



Rights Now

Winter/Spring 2013

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The newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee



ROC-United members take part in a Darden shareholder action. Photo courtesy of ROC-United.

Opening the Doors to America's Kitchens Consumers' power to transform the restaurant industry

By Ariel Jacobson

Restaurants are a part of daily life for many Americans: more than half go out to eat at least once a week; most people know someone who has worked in a restaurant; and many have worked in one themselves. But a great number don't realize the injustices that restaurant workers endure day in and day out. UUSC and the Restaurant

Opportunities Centers United (ROC-United) are committed to shedding light on unfair working conditions and transforming the industry. The plan to achieve that includes empowering customers to choose compassionate consumption and change the national conversation about workers' rights.

Continued on page 6



The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.

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UUSC bargaining unit employees are represented by Human Rights Workers Local 2661, [UNITE HERE!](#)

We Welcome Letters

Rights Now 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: rightsnow@uusoc.org

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In this edition of

Rights Now

Cover

Opening the Doors to America's Kitchens

Page 2

Youth at the Crossroads of Faith and Justice

Page 5

Preparing Youth for Peace in Kenya

Page 10

Surviving and Thriving
Successful models for sustainable recovery in Haiti

Page 13

More Than Money

Page 14

In Their Own Words: Safe Drinking Water Is a Basic Human Right

Page 17

A Deliberate Act

Page 18

UUSC's Not-So-Hidden Treasure
The National Volunteer Network

Page 20

Coming to the Streets of Egypt
Transitional justice for the people



A message from UUSC's president

We have recently been through an election in this country in which young voters played an important role in the victories of progressive candidates, the growth in women officeholders, and the changes in norms indicated by increased support for marriage equality. As is true almost everywhere, youth are signaling the shape of our future society.

I teach a course in human rights every January at New York University. I love doing that not only because it provides me contact with some of the brightest young people of the new generation but also because it reminds me that all things are possible. My students are not jaded or cynical; most of them are founts of innovative ideas and unshaken ambition. They are not afraid of testing “crazy” theories or challenging common assumptions.

That’s why youth are so often the drivers of social change around the world, and since UUSC is bent on finding the most innovative, entrepreneurial approaches to the world’s problems, it’s also why we so often end up working with youth — in Haiti, Egypt, Kenya, and elsewhere. This issue of *Rights Now* focuses in part on just that kind of work.

Nor do we forget that our own Unitarian Universalist youth can provide unlimited enthusiasm for social justice. The UU College of Social Justice, profiled here, is UUSC and the UUA’s vehicle for tapping into that energy.

Young people are making a new world. UUSC is committed to seeing that it is a just world. The combination is exceptional!



Bill Schulz

Youth at the Crossroads of Faith and Justice

By Sam Jones



Attendees of the 2012 Youth Justice Training in Boston, Mass.

The Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice (UUCSJ) embarks on its second Summer of Justice this year, with a particular emphasis on youth engagement. UUCSJ, a collaboration of the Unitarian Universalist Association and UUSC, sits at the intersection of UU faith and UU justice work — a crucial place for youth involvement.

Following a partnership model pioneered by UUSC's programs, UUCSJ has developed an array of programs built around firsthand experience and learning with partner organizations working around the globe. "Incorporating UU theology

and history into our programs brings an awareness that we don't begin from scratch in this work," said Rev. Kathleen McTigue, UUCSJ's director. "Grounding our programs in contemplative practices — such as group reflection and worship, and individual prayer or meditation — helps to create a wider, more holistic understanding for our participants." UUCSJ has specially tailored several programs to deliver that experience to youth and young adults.

After a powerful first year, the Youth Justice Training returns this July, bringing high-school students from across the country together to

explore justice issues in the context of their UU faith. Last summer, 10 young people gathered in Boston, Mass., for a week of intensive training and service. Working with Boston-based social justice organizations, the youth studied tactics for social change through a lens of economic injustice. Delving into the call to justice work as part of their faith was an integral part of the week, as was examining how to “bring home” the skills and knowledge they gained.

Richelle Perry, a youth participant in the 2012 training, wrote, “It was a great experience, and I think everyone got really excited about the prospects for social justice work in our churches

and communities. I’m already seeing the changes my week at the justice summit can make in my community.” This year’s Youth Justice Training will be expanded to accommodate 30 high-school students and will take place in July 2013.

