

THE DRUUMM BEAT

APRIL 2019



New POC Ministerial Chapter Takes Shape

In 1998, a convening of Religious Professionals of Color in Los Gatos CA led to the formation of DRUUMM. Fun fact - Rev. Gordon Bailey of New York proposed the name, drawing on the drum and drumming as one of the central images that brings our communities together. Around 50 people attended, which at the time was the largest face to face gathering in history. The leadership for the convening grew out of the African American UU Ministries network, a primarily ministerial caucus that had formed in the 1980s. DRUUMM initially understood their mission to serve and support Religious Professionals of Color, however by 2001 had shifted to become an inclusive UU People of Color organization with the intention of cultivating professional caucuses.

Today over 20 years later, a more formal UU Ministers Association (UUMA) Chapter for Ministers and Seminarians of Color is being founded. New rules allow for geographically dispersed professional chapters to be established.

This effort follows the path of Transitional Ministers and Military Chaplains who founded chapters recently. A founding membership drive is underway, led by a 6 person Council along with good officers and student representatives from current theological students.

Nominated for leadership on the council are: Rev. Dr. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa of Hayward CA, Rev. Theresa Ines Soto of Ashland OR, Rev. Tania Marquez of San Diego CA, Rev. Angela Henderson of Denver CO, Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer of Cambridge MA, and Kia Bordner a seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Good Officers are Rev. Dr. Catherine Ishida of Hawai'i and Rev. Dr. Clyde Grubbs of Massachusetts. Student Liaisons are Beyssa Buil also a student at Meadville Lombard and Latifah Griffin of Lancaster Seminary.

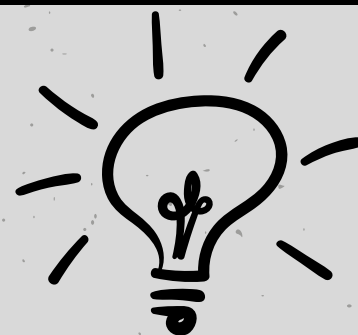
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SURVEY

DRUUMM is conducting a brief survey of members and friends who identify as UU People of Color to learn more about our community needs. We are seeking to better understand the gap between "what is" and "what should be". We expect this survey will take about 15 minutes. All information shared is utilized only for DRUUMM purposes and will not be shared without permission. The survey provides context for DRUUMM's current Mission and Values, ask about who you are, and then has three questions. Your input is greatly appreciated and will help inform the next phase of our organizing and base building work. The survey will be open through June 30, 2019.

Visit www.druumm.org for the online link, or email jsantoslyons@uuma.org for a copy.



NOTATIONS

*Over 140 Religious Professionals of Color gathered in Miami FL for Finding Our Way Home, an annual gathering currently sponsored by the UUA. Listen to reflections on the Church of the Larger Fellowship VUU weekly live talk show

<https://www.questformeaning.org/vuu/>

*Qiyamah Rahman is working on a new book commissioned by Skinner House on the history of Black Women in the UU Ministry. She is interested in any research folks may have, you can reach her at revdocrok@gmail.com.

*The UUA is actively considering a major request from DRUUMM to restore administrative staff support for general operations in their 2019-2020 budget discussions.

*Abudant LUUV is a new West End Unitarian Universalist congregation in Atlanta, centering the African American religious tradition led by Rev. Duncan Teague. Learn more at aluuv.org.

Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist
Multicultural Ministries
(DRUUMM)

A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

DRUUMM is seeking passionate and prophetic leaders of color who are committed to cultivating a truly liberative Unitarian Universalism.

Open Positions:

- Vice President/President Elect
- Outreach Co-Coordinator
- GA Co-Coordinator
- Secretary

Applications Due: May 1st, 2019

DRUUMM ELECTIONS

Are you or someone you know interested in advancing the impact and power of Unitarian Universalism by and for people of color?

Each year DRUUMM recruits and installs new members to the Steering Committee who guide and lead the organization's work. The Steering Committee meets monthly via Zoom and several times per year in person.

We encourage interested members to consider submitting an application to join the DRUUMM Steering Committee as we continue in the lineage of our Ancestors as to make Unitarian Universalism a truly liberative faith.

