

# Recommendations for Discussion at the Summit

## Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression

### Cultural Misappropriation

- **Youth Council 2006 Resolution: Uprooting Cultural Misappropriation**

Specific issue being addressed: Over the past few years, there has been an awareness among YRUU leaders that within our UU faith communities the misappropriation of cultures and religions is not acknowledged in our religious education format and worship gatherings. As we move to become a religion that accepts all cultures and religions, offering our full attention to understanding all countries and First Nations is necessary to achieve and show respect for those cultures. We as UUs must understand that a culture's/religion's practices have many spiritual or cultural roots that cannot be recklessly borrowed because of the privilege which we all hold.

Goals:

- Make YRUU a community that respects cultures, religions, and individuals by examining our own spiritual practices.
- **A staff person in the UUA providing the service of cultural misappropriation review for current RE materials and newly developed resources.** Jova, Ian, and Youth Office staff will bring this suggestion to the Consultation on Youth Ministry process as a way to ensure that anti-racism and anti-oppression are core principles of UU youth ministry.
- Figure out ways to **address cultural misappropriation at the local and district level** (e.g. culturally insensitive district con themes)

### Resources

- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: YRUU Curricula Development with Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression and Identity Work Focus**

Specific issue being addressed: There is little to no support for youth who only participate in Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) only at a congregational level. These youth are often unaware of the principles and structure of YRUU, and there is especially a lack of resources regarding anti-racism/anti-oppression and identity work that are available to these youth.

Goals:

- A **congregational-level program** devoted to **educating youth about YRUU principles, structure, resources, and how to be involved at all levels: congregational, district, and continental.** The program should have a strong **focus on anti-racism/anti-oppression and identity work** for youth.
- **Anti-racism/anti-oppression and identity work** incorporated into the **Coming of Age (COA) and Our Whole Lives (OWL) programs.**
- **Anti-bias education** for children in congregational RE programs
- Youth & Young Adult Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Coordinator – **staff position** shared by Youth Office, Young Adult & Campus Ministry, Identity-Based Ministries

### General Recommendations

- Increase **adult support** for youth anti-racism/anti-oppression and social justice work
- More conversation about, attention to, and resources addressing:
  - **ageism and youth empowerment**

- **ableism**
- **classism** and **economic justice**
- All anti-racism/anti-oppression events and resources be inclusive of **Canada**
- Increase understanding about the **spiritual nature of anti-racism/anti-oppression work** – why we do it as a faith community.
- **Create an organization** that provides resources, support, and community for **GLBPTQQI youth** (gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, transgender, queer, questioning and intersex)
- Create a **youth & young adult caucus** within **Allies for Racial Equity**
- Figure out ways to create **con culture** that is **radically inclusive**, focused on **UU values and YRUU principles**, and provides **constructive workshops**.
- Conferences/communities for **Women/Gender Oppressed Folks and Male Allies**
- Increase youth participation in the **Green Sanctuary Project**

## Social Justice

- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: Get Out the Youth!**  
Specific issue being addressed: Young peoples' involvement in politics is at a low point.  
Hope to Achieve: Creation of a resource allowing young UUs to get involved in the political process, especially election campaigns.  
Long Term Goals:
  1. Accumulate resources and compile them in a concise on and offline document that would offer **information about the political process as well as about ways to participate**. This resource should reflect the continental nature of our organization. This resource would have to be mindful of the legal issues concerning separation of church and state.
  2. Change the World.
- Structural changes to the **YRUU Social Justice Training** – specifically: change the name to something more exciting (without an acronym), create more structures for information exchange between Social Action Coordinators
- Create a **Social Justice Training Collective**, modeled after Groundwork and other Chrysalis training collectives
- Increase **collaboration** with other groups – UU (e.g. UU Service Committee) and non-UU
- Congregational dialogue **curricula** about **Education Reform and Multiculturalism**

## Youth-Adult Relations and Intergenerational Community

### Congregations

YRUU Youth Council would like to see:

- More connection between youth group and **parents**, parents and youth advisors
- Policies on parents as advisors
- More youth advisor **involvement** in congregations
- More **Youth Advisor Trainings**
- Youth involvement in **youth advisor selection process**
- Process of resolving/managing **conflict** between advisors and youth
- Local **Youth Adult Committees** and **youth reps on Boards**

- **Membership** policies inclusive of youth
- Youth needs considered in **scheduling**
- More **funding** for youth programs
- More connection between **ministers** and youth groups
- Youth-led services, youth involvement in **worship planning**

#### District Level

- **“Best Practices” manual** for fostering right relations between youth and adults within districts and regions including:
  - Adult/sponsor orientation for cons, requirement that sponsors know the youth they are sponsoring
  - Advisor trainings, including emphasis on anti-racism and anti-oppression
  - Encouragement to ministers and religious educators to attend Chrysalis trainings
  - Background checks for adult advisors/sponsors
- **Cycle for Chrysalis trainings** offered at the district/regional level (could include inter-district/region training). Youth and adults should have the opportunity to attend at least one training per year.

