker, UUSC's Ambassadors Council liaison, pictured here with Irv's family (from left to right): Lucy Rector Filppu, Ann Rector, Shelby Rector, Bill Docker, Sarah Rector Aguilar, Kris Ockershauser, Albert Aguilar and Andrea Rector Seale.



## staffNOTES

**Mary Iwata** joined the UUSC staff as executive assistant, providing essential support to Interim Executive Director Nancy Moore. Recently returning to the East Coast after several years of living in California, Ms. Iwata has a background in the arts.

As the new administrative assistant in the Institutional Advancement Department, **Laurie Beth Brunner** supports member development, institutional advancement and the Ambassadors Council. Ms. Brunner's background includes several years working in

the music and music education department of the University of New South Wales in Australia.

**Audubon Dougherty** is the new administrative assistant for programs and communications. She brings to her new position a background in writing, editing, media relations and marketing. Ms. Dougherty also works as a freelance publicist for local artists and musicians, a videographer for Blink Music Productions and a volunteer for the Cambridge Arts Council.

**Kim McDonald** has been promoted to the newly created position of senior associate for education and action. She is responsible for the direction of Just Works workcamps. Previously, she developed such programs as What's Your Profile? and Teen Voices of Lawrence. "My main goal is to work to develop learning and advocacy opportunities for UUs in communities with which they are not likely to interact on their own," says Ms. McDonald. "Our work will be a combination of education and advocacy during a workcamp and will continue through advocacy back home."

Ms. McDonald has worked for 10 years at the Service Committee, most recently as a program associate. She is excited to continue her work with UUSC members and supporters in this new position. "I find that no matter where I go to meet members



Senior Associate for Education and Action Kim McDonald

there is always a group willing to share, to learn and to work to promote justice," she says. "Through our members, we are having a positive impact on the world."

**Kelli Larsen** was promoted to programs assistant. She previously served as administrative assistant in the Programs Department.

**Shari Yeaton** was promoted to senior operations assistant. She has been with UUSC for ten years.

Programs Assistant Kelli Larsen helps a young boy with an art project during the Alternative Spring Break workcamp.



## SERVICE COMMITTEE NEWS — SPRING/SUMMER 2003

### Editor:

Sofia T. Romero

### Contributors:

Dick Campbell, Nadya Khalife, Kim McDonald, Heather Foote, Eileen Harrington, Allison Kent, Jackie Ladd, David Riley

### Photo Credits:

Audubon Dougherty, Lou Jones, Allison Kent, Kelli Larsen, Nadya Khalife

### Unitarian Universalist

#### Service Committee

130 Prospect Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139-1845  
617 868-6600  
Fax: 617 868-7102

E-mail: [SCNews@uusoc.org](mailto:SCNews@uusoc.org)  
Web site: [www.uusoc.org](http://www.uusoc.org)

© 2003 All Rights Reserved  
Printed on recycled paper  
Printed in the USA

### UUSC Mission Statement

Grounded in Unitarian Universalist principles that affirm the worth, dignity and human rights of every person, and the interdependence of all life, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is a voluntary, nonsectarian organization working to advance justice throughout the world.

The *Service Committee News* is a publication of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a membership organization working to advance justice throughout the world. UUSC members receive the *Service Committee News* three times per year. UUSC is supported by individual members, Unitarian Universalist congregations and private foundations that share our commitment to building a better, more just world.

## Letter to the editor

I want to comment on the memorial note regarding Nick Cardell, my minister and friend for over 20 years, and my especially close colleague during the *six months* we spent incarcerated together at the Allenwood (Penn.) Federal Prison Camp in 1998. Your term "...several days in jail..." somehow diminishes the 180 days that Nick and I counted off together as we met in the chow hall each day. The rest of the piece was accurately descriptive.

Dan Sage  
Syracuse, N.Y.

## WE WELCOME LETTERS

The *Service Committee News* is grateful to readers for their interest and support. We invite you to share your questions and comments by submitting a letter to the editor.

### E-mail:

[SCNews@uusoc.org](mailto:SCNews@uusoc.org)

### SCNews Editor

UUSC  
130 Prospect Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139-1845

## UUSC partners in Africa build peace

Nadya Khalife, UUSC associate for programs, traveled to Central Africa last February to visit program partners in Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo, while conducting research on possible program expansion into Rwanda and Burundi. These are just two of the program partners she visited during her time in Central Africa. Stay tuned for a more detailed report from her visit in a future issue of the *SCNews*.



The young boy pictured is a vulnerable target for forced recruitment into armed militia groups fighting a deadly war in the Congo since 1998. UUSC program partner, the People's Group for the Support and Advancement of Women's and Children's Rights (HADEFE), consists of young committed lawyers who work to educate the local population on the rights of children under international conventions which the Congolese government has signed and ratified. A large number of the population is complicit in the forced recruitment of minors for the sole reason that they are not aware of their rights or the rights of their children.



People for Peace in Africa (PPA), a UUSC program partner, is a dynamic human rights organization that works on regional issues. Located in Nairobi, Kenya, PPA empowers women refugees from neighboring countries with human rights training, leadership, computer and language skills in order that "when they return home one day, the refugees of today become the leaders of tomorrow." Pictured here are (l to r): PPA staff member Abisage Ouma, visitor Jean Paul Neisiemana, staff members Amere Abrahams, Joseph Ngala and Maurice Sungu.



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE**  
130 Prospect Street • Cambridge, MA 02139-1845

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Providence, RI  
Permit No. 980

Address Service Requested