



THE DRUUMM BEAT

DIVERSE & REVOLUTIONARY UU MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

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WE COUNT WHAT MATTERS

One of the most common responses to a Person of Color in our congregations learning about DRUUMM is that they wish they had known about our community and programs earlier. Too often, People of Color are isolated and disconnected from our larger multicultural ministry. DRUUMM is launching a campaign called "We Count What Matters," focused on improving how we collect and utilize racial/ethnic data in Unitarian Universalism. This builds on our vision that every Person of Color in Unitarian Universalism has the opportunity to learn and engage with DRUUMM and other People of Color ministries.

Data collection has long been an anti-racism goal that has never been fully realized. Our faith is one of the few that lacks any meaningful racial demographics. Other faith traditions make systematic efforts to conduct a census that provides them with insights into who their community is and identifies important trends. Good data can show us where we're growing or declining and where we may have opportunities and challenges.

One of our only consistent tools is Congregational Ministerial Search Packets, which recently added explicit questions on racial demographics. A sampling of feedback from our members reveals wild inconsistencies in how this data is collected, including some who fail to participate fully.

DRUUMM will be hosting a meeting of members interested in participating in a data collection pilot this March. We'll recruit and train members to conduct a simple count in their congregation. We'll provide orientation and support for best practices. This will help us gather more information toward our larger goal of establishing standards with all our congregations. Please contact info@druumm.org, and we'll update you on our meeting schedule.

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KAYUMANGGI RAINBOW

By Kevin Alan Mann

Love, the brown color of the earth,
Kayumanggi,
Rich, deep and dark
Center of the universe
Before time began

Before brown boy was ripped away from
Third World motherlands
Islands lush, verdant green, too bountiful
for words
Shores deep with crystal clear turquoise
blue,
Rainbow coral reefs, of every shape and
size,
Filled with every fish of the sea and
every color of the rainbow,
Spectacular golden sunsets, without rival,
Generations upon generations of
ancestors buried in its ancient sacred soil

Brown boy born into lonely white
America
"I am one of you," he thinks
"I too bleed and dream and cry"
His mother bears the love
of thousands on her shoulders
Sacrificing her dreams for seeds of hope
unborn

Across oceans and back again
Brown boy straddled between this world
and the one that haunts his dreams
Not fully one without the other
Not fully whole until together
Not fully known until he remembers

Brown boy born into white America
"Who am I?" He screams into the night

No one hears him
"Who are my people?" he cries
No one else knows

Yet legacies of conquest
still frame his every move
They question the brown of his
brownness
They question the hue of his worth
He feels the pain of his ancestors in his
chest
Trauma he still carries
A legacy he still remembers
in the blood that flows through his veins

"I am human he cries!"

He breathes through the breath of his
ancestors
"I am Lapu Lapu, king of the island
people"
"You will not take our ancient lands!"
"You will not destroy our ancient Gods!"
He says to the pale skinned foreigners
burning with greed and lust, cross in one
hand and sword in the other

"You will not destroy our verdant green
Islands, lush, too bountiful for words
Shores deep with crystal clear turquoise
blue,
Rainbow coral reefs, of every shape and
size,
Filled with every fish of the sea and every
color of the rainbow,
Spectacular golden sunsets, without rival,
Generations upon generations of
ancestors buried in its ancient sacred soil"

Kayumanggi Rainbow

(Continued)

"You will not burn down our ancient
bahay kubo nipa hut houses"
"You will not take our Gods and replace
them with yours"
"You may kill our bodies but you will
never kill our spirits"
"For you do not know our secret weapon"
"We were made for this moment"
"We planted seeds long, long ago"
"Love in the form of hope unborn"
"Love as eternal as the stars"
"Love that knows the revolution that
burns in his chest"

500 years later

Brown boy is born into white America
"I am alive" he exclaims "I am right now"
"On the knife edge of time"
He takes his first breath from other
people's sacred skies,
He takes his first drink from other
people's sacred rivers and streams,
He takes his first steps from other
people's land, soaked with red stained
soil,
He forms his first words in a nation
indifferent to its history of chains,
genocide and war
Legacies of trauma unhealed, yet
somehow love still remains unbroken, a
miracle from time before time