For college-aged students and other young adults, UUCSJ will sponsor internships this summer with overseas partner organizations. Last summer UUCSJ launched the inaugural Global Justice Internships for young adults ages 19–34. Two interns were placed with the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP), a UUSC partner and Haitian farmers’ collaborative, which has worked

Gifts for Coming-of-Age Youth



The next generation of activists is embarking on a new journey of spiritual discovery and social justice. Mark the occasion with a token that symbolizes a strong connection to their congregation and UU heritage.

Visit shop.uusc.org today to order UUSC’s flaming-chalice jewelry and charms.

for over 40 years on community organizing and sustainable agriculture in rural Haiti.

The UUCSJ interns spent two months living at MPP's training compound, immersed in the community there. One, Emma Elbaum, taught English to many of the workers and children who lived in the area. The other, Evan Carter, used his video production skills on MPP's behalf, helping create media to celebrate MPP's fortieth anniversary and spread its message far beyond Haiti (watch a video he made at uusc.org/mppmedia). Both found the internship to be an extraordinary

learning experience, and MPP is eager to welcome new interns in the summer of 2013.

For more information about the 2013 Youth Justice Training, service-learning opportunities, and young adult internships, please visit uucsj.org or contact UUCSJ at info@uucsj.org or 617-301-4326.

Sam Jones is UUCSJ's associate for marketing and enrollment.

Beyond Youth

UUCSJ offers a number of experiences for adults, too! Take part in hands-on justice work through one of the following programs:

Haiti Just Recovery

Work alongside members of Haiti's Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP) as they construct the next phase of the eco-village, an innovative model for a sustainable rural community (find out more on page 10).

UU Holdeen India Program: Justice for Rural India

Help grassroots UUA partners document their efforts organizing for land rights while you learn firsthand how they are changing the complex web of power and privilege.

New Orleans Community Building: Turning the Tides

Explore a holistic and equitable recovery from Hurricane Katrina with the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal, a community-based organization that UUSC helped establish following the hurricane.

To check out dates, learn more, and register, visit uucsj.org today.

Preparing Youth for Peace in Kenya

By Martha Thompson

As Kenya's April 2013 presidential elections approach, people are reporting rising tensions and increased momentum for violence. In 2007 presidential elections there sparked a wave of violence that killed 1,000 people and displaced 600,000 more. But there is hope that this year will be different. In Kenya's Western Province, the Kakamega Grassroots Initiative (KGI), a UUSC partner, is training youth to become catalysts for peace.

"The youth are eager to learn what they can do to build peace before the elections," said Rev. Polycap Keta, head of KGI. This development is meaningful — given that youth were often at the forefront of the 2007 violence — and has been fostered by KGI's work with displaced people since 2008.

KGI identified 40 multiethnic youth leaders to participate in an intensive course in peace-building

skills in November 2012. Keta reported on the training's success: the youth enthusiastically committed to spreading the message of peace and unity among their family and peers "in the bus, in the grinding mill, in their families, wherever they go."

Moving forward, the youth will advocate against interethnic violence, influence their peers, and share their skills. They plan to gather periodically for joint reflection and hone their efforts by discussing their work with each other. So that youth have a stake in peace, KGI gives them a small business loan to start work. They literally become peacemakers in the marketplace, the very site of much of the 2007 violence. They are being given a chance in order to give peace a chance.

Martha Thompson is manager of UUSC's Rights in Humanitarian Crises Program.

Two youths who have pooled their funds to start a clothing business in a Kakamega market.



Opening the Doors to America's Kitchens

Continued from front cover



ROC-United workers from around the community visit the historic Haymarket memorial in Chicago.

Photo by Ariel Jacobson

As the restaurant industry grows — more than 10 million workers and record sales of \$632 billion in 2012 — people’s attention to how food choices affect health, the environment, and local economies has grown (think ethical eating, organic and local food, and more). Yet how workers are treated, in restaurants and throughout the food supply chain, has largely been omitted from this increased consciousness. A true concept of sustainability must also encompass the human rights of all the people who work to bring us our food.

