

2013 MUUSJA ANNUAL REPORT

March 2014



Our Mission:

MUUSJA unleashes the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota UUs to realize a just and loving world.

Guided by our Unitarian Universalist Principles, we value:

- Acting through Love for Justice
- Inclusive, Multi-generational Community
- Courageous Leadership
- Collective Power
- Systemic Change



www.muusja.org



Board Chair Report: A year of milestones

Jennifer Jewell Thomas

MUUSJA achieved key milestones in 2013, coming full circle on focus issues, realizing dreams, and building leaders.

We came full circle by renewing work on the issue of housing. We started in 2000 focused on affordable housing in Minneapolis. In late 2013 we initiated a new effort with the 8+ MN UU congregations doing extensive service work on housing, to collaborate on advocacy for housing stability at the legislature.

We came full circle realizing our dream of marriage equality. Our first statewide issue in 2005, led by then-volunteer, Ralph Wyman, succeeded in defeating legislation for an anti-marriage-equality amendment and articulated the ultimate dream of marriage equality. In 2013, we realized that early dream by building on the 2012 defeat of the constitutional amendment to achieve true marriage equality! Let us forever dream big on our goals!

We came full circle on building leaders. Ralph Wyman, the volunteer, became our Director/Organizer in 2007. In 2013, after six+ years of

dedicated service, he “retired” as Executive Director to return to a volunteer role with MUUSJA. Ralph leaves a remarkable legacy, helping establish MUUSJA as a formidable collaborator on state issues where a values-based, faith voice makes a difference.



Demonstrating our capacity to build new leaders, the board was delighted to hire Laura Smidzik as our Acting Executive Director, who first served MUUSJA as a ministerial intern working to defeat the anti-marriage-equality amendment. Learn more about Laura's incredible talent and experience on page 2.

We also expanded MUUSJA's leadership capacity by adding four new board members, for a total of nine talented directors representing the greatest geographic and congregational diversity ever. (page 6). It has been an honor for

me to serve as board chair the past three years and we will tap this great board for new leadership in 2014.

MUUSJA also came full circle, achieving goals for racial equity in a high-profile, metro public-works project. Ralph has served as a key participant of the core team for the HIRE MN coalition that achieved remarkable success in 2013, realizing target racial and gender hiring goals for high-paying jobs on the Central Corridor investment of public funds. We hope this will be a model for other state public works projects.

In 2014, MUUSJA will continue the HIRE MN coalition and new groups on housing and health care, with a renewed focus on environmental justice. Meanwhile, we'll continue work on voting rights, LGBT justice and reproductive justice.

So let us be about the task of UU justice. Thanks for your support.

Jenny Thomas, Chair
jjt@jjthomas.net

2013 MUUSJA In Review

Message from the 2013 Executive Director (2007-Jan 2014)

Ralph Wyman

I am so pleased to report that 2013 was another effective and successful year. Our UU collective voice for justice in Minnesota kept building on our historic vote on the anti-marriage amendment. Passing affirmative freedom to marry for all loving couples here was quite the frosting on the wedding cake!

How amazing to have been part of the formation of *UUs out for Marriage Equality* back in 2005, when our group thought this was a far off horizon to aim for. Just eight years later, a blink in the arc of human progress, and in law we're here now! We're retiring the UUU4ME name, but not our commitment to our LGBT community.

Advances in racial equity were part of our 2013 successes, and a significant focus for me in my work for MUUSJA. Through diligent attention and three years of community mobilization, we helped ensure that the Central Corridor Light Rail project (the "Green Line" opening in June of 2014) met and exceeded their substantial workforce goals for women and for people of color.



Thousands of hours of well-paid, career-track work was done by black, Asian, Native American and Latino/a men and women for the rail project, and our MUUSJA commitment to HIRE Minnesota and to the Met Council process helped make that happen! Watch for our push for the Viking's Stadium to meet and beat 32% workers of color over the next few years!