Brown boy grows up
He fractures into a thousand rainbow
shards of glass, too many broken pieces
His secret love hidden deep
Buried somewhere beneath white picket
fences and his parents' dreams
Everyone else's dream

"Abomination and condemnation"
are the "holy words" he reads

From the pulpit he hears
"Love the sinner hate the sin"

"But my love is not a sin!" He shouts back
"Am I not human?" He cries

Brown boy screams at night but no one
hears him
Too brown for rainbows
Too rainbow for brown
"Am I the only one?" He prays

"Do dreams come true?" he asks
"Will the oppression ever end?
When will the nightmare be over?"
Will justice one day reign in the morning
light?
Will peace flood the valley and joy turn
sorrow into day?"

In this time of rage and sorrow
Rebirth and revolution
Brown boy stands on the knife edge of
time
Our bodies mark this very moment
With the ancestors whisper in our ear
Our lives with this one chance to make
our move, dance our dance, live into our
ancestors wildest dream

Love, the only way
Love, as eternal as the stars, and the sun,
and the moon, and the rain, and the
earth
Love, holy and sacred and forming an
unending circle
Love, pure and generous and kind
Love, justice here on earth, boundless
and unbreakable

Love, the brown color of the earth,
Kayumanggi,
Rich, deep and dark
Center of the universe
Before time began



Kevin Alan Mann

(he/him pronouns)

is currently serving as a Chaplain with Kindred Hospice (soon to be Gentiva). As a Queer Person of Color whose parents immigrated from the Visayan Islands of Central Philippines, he strives to create spaces of compassion, authenticity, vulnerability, and empowerment. Kevin is going before the UU Ministerial Fellowship Committee in March to seek preliminary fellowship and ordination.

DRUUMM Gatherings

March 18 | Los Angeles

March 25-26 | Chicago

April 1-2 | Austin

learn more at druumm.org

SHINE ON, RESILIENT AND BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

Save-the-date for our 2023 Public Worship coming up this May 11th, 2023. Join DRUUMM for our annual public worship featuring a festival of Black and Brown joy and resilience through original works of music and preaching. Get ready to SHINE ON with musical director **Amanda Thomas** and guest minister **Rev. Katie Romano Griffin**.

We are seeking sponsorships from Unitarian Universalist congregations, organizations, and ally groups to show your support for our mission and vision.

DRUUMM's Public Worship is an opportunity for the wider world of Unitarian Universalism to connect with DRUUMM and be in community together. The Worship is open to everyone while prioritizing space for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We particularly encourage our DRUUMM members in multiracial families and White antiracist allies to join.

Sponsors are recognized on our website, via our mailing list of 1,500, and in our beautiful worship program. Sponsorship is open to anyone.

DRUUMM Public Worship

Thursday | May 11, 2023
8PM Eastern Time
Virtual service via Zoom,
Open to All

You can view previous programs at youtube.com/@druumm. Sponsors who give over \$500 will be offered a DRUUMM Group Membership for up to 20 BIPOC persons in your congregation or community group.

To be a sponsor, send an email with your pledge to info@druumm.org and **Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons**, our community minister and the team will confirm back with you.

**BE A SPONSOR
PLEDGE | SHARE THE PLATE
INFO@DRUUMM.ORG**

DRUUMM VILLAGE 2023

DRUUMM Village 2023 will be multiplatform event concurrent with General Assembly from Wednesday June 21st to Sunday, June 25th, 2023. The Village is where members of DRUUMM can have the opportunity to grow in community and in faith as we will be holding space for you.

Whether you have registered for the main UUA General Assembly or not, DRUUMM Village programming is open to all Unitarian Universalists of Color.

From the Annual Meeting to ingathering and closing worships, workshops to book talks, Drop-in space to BIPOC Caucusing, we are looking forward to the Village and all that it can be for those that attend.

As we plan for this year's DRUUMM Village, your assistance is welcomed. We have openings for worship, workshops, and leading caucus sessions in-person and virtually.

We are looking forward to gathering together once more in community and in love.