Challenges in the restaurant industry

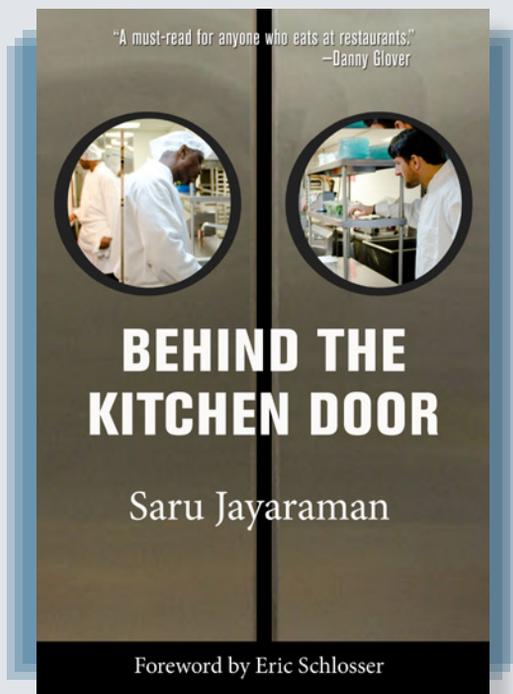
ROC-United, a UUSC partner that has more than 10,000 members in 19 cities, has been striving to redefine the industry for years. They’ve successfully organized and

trained thousands of restaurant workers, opened two worker-owned cooperative restaurants, and engaged about 100 restaurant employers in choosing the “high road” to profitability with fair labor practices. Significant systemic problems remain, however.

ROC-United has documented extensive poverty, wage theft, health and safety hazards, discrimination, sexual harassment, and lack of basic benefits in the industry. They found that more than 87 percent of restaurant workers lack paid sick days and two-thirds of all restaurant workers reported cooking and serving food while sick. The federal minimum wage for tipped workers remains at \$2.13 per hour, the same it was 20 years ago. And although the law requires employers to make up the difference between that and the

continued on page 8

Take Action for Restaurant Workers



- Watch *Behind the Kitchen Door* video trailers at uusc.org/bkd.
- Change the conversation by making *Behind the Kitchen Door* a bestseller; buy the book at uusc.org/bkdorder.
- Be part of a UUSC Get-Together with author Saru Jayaraman on February 24 — register at uusc.org/gettogether or check out the archive later.
- Download a diners' action kit at uusc.org/ccr/restaurants.
- Apply for a microgrant to spread the word (see page 9).

“Half of all Americans eat out at least once a week. The restaurant has become our second kitchen. In her groundbreaking new book, Saru Jayaraman exposes a missing plotline in the story of our food: the story of who’s behind the kitchen door, how they’re treated, and why it matters. Hers is a captivating, rousing story. If you care about where your food comes from, this book is for you. Read this book, get inspired, and join the fight for fair food behind the kitchen door.”

—Anna Lappé, founder of the Real Food Media Project and bestselling author of *Diet for a Hot Planet*

regular minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour if tips fail to cover the gap, the reality is that employers seldom do.

Taking consumers behind the kitchen door

What will it take to change these conditions? After repeated unsuccessful attempts to pass fair minimum-wage legislation, it has become clear that it will take a groundswell of public support to advance rights for restaurant workers. Most critical to this effort is the active participation of the only group more powerful than the immensely well-resourced and politically connected National Restaurant Association lobby group — consumers.

Just as diners changed the restaurant industry by asking for organic and locally sourced options, they can shift restaurant practices from the bottom up by requesting respect for workers' rights. To motivate consumers, Saru Jayaraman, ROC-United's codirector and cofounder, has written *Behind the Kitchen Door: What Every Diner Should Know About the People Who*

Feed Us, which is being released on February 13 to highlight the tipped minimum wage of \$2.13 (2/13/13). This book provides an inside look into the personal histories and experiences of restaurant workers. It is the key to reaching a broad audience and a unique opportunity for Unitarian Universalists and other UUSC and ROC-United supporters to bring a discussion of restaurant working conditions into the national conversation.

If you help take the lead in buying the book and sharing the book's message, *Behind the Kitchen Door* has a chance to make it onto the *New York Times* bestseller list — garnering further national attention for restaurant workers and their call for better conditions. Workers, employers, and consumers will together forge a new path forward to sustainability. Remember, “the customer is always right” — and it's time to tell the restaurant industry what customers think is right for workers.