Our board continued to recruit new members and increase our statewide representation, and began the process of supporting new issue working

groups. I'm excited that MUUSJA is returning to its roots in Affordable Housing and Homelessness with the new UUs Heading Home campaign, and is starting to formulate next steps for Minnesota to be a leader in Healthcare with a new campaign for single-payer for MN in 2017.

I'm optimistic that the time is right for us - and for the communities we connect with - to recommit to our strong environmental and climate work as well.

As 2013 came to a close, I reflected back on my six years as your organizer and Executive Director and realized that, with our strong track record, effective board, and new energies rising for new justice challenges, this was the moment for me to step back and make way for the next phase of MUUSJA.

I am thrilled that Laura Smidzik is helping MUUSJA take these next steps, and you will most certainly see me in my volunteer capacity with this justice community I've joyfully been part of. I'm excited for what we'll do together next, even as I try on new things personally and professionally. See you at the Capitol too!

—Ralph Wyman, Executive Director

Meet our new Acting Executive Director

Laura Smidzick named Acting E.D. Jan-July 2014

The MUUSJA board was delighted to hire Laura Smidzik as Acting Executive Director, effective January 25, 2014. Laura is replacing Ralph Wyman who is stepping down as ED after over six years of outstanding service. We wish Ralph the very best and enthusiastically welcome Laura.

Laura brings a wealth of experience and skill to this position including her service as executive director with Project 515 and Rainbow Families, board chair at Unity Church-Unitarian, and program director at Macalester College and Hamline University. Laura is in her final semester seminary training at United Theological Seminary (UTS) and is well-known to many MUUSJA volunteers as she served as one of our interns from UTS on the Marriage Amendment organizing work.

Laura was a ministerial intern at First Universalist Church last year and oversaw the MN Standing on the Side of Love project which included a statewide UU service for Marriage Equality and a social media pastoral care project. Laura will only be able to serve as our "acting" Executive Director through July because of other professional commitments.



We are blessed to have someone of Laura's ability to lead during this transition period. Stay tuned for more information on our future staffing plans.

Action Highlights

Marriage Equality:

This cake from St. Cloud UU Fellowship says it all: "LOVE and JUSTICE WIN" in 2013! MUUSJA played a significant role in the faith voice that was essential in fulfilling the dream of marriage equality, which was signed into Minnesota law effective August 1, 2013. The effort was marked by big, joyful and successful Freedom to Marry faith rallies and participation in Pride. Thank you for Standing on the Side of Love to help make this success possible!



Racial Equity:

MUUSJA was also a critical partner in the significant success of the HIRE Minnesota coalition to hold the Metropolitan Council to task to meet racial and gender hiring goals on the Central Corridor Project. The successful conclusion of this three-year effort was in serious doubt when it began. Now this success has continued in the public investment in new stadiums. Special thanks to Ralph for his passionate leadership in this coalition effort.

Climate Change Changers: A new environmental focus began in late 2013 led by an enthusiastic group of leaders. We're delighted to see this renewed effort connecting congregations across the state on this critical issue. We look forward to great things in 2014.

Voting Rights: We signed on to the Restore the Vote coalition that is working to restore voting rights to citizens with felony convictions who are living in the community. The faith voice will be critical in achieving this goal.

Reproductive Justice::

Rev. Kelli Clement and the Association of Universalist Women (AUW) of First Universalist continue to lead our presence at the Pro-Choice Rally on Good Friday.

UUSAN Leader:

MUUSJA has become an important leader among the State Advocacy Networks (SANs) helping build UU grassroots organizing and advocacy capacity in states across the country. The SANs had a big presence at GA in 2013 with strong contributions by Ralph on behalf of MUUSJA.



The Power of Six

2014 MUUSJA Membership Campaign!

In 2014 we'll be launching our Power of Six campaign, based on the theory of social change that it only takes 6% of a group to have a big impact on the direction of the whole. We certainly see that when our small number of UUs have an outsized-impact in Minnesota and nationally.

MUUSJA is already halfway there with nearly 3% of the state UUs already members of MUUSJA. And most UUs in the state have never even heard of us! Help build awareness of MUUSJA at your congregation by inviting our staff or board to speak at a service and tell our story.