Verdis LeVar Robinson
DRUUMM GA Coordinator

UU General Assembly

June 21-25, 2023
Pittsburgh, PA

Please contact:

Verdis LeVar Robinson,
DRUUMM GA Coordinator
verdisrobinson@gmail.com

or fill out the brief sign-up form:

[druumm.org](https://forms.gle/Sjk6hCavpbSNGIfS8)
or direct link:

<https://forms.gle/Sjk6hCavpbSNGIfS8>

SC ELECTIONS

Are you interested in serving our growing UU People of Color Ministry?

DRUUMM is recruiting and interviewing members interested in serving on the Steering Committee. Current Secretary and Nominating Chair Michelle Matula-Venegas is working with a committee of dedicated members and religious professionals of color. Look for a member announcement via email.

KEY DATES

Feb 28 | Deadline to Apply
March | Nominating Interviews
April | Candidates Announced
May | Member Voting
June | Election Results

TALKING WITH PAULA COLE JONES



I first met Paula in person on a cool Fall evening in Atlanta, Georgia. We were at the first DRUUMM youth and young adults of Color retreat held at the Northwest Congregation. We had connected by phone months earlier through my organizing and community scan with congregations seeking to understand the opportunities and challenges facing young people of color in Unitarian Universalism. Out of these conversations, and building on a vision originally set forth by young adults of color, including (now Rev. Dr.) Kristen Jewett Harper, Alyce Gowdy-Wright (#restinpower), Layla Rivera, Danielle Gladd (#restinpower), and James Coomes convened fifty participants from around North America.

Paula is a lifelong member of All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington, DC, known to be one of the most racially diverse congregations in the UUA. She has served in various leadership roles, including as DRUUMM President, and is currently the Interim Congregational Life Staff for the Central East Region of the UUA. I've admired her skills as a competitive martial artist and certified research scuba diver, where she has organized with her husband a Black scuba collective for decades. ~ *Joseph*

Why did you gravitate to DRUUMM and into leadership?

My congregation had a racially sensitive crisis in the late 1990s. We lost fifty People of Color, mostly African Americans. That is when I stepped into leadership in the church. Within my first year, I was invited into a Jubilee Workshop (anti-racism training) and met folks engaged in the wider faith. Later I joined the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team of the previous Joseph Priestley District's working group on anti-racism/anti-oppression/multiculturalism). At about the same time, I attended my first General Assembly. I was shocked at how White the UUA was. That Assembly was an emotional roller coaster.

I was encouraged to attend the DRUUMM meeting at the Nashville GA in 2000, and glad that I did. It was like finding a home, finding a multicultural community. One thing that impacted me was when we gathered together into smaller groups; I connected with a diverse, multicultural community of UU People of Color.

There was such a range of cultures within DRUUMM, and all of us were being impacted by how race and racism were imposed upon us. Everyone's stories were so similar, even though our particular experiences were different, creating a unique sense of solidarity.

What kept you connected?

Robette Dias, Rev. Mel Hoover, and Dr. James Brown were a big part of keeping me connected. I was doing antiracism work across the UUA. Ruth Alatorre (a Latinx lay DRUUMM member from California) had passed away unexpectedly. She was to be President. I had a conversation with Dr. James Brown (#restinpower), and I agreed to be President-Elect if he served as President.

I took to heart the principle that DRUUMM models the beloved community. It was compelling to work with the multigenerational, multicultural community and to practice co-leadership and deep partnerships. These are essential qualities of DRUUMM spaces. I also appreciated DRUUMM's self-determination and the creation and design of programming and activities by UU People of Color for UU People of Color. DRUUMM has given the UUA this gift over the years, often uncompensated and unrecognized.

When I stepped in as DRUUMM President, it was a difficult time in the UUA. Rev. Bill Sinkford was just beginning his term, and there were a lot of new forces at work. Antiracism work was losing significance or positioning in the UUA, and things were changing.

DRUUMM created the Mel Hoover Beloved Community Award, recognizing the role Mel had played in the groundwork and leadership for the last generation and honoring his contribution as he transitioned from directing the Faith in Action staff and programs.

The Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus of DRUUMM was very new, Manish Mishra (a seminarian at the time) was the Chair, and they were considering withdrawing from DRUUMM because of internal struggles for autonomy, visibility and tensions within the community. As President and in consultation with Taquiena Boston, I supported A/PIC's process for thinking through this decision, encouraging steps similar to the Beyond Categorical Thinking. Ultimately, A/PIC decided to remain, and Manish would later serve a term as President.