Ariel Jacobson is a senior associate in UUSC's Economic Justice Program.

ROC-United cofounders: Saru Jayaraman and Fekka Mamdouh



Microgrants to Create a Groundswell of Consumer Pressure

At UUSC, our members are central to our theory of change. You help us to educate and mobilize members of your community — and we want to provide you with some resources to do it. Please apply for a microgrant to help you spread the word about respecting the rights of restaurant workers!

What is your exciting idea to support the launch of *Behind the Kitchen Door* and stand up for restaurant workers in your community? Resources may be available to hold discussion groups, events, and actions.

To learn more and apply for a Choose Compassionate Consumption microgrant, please visit uusc.org/ccm/microgrant. Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis — apply soon!

Bid for Justice!

Looking for a unique gift — for your loved ones or yourself? Get ready to find it in UUSC's online auction, running March 15–30. Featured items will include one-of-a-kind paintings from youth artists in Haiti, luxury vacation stays, a service-learning trip to Haiti, and hand-woven baskets from a UUSC partner in Kenya.

Mark your calendar today and visit uusc.org/auction on March 15 to start your bidding!



Surviving and Thriving

Successful models for sustainable recovery in Haiti

By Jessica L. Atcheson

Since Haiti's 2010 earthquake, UUSC has partnered with the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP) in the Central Plateau on pilot projects to support survivors, create sustainable rural livelihoods, and foster people's control over their own food. Beyond initial relief work, UUSC has made a long-term commitment in Haiti, redefining recovery to include social justice. As part of these efforts, UUSC has championed two innovative MPP models: the eco-village and tire gardens. These models are bearing fruit — and vegetables, as the case may be — and UUSC is helping transform them from testing ground into template.

The concept of the eco-village

The first MPP eco-village — built with financial and on-the-ground support from UUSC — is home to 10 families that survived the earthquake in Port-au-Prince and fled to the countryside. Delivrance Jean-Baptiste, her husband, and their four children moved into a new home there in December 2011. In addition to a roof over their heads, they have land to farm — a way to make a sustainable living, something that's hard to come by outside of (and often even in) Port-au-Prince. MPP provides them with training in organic

farming methods. A year after families started tending the land, Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, MPP's founder and leader (and no relation to Delivrance), observed: "Many of the families in the eco-village had never done agriculture. But now they do it so well — and they like it!"

More than a village — a vision

Chavannes would be the first to tell you, though, that this is about more than one eco-village and 10 families — it's about a vision of a prosperous and self-reliant rural Haiti. After seeing the eco-village's initial success, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., began working with MPP to fund an additional four villages; villages two and three are under way, and UUSC is raising funds for a sixth village. This adds up to a community of 60 families — enough to create and sustain a school and rural clinic.

Wendy Flick, manager of UUSC's Haiti program, will soon begin presenting the model to the Haitian government and various international nongovernmental organizations in hopes of getting it adopted and replicated on a broader scale in Haiti.



Tire gardens

One of the most compelling features of the eco-village is the tire gardens — personal vegetable gardens in recycled tire planters alongside each house. The planters retain rainwater and are far more productive than traditional gardens. Just five tire gardens can feed a family of four for a year. Each family at the eco-village has at least 20, which means they can sell surplus produce — peppers, spinach, carrots, and more — at the nearby market.

Flick spoke to Delivrance after her first tire-garden harvest. “She was so excited,” Flick recalled. “She had just been to the market with her mature peppers the week before and had sold \$60 U.S. worth of peppers — in Haitian terms, that is a fortune. She was beside

herself.” With that income, Delivrance can afford school fees for her children and doctor’s visits. “Thanks to the things that we plant and harvest, it helps us make it through,” she says.

From the country to the city

Tire gardens are now being piloted in Port-au-Prince, where UUSC is working with a group of youth and young adults called the Bright Educators of Delmas (known as GEAD, its Haitian acronym). As Guerna Salomon, a member of the GEAD executive committee, explains, “The purpose of the project is to enable people in Port-au-Prince to eat from their own gardens and to know how the food was cultivated.”

GEAD members learned the technique from MPP, and months later Salomon gestures to the flourishing tire gardens beside her, overlooking the city with rebar and reconstruction in view. “Here it is, what we learned,” she says. “We didn’t want to keep it to ourselves; we came here, and we shared it with everybody else.” More than 48 families in Port-au-Prince are now cultivating these gardens. As neighbors see the results, more and more people want to join the movement.