And watch for a report of MUUSJA membership by congregation. We'll be releasing the current status soon. Some small fellowships already exceed our 6% goal and a few larger congregations are close. In 2014, we'll report on which congregations get to the 6% goal of church members in MUUSJA, who achieves the highest share, who is the most improved, and more! It will be a fun way to build our power for UU social justice in Minnesota. This is an essential component of our plans to build a sustainable organization for the future.

Did You Know?

MUUSJA was founded in 2000 by visionary Unitarian Universalists who collaborated on social justice systemic change in **Minneapolis**. A few years later they expanded to the **Metro** area, and in 2006 the "M" in MUUSJA became **Minnesota** as the organization expanded statewide!

Those early founders included Rev. Wendy Jerome, Betsy Allis, Jo Haberman, Marcy Leussler and Barbara Skrivanek. Thank you!

Finance Highlights

Calendar/fiscal year	2013
Income	
Memberships & Gifts	\$9,315
Additional donations individual	4,193
Special Events	593
Congregations & Organizations	4,017
Grants	13,730
In-kind contributions	1,681
Total Income	\$33,529
Expenses	
Personnel & Prof. (incl. in-kind)	\$27,176
Office/Admin (incl. in-kind)	704
Communications (incl. in-kind)	1,338
Programs & dues	528
Fundraising (incl. in-kind)	366
Travel/GA & PSD Conferences	1,982
Total Expenses	\$32,094
Net Income	\$1,435

As an organization, we had a good year financially thanks to generous donations and effective cost control.

We continue to work to build a strong financial foundation, which relies—as always—on generous donations from members and donors like you. Thank you!

In 2013, we had grant support for our HIRE MN collaboration, substantial Sunday collections and, most importantly, generous individual contributions. Give to the Max Day reached a 3-year high for us, despite the site being down for hours. Thanks for your persistence and generosity!

We didn't raise as much as we had planned but we kept costs under control so ended the year with a small gain, helping replenish prudent reserves for MUUSJA.

We are partnering with more congregations across the state. Our vision is to expand staff capacity through increased membership and congregational support, and to build stronger partnerships and congregational connections.

Thank you to all our 2013 donors and supporters for building a solid base for our work! Thanks also to Prairie Star District, now MidAmerica Region, for serving as our fiscal sponsor.

Thank you!

Our 2013 donors sustain our work together!

Our work is strengthened by the financial support of donors like you. **Thank you!**

If your name should be included in our recognition, please contact Laura Smidzik at muus-ja1@gmail.com so that we may correct our records and acknowledge your gift.

Kathy Ahlers
 Judith Anderson
 Betsy Allis & Bill Elwood
 Cathy Apostle
 Nancy & Tom Atchison
 Roberta & Ken Avidor
 Jane & Dale Bacon
 Bob Benjamin & Cathy Coult
 Jody Beresford
 Lisa & Eric Berglund
 Carl Besser
 Gail Bishop
 Anne Black-Sinak
 Chris Bremer
 Nancy Browne
 Chris Burda
 Kathy Burek
 Terri Burnor
 Judie Carlson
 Bob & Suzannah Ciernia
 Madeline Cioci
 Glenn & Nan Corliss
 Nancy & Dennis Cramblit
 Sue Dailey
 Angela Davey
 Kay Dawson
 Lori Dehn
 Merle DeNuccio
 Mary DeYoung
 Connie Diercks
 Diane Dobitz
 Mary Doerr
 Jane Eastwood
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 Andrea & Bill Heier
 Stewart Hoagland
 Kat Janes
 Barry Johnson
 Carol Johnson
 Sherri Knuth
 Marci & David Leussler
 Mary Ann Lundquist
 Sandy MacLaughlen
 Ozzie Mayers
 Jennifer Mays
 Stephanie McCullough-Cain
 LaDonna Meinecke
 Polly Meyerding-Dedrick
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 Carolyn Muska
 Patricia Neal
 Cecelia Newton
 Joan & Dick Niemiec
 Cynthia & Jeremy Norton
 Jeanne Olson
 Fred Olson & Becca Brackett
 Nora Page
 Mibs Pearson
 Roger Peck
 Cathryn Pernu
 D'Ann Prior
 Seg & Marti Reckdahl
 Terry & Kathryn Richmond
 Dianne & Nick Rowse
 Roger & Carole Rydberg
 Susan Schonfeld & Doug Hicks
 Shelley Shreffler
 Madeline Simon
 Kay Slama