#### Continental Level

- More trained youth and adult **chaplains** for youth, with attention to identities (People of Color, Queer, outside gender binary, etc.)
- Full youth members on the **GA Planning Committee** and **Nominating Committee** (see Governance/Structure section).
- Encourage **Allies for Racial Equity** adults to get advisor/youth-adult relations training and promote better youth-adult relations within the organization
- Concern about the culture of alcohol, particularly at General Assembly, being unwelcoming and unsafe for youth.
- Steering Committee should **select Youth Ministry Associates**.

#### General

- **Background checks** for all adults working with youth.

### **Spirituality/Worship**

- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: Bring Religion (Unitarian Universalism) and Spirituality into YRUU Lifestyle Beyond Worship**
  - **Each district host an annual Spirituality Development Conference.** This would help the youth develop the skills and amass the resources needed to bring spirituality back to share with their communities.
  - **Have chalice lightings before business meetings.** This would bring us back to our spiritual roots as a group, which we seem to have strayed from due to our love of governance.
  - Offer **workshops on UUism at conferences** including spirituality. We feel that if more youth are informed of our spiritual history as UUs, they will feel moved to reach into their own minds and find what they believe in.

- Opportunities to **learn about our own faith in conjunction with all the other faiths** out there would help build respect for other belief systems and structures, which is exceedingly important for right relations in today's multicultural society.
- **Chalice Circles** – time for youth to come together to learn more about each other and focus on the seven Unitarian Universalist principles.
- Create new **resources** and use all of the resources currently available to us for worship and spiritual development. New songs, new suggested worship themes.
- Get more people involved in **worship planning** processes. Develop the **skills and knowledge** of more people.
- Vision:
  - **Safe, consensual** and **healing** community for all.
  - No cultural misappropriation!
  - Allow people to name their **higher power**

## Outreach

- **What is the difference between secular outreach and faith community outreach?**
- **Outreach to:** Youth of Color, youth who don't feel at home (who are already involved), continental outreach to district/regional/local
- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: It's a Holiday, Let's Celebrate**  
Specific issue being addressed: Lack of Spirituality; Need for denominational growth; Need for greater awareness in general public.  
How resolution promotes YRUU principles: Establish a continental community of youth; Provide for worship, celebration, and rites of passage; Build the Unitarian Universalist movement: its traditions, membership, and heritage; Foster tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of diversity.  
Short term goals: Empower the Youth Office to create a report on the **steps needed to establish an official religious holiday** and create a report about **the possible UU holidays that could be established**. Connect with people who have proposed UU holidays, like Chalice and Religious Freedom Day. Research the background of these proposals and the history they celebrate. Bring these to Youth Council and the larger Association for consideration.
- Increase knowledge/awareness of things happening at different levels of YRUU by creating a **YRUU 101 resource** to send to congregations. This resource would encourage youth to get involved at larger levels. Would help YRUU Steering Committee be accountable to every level.
- Cities close together should **collaborate** to serve youth. Congregations should reach out to local community to host non-UU groups. Build bridges.
- More opportunities for youth to **be together, make connections**, not just do work. Conferences, lock-ins
- **Anti-racism and anti-oppression work** – makes youth communities more welcoming for all.
- Programs to **address exclusive behavior**.
- Strong **YRUU groups** at congregations.
- **Communication** – not just through e-mail and web. Information about opportunities more readily available.
- **Money:**
  - Scholarships for events

- Travel equalization
- Current reimbursement policy for volunteers/leaders is classist. Should not be expected to spend up-front and be reimbursed later.

## Governance/Structure

### Relationship Between YRUU and UUA

- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: Making GA Planning Committee and Nominations Committee Accountable to Youth**  
Specific issue being addressed: There are no youth on the Nominating Committee or the General Assembly Planning Committee, both of which have a deep effect on the youth community and denomination.  
Hopes to Achieve: To **get a youth on the GAPC and NomCom** so that specific issues relating to youth in our denomination and the youth at GA can be more accountably addressed. These positions would be elected by Youth Council.
- Structured support for **relationship** between **UUA Board** and Youth Council/Steering Committee/other **YRUU leaders**
- Increase **transparency** around **budget** issues, so that youth can have **input** into how budget is used
- **Youth Observer** and **Youth Trustee** on the UUA Board need to be accountable and report to YRUU Steering Committee.

### YRUU Leadership and Structure

- Set **election process** for Youth Council Representatives, perhaps happening in the fall so YCRs have time to prepare for their first Youth Council
- Clearer **job descriptions** for youth and adult volunteer leadership positions
- Add position to Steering Committee that is for a Canadian youth (e.g. Canadian At-Large on Youth Council)
- Institutional support and clarified roles for **People of Color Caucus** and **People of Color Advisory Council**

### YRUU Policies and Processes

- Updated **YRUU bylaws** that include YRUU's commitment to **anti-racism and anti-oppression**

## U.S.-Canada Connection

- **Youth Council 2006 passed a resolution called "Let's Be Inclusive, Eh?"**  
Specific Problem being addressed: Many "Continental" events are held without any Canadian content, making them essentially National (US American) events, which Canadian youth are invited to. Since the split of the CUC and the UUA, YRUU has remained a continental area; so truly continental events such as YSJT, Youth Council and Trainings of Trainers, are necessary in order for YRUU to meet the needs of all its constituents.  
Hope to Achieve: A requirement for **every conference or event that is billed as being "continental" to include Canadian content** of some sort, be it a workshop or presentation."