Hope and success

Word about these models is spreading because they work. Delivrance and her family have now been in their home for more than a year. Their tire gardens are thriving, and they are growing additional crops on the land next to their homes. They are part of a robust rural community, and they are looking toward the future. Delivrance’s husband, Elanese Jerome, says it well: “We’ll never lose hope. As long as we have life, we’ll continue to grow.”

Jessica L. Atcheson is UUSC’s writer and editor.

Learn More and Take Action

- Watch videos about MPP’s eco-village at uusc.org/villagevideos.
- Register for a service-learning trip to Haiti with the UU College of Social Justice at uucsj.org/haiti.
- Donate to support the sixth eco-village at uusc.org/haiti/donate.



More Than Money

By Maxine Neil



A lifelong UU, Eleanor “Ebe” Emmons-Apt is currently a member of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, where she serves on the Social Action Council and takes part in the Interfaith Impact Network. For those and other reasons, Emmons-Apt is a dream supporter for a human rights organization like UUSC.

Emmons-Apt, a member of the UUSC Board of Trustees and Stewardship Circle, believes that the stability, safety, and joy she has been blessed with also carry the obligation to defend the rights of people who are oppressed and disenfranchised. Growing up during the struggle for desegregation of schools in Boston, she learned this from her mother and has in turn passed these values down to her own children.

She chooses to invest in UUSC — both personally and through her family foundation — as an expression of those values. “I love that this organization gives concrete expression to the UU principles — especially the worth and dignity of every person; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence,” Emmons-Apt says.

More than just donating, Emmons-Apt delves deeply into UUSC’s work. She identifies what she finds most striking about it: “I like the UUSC’s nimble, flexible approach to human rights work and the continual assessment of what issues are most important and where in the world work can be done right now.” Emmons-Apt embodies UUSC’s dream donor — someone who not only gives money but also has a deep commitment to active participation in UUSC’s mission.

Maxine Neil is UUSC’s director of institutional advancement. If you would like to learn more about how you can support UUSC’s work, please contact Neil at 617-301-4313 or mneil@uuscs.org.

In Their Own Words: Safe Drinking Water Is a Basic Human Right

An interview with Maria Herrera of the Community Water Center

Conducted by Jessica L. Atcheson

UUSC worked with the Community Water Center (CWC) in Visalia, Calif., to ensure that community voices were heard during the struggle to pass California's A.B. 685, a landmark bill affirming the human right to water. Thanks to grassroots work by a broad coalition, that bill was signed into law September 25, 2012. The following is an abridged interview from October 2012 with Maria Herrera, CWC's community advocacy director; to read the full interview online, visit uusuc.org/mariainterview.

Many people aren't aware that access to clean water is an issue in the United States. Tell us what some California communities face.

In the Central Valley here in California, and all over the state, many communities don't have access to safe, clean, or affordable drinking water. Often times these are also low-income communities of color, small communities of a couple hundred homes. For decades, they haven't had the luxury of safe drinking water coming out of their taps, and they rely on old and dilapidated infrastructure.

So what does passage of A.B. 685 mean for children and families in California?

For decades families have had to

live with this reality — paying really high water rates for water they can't drink, and then having to travel to neighboring communities to get clean drinking water. We wanted to insure that safe drinking water is a basic human right and make sure that we are advancing that goal — that's specifically what A.B. 685 is going to do. It recognizes this issue, unveils the reality that communities have been facing, and gives clear direction to state agencies to consider this policy when they're making decisions that could impact whether people have safe drinking water.

CWC has been working for years to get this law passed. Tell us about that journey.

It wasn't easy, because there was a lot of opposition from powerful interests who didn't want to see the status quo in California's water policy change.

We did community advocacy in partnership with allies in the faith-based community, like UUSC and the UU Legislative Ministry of California [UULMCA]; public health advocates; and environmental organizations. We connected community partners directly to decision makers to show that this is



María Herrera

a human issue that has real impacts on California families.

The stories, testimonies, and direct communication with leaders made a significant difference in moving the bill forward. September 25, when the governor signed the bill, was a glorious day for our communities — a day of shifting power.

How did you feel when you heard that Governor Brown signed the bill?