Sondra Smalley
 Dane Smith
 Caren Stelson
 Sharleen Stueland
 Robert Tapp
 Jenny & Dave Thomas
 Lindsey Thomas & David Lauth
 Joy Throm
 Susan & Jim Tincher
 Patty & John Trnka
 Bonita Underbakke
 Willis Unke
 Victor Urbanowicz
 Avi Viswanathan
 Grant Wacker
 Gloria Walters
 Marlene Walth
 Nancy Wangler & Dick Kern
 Marcia Wattson
 Barb Weatherhead
 Beverly Webb
 Mary Lou Werner
 Suzann Willhite & Kristen Siegesmund
 Ralph Wyman & Jim Foti

Minister's Hall of Fame

Rev. David Breeden
 & Theresa Zingery
 Rev. Lyn Burton
 Rev. Kelli Clement
 Rev. Jen Crow
 Rev. Wendy Jerome
 Rev. Bruce Johnson
 Rev. Dana & Wendy Reynolds
 Rev. Meg Riley
 Rev. Victoria Safford
 Rev. Justin Schroeder
 Rev. Suzanne Wasilczuk
 Rev. Bill Wier

Congregation Support

First Unitarian Society
 First Universalist Mpls
 UU White Bear Lake
 Michael Servetus
 First UU Rochester
 St Cloud UU Fellowship
 UU Fellowship Northfield

Join us to help realize MUUSJA's mission to *unleash the courageous leadership and collective power of Minnesota Unitarian Universalists to realize a just and loving world!*

DID YOU KNOW?
PAYPAL OFFERS
WEEKLY,
MONTHLY, OR
QUARTERLY
SUSTAINER
GIVING OPTION?
ASK US!

Support MUUSJA

Your memberships and contributions build our public moral voice for UU values.

Suggested Membership levels:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25/Student & limited income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50/Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100/Household | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250/Justice Builder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500/Leadership Circle | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000/Patron |

You may mail a check payable to "MUUSJA/MAR-UUA" to:

MUUSJA/MidAmerica Region-UUA
900 Mt Curve Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403
Thank you!!

Join/Donate online at muusja.org

giveMN.org
Click. Contribute. Change Your World.

Wish list!

Items & skills you can contribute to our UU justice movement!

- Technology assistance:
 - ✓ PC maintenance
 - ✓ Webcasting events & meetings
 - ✓ HTML template design
- Technology tools:
 - ✓ PC-based laptop (new or late-model)
 - ✓ Pro-quality web cam & mic
- Administrative support
 - ✓ Data entry
 - ✓ Fold & stamp mailings
 - ✓ Publication layout (MS Publisher)
- Event photographer
- Attorney for occasional consultation



To Help: contact muusja1@gmail.com

MUUSJA's Board:

We now have representation on the MUUSJA Board from four of the five largest congregations in the state, as well as medium and small sized congregations, including metro, suburban and Greater MN:

Jenny Jewell Thomas - Chair
First Universalist Church Mpls

Marcy Leussler - Treasurer
First Unitarian Society Mpls

Judy Goebel - Secretary
First Universalist Church Mpls

Stewart Hoagland
UU Church of Minnetonka

Rev. Wendy Jerome, co-founder
First Unitarian Society Mpls

Judy C. Foster
St. Cloud UU Fellowship

Rev. Bruce Johnson
UU Congregation of Duluth

Gail Bishop
First UU Church Rochester

Sherri Knuth
Unity Church-Unitarian St. Paul

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MUUSJA—MN UU Social Justice Alliance
% First Unitarian society
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