In response to some conflict I experienced within DRUUMM, and the conflict that my home congregation had experienced, I began working on reconciliation. After meeting with the Leadership Council to persuade the UUA that DRUUMM should remain in a leadership role in the anti-racism work, Tom Stites, Editor of the UU World magazine, expressed an interest in the subject and published my article in 2003.

DRUUMM took an important position on accountability, which is that the DRUUMM leaders and members should select their representatives, rather than people being hand-picked by other sources. My home church recently used this approach to construct a Transformation Team to embed the 8th Principle into every aspect of the church's ministry. The 8th Principle calls us to build the Beloved Community by accountably dismantling racism and oppression. DRUUMM helped the UUA shape a better understanding of accountability.

What do you hope for DRUUMM's future?

I would like to see DRUUMM grow and cultivate a larger vision for the Journey Towards Wholeness work. We were told we should have a 30-year plan to achieve the cultural shift. We are about 20 years into it. Stay the course, build capacity and continue to look at the institutional infrastructure and how we as faith should live into that. DRUUMM has an essential role in being a voice for change.

We all benefit from DRUUMM having strong caucuses and intentional spaces for UU People of Color to gather, grow and strengthen their leadership experience. It is important for people to learn that when we say People of Color, we are talking about an inclusive community of various identities and not just African Americans. There needs to be more imagery of who DRUUMM is.

DRUUMM also has the unique ability to convene and activate partners, such as the Allies for Racial Equity, who share our vision. I want to see ARE become a more impactful organization to counterbalance racial bias and White supremacy.

Lastly, to be thoughtful about leadership turnover. We have to have better ways to do leadership transitions so that momentum continues to build. Have a clear succession plan, be explicit about it, and be transparent so we can continue to model collective decision-making.



DRUUMM STEERING COMMITTEE 2022-2023

The DRUUMM Steering Committee is made up of members elected to three year terms at our annual meeting. For more information you can reach them at info@druumm.org.

- President **Esperanza Garza-Danweber**, Texas
- Acting 1st Vice President, **Tomi Fatunde**, Texas
- Acting 2nd Vice President **Rev. Sangye Hawke**, California
- Acting Secretary **Michelle Matula-Venegas**, Texas
- Treasurer **Kate Goka**, California
- Communications Coordinator **Karin Lin**, Massachusetts

- GA Coordinator **Verdis Robinson**, Vermont
- Outreach Coordinator **Noel Burke**, Missouri
- UUA Liaison **Rev. Michael J Crumpler**, New York
- ex-officio*
- Consulting Minister **Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons**, Oregon
- Lead Chaplain **Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti**, Michigan

Notations

- We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Danielle Di Bona for her long serve as lead chaplain. Over the last two plus decades, she has been a cornerstone of our faith formation and anti-racism work. We welcome Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti as our new lead chaplain. We also say thank you to Rev. Christina Shu who completed her term and hello to Rev. Xolani Kacela who joined in January.
- Our website druumm.org is getting a major overhaul that will feature new resources and information for members. Look for the refresh by end of February.
- The DRUUMM Peer Network bringing together facilitators and organizers of local UU BIPOC groups meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month for support and guest speakers. We will be updating our Directory of Local UU BIPOC Groups this Spring.
- The Steering Committee has made a commitment to well-planned hybrid programs going forward as we go back to in-person gatherings. We have a fancy OWL video cam.

Seeking Admin Consultant

DRUUMM is seeking a dedicated, detailed oriented, and self-motivated individual for the position of Administrative Consultant. This person will be responsible for delivering membership management and event logistical services.

- Provide part-time administrative services on evenings and weekends for events and meetings
- Handle membership processes
- Support our in-person General Assembly programs in Pittsburgh

This is currently a limited duration consultancy through June 30, 2023 for up to 300 hours.

Contract payrate of \$26 to \$35/hour plus travel, housing and registration expenses for GA.

If you are interested, please see the full posting at druumm.org and submit an independent contractor response to our posting by February 6, 2023.



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For inquiries, please email editor@druumm.org

The DRUUMM Beat is published under the direction of the DRUUMM Steering Committee and the Communications Portfolio. Join in the conversation with DRUUMM on Twitter and follow us on Facebook for the latest news.

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