I literally was speechless for a moment before I got out, “Oh my god, we won! We won!” We had struggled for years, and this was truly groundbreaking. And then, of course, the tears came, because I just couldn’t believe that we — a small group of people — had overcome powerful interests and had influenced

our decision makers to the point that they did the right thing. That was just a momentous occasion that I will forever remember.

How has it been to work with UUSC, UULMCA, and the Safe Water Alliance?

I feel so privileged to have worked with amazing, dedicated, passionate people — you can see how much they care about this issue and the respect that they have for the community partners who are part of this effort.

And UUSC was a true partner that helped CWC do what needed to get done — supporting our community advocacy and our work to raise public awareness, broaden support, and educate decision makers. You helped

us ensure that A.B. 685 was truly a bottom-up effort and the communities who needed this bill were part of the decision making.

What is next on the horizon now that the bill is law?

We've got to work with the state and various agencies on implementation. Even though the bill doesn't go into effect until January 1, 2013, it is already making change. I recently sat in a meeting with the Department of Public Health in which the director began the meeting by reminding us all that safe drinking water is

a huge priority of the governor's administration and that A.B. 685 recognizes that this a human right. It really changes the dynamic of discussion.

Read the full interview at uusc.org/mariainterview.

Jessica L. Atcheson is UUSC's writer and editor.

Historic Water Legislation in California

On September 26, 2012, Governor Brown signed A.B. 685 — the first state policy on the human right to water in the United States — into California law. The Community Water Center (CWC) and the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, both grassroots UUSC partners, worked for many years to pass this meaningful legislation, which requires state agencies to consider the human right to water when making decisions about funding criteria, regulations, and policy.

The law reads: "It is hereby declared to be the established policy of the state that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and

accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes."

A.B. 685 was introduced by State Assembly Member Mike Eng (D-Alhambra) and cosponsored by the Safe Water Alliance, which includes UUSC, the UU Legislative Ministry of California, community partners like CWC, and allies. The victory was made possible in part by a visit to California from Catarina de Albuquerque, the U.N. special rapporteur on the human right to water, who evaluated and spotlighted the poor water services in California.

A Deliberate Act

By Maxine Neil



Many of us are good at planning. We plan for vacations, children, college tuition, weddings, and retirements. Unfortunately, not many plan for what happens when we are no longer here. There is often fear around writing a will, almost as if the act will lead to our immediate demise. Rodney and Jeannette Debs of Niceville, Fla., have conquered that fear, though, and are two of more than 175 individuals who have included UUSC in their estate plans.

Rod and Jeannette have been together since 1982, when Jeannette was an active member of the UU Congregation in Binghamton, N.Y., and Rod visited for the first time. Since then, Rod attended seminary, they raised a daughter, and Rod became the senior minister at the UU Fellowship of the Emerald Coast in Valparaiso, Fla.

The Debs family recognizes the importance of supporting human rights and social justice not only now

but beyond their lifetimes. In addition to making provision for their daughter in their will, they have included UUSC. As Rod describes it, “UUSC conducts global work for social justice by working efficiently with partners around the world — reaching at-risk populations where other NGOs many times will not or can’t go, and I want to leave a legacy that is significant if only to the beneficiaries of UUSC’s work.”

Including UUSC in their estate plans assures the Debs family that, even when they are no longer around, the work of protecting women, girls, and other vulnerable people will continue. And they are proof positive that writing your will does not bring on one’s imminent demise!

Maxine Neil is UUSC’s director of institutional advancement. If you would like to learn more about including UUSC in your estate plans, please contact Neil at 617-301-4313 or mneil@uuscs.org.

UUSC's Not-So-Hidden Treasure

The National Volunteer Network

By Lauralyn Smith

One of UUSC's most valuable assets comes in the form of people power: the National Volunteer Network. Engaging fellow congregation members in UUSC's work, these volunteers gain personal growth and development while helping UUSC thrive.

The mainstay of the Volunteer Network is the local representative, who serves as a direct link between their congregation and UUSC. Local reps build solid relationships with congregational leadership, such as ministers, religious education professionals, board members, and social action committees. The local reps are UUSC's eye-to-eye partners in their congregations — people who

are close to the ground, know and are trusted by those they serve, and share with UUSC their experience of how to best achieve mutual goals.