Applications are due by Wednesday, May 1, 2019 for the following positions:

*Vice-President (President Elect)

*Secretary

*Membership & Outreach Co-Coordinator

*General Assembly (GA) Co-Coordinator

Application and more information about responsibilities of each position is available at www.druumm.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 25-28 DRUUMM Programs at Pacific Southwest Assembly

June 8 DRUUMM Convening, New York City NY

June 11 DRUUMM Convening, Boston MA

June 13 DRUUMM Convening, Oakland CA

June 19-23 General Assembly, Spokane WA

July 17-21 Thrive Youth, Minneapolis MN

July 24-27 The Well, Saco, ME

Fall TBD DRUUMM Annual Gathering

Have other key dates? Share with editor@druumm.org

DR. ELIAS ORTEGA-APONTE NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT OF MEADVILLE LOMBARD SEMINARY



This April the Meadville-Lombard Board of Trustees will vote on Dr. Elias Ortega-Aponte to serve as the new President of Meadville Lombard, one of two Unitarian Universalist specific seminaries in the world. Dr. Ortega-Aponte is currently a professor at Drew University Theological School in New Jersey, and a member of the UUA's Commission on Institutional Change and Religious Education Credentialing Committee.

From the Meadville Lombard Search Committee:
Dr. Ortega-Aponte received his MDiv and PhD (Religion and Society, Magna Cum Laude) from Princeton Theological Seminary (2005, 2011). His primary teaching and research areas are Sociology of Religion, Religious Ethics, Cultural Sociology, Social Movements, Critical Theory, Africana Studies, Latinx Cultural Studies.

He also has competency in the areas of Science and Religion, Latin American/ Latino/a Philosophy, Decolonial/Post-Colonial Studies and Liberation Theologies. In addition to his work in Unitarian Universalist circles, Dr. Ortega-Aponte helped to start and run the Drew Freedom School Initiative, a social justice program that provides training in non-violent resistance and community organizing.

Having studied and taught in theological schools, Dr. Ortega-Aponte is profoundly attuned to the blessings and the burdens of theological education. He has keen insights into student recruitment and retention, innovative ideas about fundraising, a strong commitment to global learning, and bold ideas about the purposes, content and forms of ministerial formation. As this brief introduction indicates, Dr. Ortega-Aponte's leadership in academic, religious, and social justice settings, his deep concern for students, his innovative ideas about theological education, and his vision for the future of Meadville Lombard and Unitarian Universalism make him an ideal candidate to serve as the next President of Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Meadville Lombard is a result of a merger in the 1930s between the Unitarian Meadville Theological School in Pennsylvania and the Universalist Lombard College in Illinois. It is currently affiliated with the University of Chicago.



#TBT

Asian & Pacific Islander Caucus
at Finding Our Way Home
Denver Colorado
2015



COLOR/FULL: A DRUUMM GLOBAL MAJORITIES PROJECT

Our Mission

We help show the full potential of what Unitarian Universalism can look like.

Our Story

Many Black, Brown, and Indigenous people are inspired by the message and values of Unitarian Universalism.

However, those who choose to belong to Unitarian Universalism often face pressure to assimilate into Euro-centric culture. The lack diversity within the church often leaves Black, Brown, and Indigenous people feeling invisible and isolated. This has led to many people of color to abandon any formal affiliation with Unitarian Universalism.

There remains so much work to be done on racial justice — and it is critical for UUs of color to have a sense of agency and empowerment in this work.

Color/Full is a photovoice project that provides an authentic path for creative and spiritually driven action on racial justice. Our mission is to create lasting change on the individual, cultural, and institutional level. Through the confluence of photography, community engagement, and storytelling, this project creates a venue to honor and affirm the presence, experiences, and cultures of UU and UU-adjacent people of color.

Our Unitarian Universalist Principles call us to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of each person and to uphold justice, equity, and compassion in all human relations. Color/Full is a promising opportunity to promote a multicultural UUism that decenters whiteness and helps us get closer to making our core principles a reality.

COLOR/FULL was created and produced by Cameron Whitten.



KIA

Kia Bordner

San Diego, California

Goals

This is my first General Assembly. My goals are to make connections with those I haven't made connections with. I was going to the vendors and talking to people at the booths. They had a spiel, these white ladies. I asked them, "what are you doing to address people of color's concerns, if you don't have the connections"

I'm a point of perspective for native and indigenous voices so they can do the work of decentralizing white supremacy.

Gifts

I'm very much an agitator and a disruptor. But I know how to do code switching. I like to turn things around from the inside. My gift is big picture – I can see how a ripple in one place can change the whole.



The DRUUMM Beat is edited by Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons. We welcome submissions and inquiries to editor@druumm.org.

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