



Sample Introductions to Partner Videos

For Guest at Your Table 2021-22 Worship Services

Videos Introduction

Every year during the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Guest at Your Table program, we have the chance to learn about four people connected to UUSC partner organizations – the “guests” in Guest at Your Table. The program is a chance to learn about critical human rights issues around the world through stories of people who are deeply connected to the issues and the communities they impact. You can think of the program as offering *stories from the grassroots*, gathered for Unitarian Universalist congregations – to tie us more closely together with issues on the ground and innovative change-makers around the world. It is also a way to learn about the grassroots organizations we are helping through our support of UUSC. Over the next four weeks, we will hear directly from this year's “guests” through videos that they have recorded for us.

Video 1: Axel Fuentes

Today I have the pleasure of introducing you to our first of our four “guests,” Axel Fuentes. Axel is the director of Rural Community Workers Alliance (RCWA), a grassroots organization based in northern Missouri that supports the rights of immigrant and refugee workers in the meat processing industry.

The meat industry got a lot of well-deserved negative press early on during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, you may remember the disturbing story about executives at an Iowa pork plant who had a betting pool about how many of their workers would contract the disease.

These kinds of unjust conditions are something that long predates COVID and that Axel and RCWA have been working to combat for years. Here is a clip of Axel sharing about his work with RCWA, including their response to COVID-19.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/596023719/669a7f5070>

Video length: 2 minutes and 23 seconds

Video 2: Myra Dahgypaw

Ethnic minorities of Burma (also known as Myanmar) have long endured violence and discrimination at the hands of the Burmese military, including the 2017 genocide against the Rohingya Muslim minority, which forced more than 700,000 people to flee from their homes into neighboring Bangladesh. Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh still make up the world's largest refugee camp.

As part of UUSC’s Guest at Your Table program, today’s “guest” is Myra Dahgaypaw, a leader from another one of Burma’s ethnic minority communities, who is making important connections among ethnic groups to work together for justice and accountability in Burma.

Here is a clip of Myra sharing about her firsthand experience with military brutality as a member of the Karen ethnic minority, and what she is doing to support the people of Burma continuing to face this same kind of brutality today.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/596042719/9f6f7eb1f4>

Video length: 1 minute and 24 seconds

Extended interview with Myra: <https://vimeo.com/596031488/f6902ad2d8>

Video length: 14 minutes and 40 seconds

Video 3: Kioa Island Community Organization

Around the world, Indigenous communities are facing the harshest and earliest impacts of climate change. As a result of rising seas, melting permafrost, and other impacts of the climate crisis they did little to create, Indigenous communities are at risk of having to relocate from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived for between hundreds and thousands of years.

Today we are highlighting UUSC’s partner the Kioa Island Community Organization, or KICO, which is supporting an island in Fiji to become more climate resilient. Here is a clip of another one of KICO’s leaders sharing about their important work.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/596027172/967fc177f5>

Video length: 1 minute and 20 seconds

Cristian Guzmán Merlo

Communities in rural Nicaragua are grappling with widespread violence against women as well as damaging farming practices promoted by multinational companies, which cause ecological damage and take over their traditional ways of life. UUSC’s partner Fundación Entre Mujeres (FEM) is working to combat both, including through a feminist farming cooperative that helps women access their own land and gain financial independence.

Today’s UUSC Guest at Your Table “guest” is Cristian Guzmán Merlo, one of the directors of FEM, who shares about her work with FEM in this short clip.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/595963115/0944875137>

Video length: 42 seconds