Local reps and other congregational volunteers help to raise approximately 12 percent of UUSC's annual revenue, a vital component of UUSC's annual budget. There are local reps serving in over 540 congregations nationwide. They are an important reason that UUSC is able to put 87 percent of its expenses toward program work, not administration. Local reps are vital in helping UUSC communicate effectively by mobilizing their congregations to act together when urgent issues need member participation.

Regional coordinators are



Members of the UUSC National Volunteer Network with UUSC staff and partners.

experienced volunteer leaders who mentor 10 or so local reps in nearby congregations. Local reps not under the jurisdiction of a regional coordinator are mentored by UUSC staff. Regional coordinators aren't liaisons for a specific congregation, but they do help UUSC connect more broadly with UU districts and clusters. UUSC supports the Volunteer Network leadership with an annual training conference and ongoing support resources.

The Volunteer Network leadership also includes national cochairs, who participate in volunteer policy decisions. The cochairs, who oversee three territories in the United States, nominate and mentor 9–12 regional coordinators in their territory.

In addition to the roles listed above, UUSC also has a multitude of project coordinators — people who help with specific campaigns, such as Justice Sunday, an annual program

that provides resources for learning, reflection, and action on a key human rights issue. More than 340 people facilitate Justice Sunday and many more work on other programs and projects.

The Volunteer Network — grassroots supporters joining together in their dedication to human rights — is one of UUSC's treasures. UUSC could not be as effective as it is without these volunteers!

Lauralyn Smith is UUSC's senior associate for member development. If you are interested in becoming a member of UUSC's National Volunteer Network, e-mail volunteerservices@uusc.org.



Coming to the Streets of Egypt

Transitional justice for the people

By Jessica L. Atcheson

Revolution is hard, messy, and fractious. Transition from dictatorship to democracy inevitably gives rise to conflict between any number of groups. But democracy, even with its own challenges, is worth it. Dalia Ziada, executive director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development (IKCD), a UUSC partner in Cairo, sees firsthand how the people who stood in Tahrir Square are

experiencing this every day. As Egypt moves forward into democracy, UUSC is working with IKCD to foster a sense of reconciliation and transitional justice among all Egyptians — and doing so in some very creative ways.

On the ground in Egypt, Ziada and IKCD are concentrating on four key areas of conflict. Reconciliation efforts are focusing on tensions between the following:



UUSC partner Dalia Ziada

- The people and the police
- The Muslim majority and religious minorities
- Revolutionaries and members of the old regime
- Nongovernmental organizations and the government

As director of one of the oldest human rights organizations in the Middle East, Ziada is acutely aware of the hostility between government and civil society. “We hope now, as we are turning into a democracy, that the relationship between the government and the people — they should be completing each other, not competing against one another,” she says. Ziada hopes to encourage empathy, understanding, and partnership across the board. “For the interest of Egypt, everyone should be involved in the transformation,” she adds.

To achieve that, UUSC and IKCD have embarked on innovative grassroots field work in the form of the One Hand project. “It’s very important for civil society now to find creative ways to do things. Now we are a semi-democracy; we are no longer under a dictatorship. So the techniques and the tools and the targets should be different.”

Accordingly, IKCD will be using street theater to communicate with people, educate them about transitional justice, and garner their ideas and feedback. Scripts for the street performances address religious conflict, human rights, and more. “People will learn, will have a vision, and will help us find the solution,” Ziada explains.

Youth are critical to this process. They took the lead in the revolution, and they are indispensable to this transition phase. In addition to the One Hand project, IKCD is working on an academy for turning youth revolutionaries into politicians. “Youth are the future,” Ziada says. “When we see the young people who made the 2011 revolution in the government in five years, ten years, that will be the real success of the revolution.”

The work of reconciliation is essential to a healthy future for post-revolution Egypt. “I think it is the vision of all young people, of all young revolutionaries, to see Egypt as a liberal democracy five years from now,” Ziada shares. “By liberal democracy, I don’t mean liberalism as a political ideology, but I mean free democracy — real democracy that comes with civil rights, with individual freedom, with respect for human rights and women’s rights, with proper empowerment of all people.” Together IKCD and UUSC are paving the way from unrest and revolution to understanding and justice.

Jessica L. Atcheson is UUSC’s writer and editor.

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