- Add position to YRUU Steering Committee that is for a Canadian youth (e.g. Canadian At-Large on Youth Council)

## Communication

- **Youth Council 2006 Recommendation: Facilitating Greater Communication Among Youth Council Representatives and Continentally About District Policy and Procedure**  
Specific issue being addressed: By providing a means to have inter-district and region communications throughout the year creates an environment in which Youth Council Representatives are better prepared to make policy and direction for Young Religious Unitarian Universalists if they understand what is happening in each district.

### Steps:

- District and regional representatives on Youth Council will **mail** their district or region's current by-laws, conference codes, safety policy, smoking policy, and any other applicable **policy or procedure to the UUA Youth Office by the beginning of May**. They will also send a **brief report** summarizing what policies and procedures are working and what policies and procedures are ineffective.
  - If the representative fails to send in the packet two weeks after the deadline, the Youth Office will ask the district/regional adult leadership to send the requested materials.
  - **Youth Office will compile** all current by-laws, codes, policies, and reports. This compilation will be mailed (hard copy) to every Youth Council member in early June.
- Structures for **inter-district communication** throughout the year
  - Structures for **communication** between **new and old YCRs**
  - **Communication Among Leaders – Concerns Raised at Youth Council 2006**  
Concerns around communication among staff and leaders (youth and adult) arose at Youth Council 2006. These people (UUA staff, Steering Committee, facilitators, observers, trainers) met and talked about these issues – together and in age caucuses. The groups recognized that all of their concerns indicate a systemic problem that needs to be addressed in a systemic way. It's not just about the people attending this meeting.

### **Youth Concerns:**

- Steering Committee members getting called out in front of other youth is inappropriate
- AR/AO trainers stepping over boundaries
- Adults and UUA staff take up too much space
- Forceful tones when giving advice
- Everyone needs to recognize experience of youth – leadership ability isn't exclusive to time/UU involvement, need to trust youth's decisions and ability to do their job
- Some things aren't engaging for youth
- Assumptions made about youth, youth stereotypes
- Sacrificed to be here too – recognize this
- Unaccountable behavior – old to new Youth Council members
- Internalize youth empowerment

### **Young Adult Concerns:**

- Communication is a problem – we keep saying that but still aren't communicating – need to stop being rude and avoiding each other
- We're not getting to the deeper issues, stop superficial communication
- Tension between young adults and SC – we're trying to reach out and make space, how to balance stepping up support with stepping back? – navigating difference between leadership and support role
- Feel pushed away sometimes, people aren't asking for help they need
- People don't get consulted when they need to get consulted about decisions, don't get answers to questions we've been asking all week
- Recognize/own up to the fact that we haven't heard some things SC is saying
- Expectations never communicated to facilitators – e.g. SC wants them to attend everything
- Devaluing of SC members by YC members – how can young adults support?
- Unrealistic and unclear expectations placed on ALL of us (youth, young adult, and adult)

### **Adult Concerns:**

- Be present, respect
- Confusion of roles
- Roles and identity
- Closure of old roles (into new)
- Need communication, especially direct communication – no triangulation
- Space consciously made for SC to step up
- No place for 20-24 year olds
- Mentorship training
- More +/delta
- Understanding and better tools

### **Bridgers/Young Adults**

- More support for bridgers and college-aged people. Particularly those who are not in college.
  - Continental Bridger Conference – all local people are invited
  - Strengthen campus ministry and young adult groups
  - Build partnerships between congregations and campus/young adult groups
  - Promote bridging packets for youth ageing into young adulthood
  - Mentoring relationships between bridgers and young adults
- Youth and young adult collaboration at General Assembly
- Cool, respectable, anti-racism/anti-oppression-knowledgeable young adult leaders
- Really strong city-wide young adult networks – advertising, money/resources
- Work with DREs on anti-racism/anti-oppression, bridger/young adult support, bridging packets (Youth Office push these packets)
- Let churches know about UU college students so they can reach out
- Support and promote young adult ministers
- Youth Office connect bridgers, encourage youth to join young adult/campus ministry groups and go to Opus/Concentric
- Adult support for young adult ministry – don't assume everyone is in college because some stay at home in their congregations

## **Things YRUU Wants to Do**

- YRUU and Youth Office should develop a mission statement that includes who we are serving and our commitment to anti-racism/anti-oppression and youth empowerment.
- Update YRUU bylaws and policies/procedures.