

UU Funding Program
Fund for UU Social Responsibility
Grants Made Fall 2021

Flaming Chalice International

Saskatoon, SK

U-Thrive project II: Promoting BIPOC flourishing

\$7,460 Grant / \$1,500 Challenge / \$600 TA

Flaming Chalice International was born in prison and expanded the work with refugees in East Africa and Unitarians in Burundi. This project will promote black people and other people of colour flourishing through online, face to face events and a phone line that will help them support each other. By connecting to people who sound and look like them, they will fight isolation, share information, and live decent and dignified life. In addition, the project will also raise black voices and showcase their leadership and contributions.

Kentucky UU Justice Action Network

Louisville, KY

KY Justice Action Network Planning

\$8,000 Grant / \$3,000 Challenge

KUUJAN, a new state-wide network, will engage in a planning process to create a mid-range (3 - 5 year) strategic plan for our network. From this organizational strategy, we will craft a development plan to strengthen our viability and sustainability. KUUJAN was founded in the summer of 2020 based on seed funding provided by All Peoples Congregation (formerly Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church) as a part of their launching a community-based Justice Center. KUUJAN's mission is to a) develop the capacity of congregations in Kentucky to engage in meaningful justice efforts; b) provide means for meaningful networking and resources sharing amongst and between UUs and congregations in Kentucky; and c) create a state-wide UU presence for advocacy and organizing on justice related issues.

South Carolina Unitarian Universalist Justice Alliance

Chapin, SC

South Carolina UU Justice Alliance Startup

\$15,000 Grant / \$5,000 Challenge

To develop a State Action Network of UUs in partnerships that center the voices and authority of people experiencing injustice. Early conversations show critical need among immigrants, uninsured and transgender persons. We will continue dialogue with UU justice, BIPOC and LGBTQ groups and partners to build relationships and form the Network. We will amplify justice action and offer workshops, events and vigils. There are 10 churches in SC (3 lay-led; average 154 members). In meetings, we found most churches focus on local and charitable activities, with little knowledge of other churches' activities. This is due in part to the legacy of racism and classism that divided the state into the Lowcountry and Pee Dee regions (wealthy

plantations) and the Upstate and Midlands (frontier settlers). SC culture is rooted in regional isolation. The structure of UUA districts and subsequent ministerial clusters followed these long-held divisions and exacerbated the divide.

Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of IL (UUANI)

Carbondale, IL

Deepening Voter Engagement through Critical Conversations

\$11,500 Grant / \$8,500 Challenge

In the 2020 elections, IL UUs mobilized to side with love. In 2022 nearly every political official in IL will face election due to redistricting changes based on the 2020 census. We will engage voters at grassroot levels to create brave spaces in which people can have difficult conversations that open opportunities for creative collaboration.

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

Glen Allen, VA

Afghan Refugee Assistance Initiative

\$2,000 Grant / \$5,000 Challenge

As the news broke that literally thousands of Afghan refugees would be arriving at Ft. Lee (20 miles south of Richmond), UUCC's Social Action Ministry, with the blessings of their minister, gathered leaders and former refugee resettlement hands to assess the current resources and volunteer capacity (Phase I of the project). The goal is to assist Reestablish Richmond in helping refugee families to become independent of our support, to become good neighbors and successful community members in the Richmond area.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County

Eustis, FL

Pathways to Racial Healing

\$10,000 Grant / \$2,500 Challenge

Pathways to Racial Healing was formed as a direct response to the long history of racial injustice in Lake County, Florida. The Pathways to Healing initiative brings together the UU Congregation of Lake County, Lake County Voices of Reason, the Friendship Methodist Church, and the Farmworkers Association of Florida. These organizations are located in Lake County and support racial justice efforts in the community. The project will offer eight community racial healing sessions to members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County and like-minded community partners and establish a Race Equity Advisory Panel that will provide informed recommendations to our all-white Lake County Board of Commissioners. This Panel will advise on programmatic, community, and legislative options to address and rectify systemic and structural racism and bias within local government.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango

Durango, CO

Mission: Support Kids

\$11,500 Grant / \$1,000 Challenge

The city of Durango and county of La Plata provides support to address many social justice issues and needs in our area, but support to children in foster care is a gap. This project was started by a young adult UUFD member, on her own, with her own resources, during the last year. Her past personal experience as a Foster Child drove this project due to her passionate desire to provide a sense of worth and personal dignity to children in our county experiencing the loss of identity, chaos, fear, and loss of personal dignity that occurs when they are taken from their families and placed with strangers in foster homes. The project now engages 15 members of the congregation and is growing. They provide 'comfort' backpacks to Foster Children when taken from their homes, with personal care and support items, and to hold their belongings, instead of a trash bag. This program gives traumatized children a sense of dignity and self-worth amidst a chaotic and emotionally frightening upheaval in their young lives. These backpacks are theirs alone: a new good quality backpack; a plush toy to cuddle at night; a journal and pen for older children; coloring book and crayons for younger children; \$15 gift card from our local bookstore, "Maria's Bookshop"; personal hygiene products; hairbrush and comb; toothbrush & toothpaste; hair ornaments and hair gel; fidget toys for young children; tissue packs; bath bomb; silly putty; lip balm, and a personal handwritten card from our Team. These "comfort packs" are generally made for four different groups: under 12 years old; over 12 years old; primarily gender neutral items, but some minor 'boy/girl' items. However, they know from direct experience with their project team, as well as the work of our LGBTQIA+ social justice team, that a boy/girl binary is not the defining way to determine which backpack a child is given. They have asked Social Services to use whatever knowledge they have of a particular child to select the backpack they think appropriate to that child.

Unitarian Universalist Mass Action

Marlborough, MA

End Solitary Now! (Led by MASC / Massachusetts Against Solitary Confinement)

\$10,000 Challenge

MASC works to end solitary confinement in the Massachusetts Correctional System through both legislative and regulatory strategies. Despite new legislative mandates, the torturous practice of solitary confinement continues to increase in MA prisons. MASC is led by survivors and impacted people and we are the only coalition focused on this issue in the state. The UU community joins social media campaigns, hosted events in person pre-covid and now via Zoom, contacted their legislators to advocate for change and participated in lobby day, and wrote letters to the editor to keep attention on this important issue. In addition, members have turned out for rallies, attended press briefings both in person and on-line and attended legislative briefings. This year, they have added letter writing to people who are imprisoned and have partnered with organizations such as Black & Pink and Families for Justice as Healing to identify loved ones inside who will welcome a pen pal.

Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois

Glen Ellyn, IL

UU Prison Ministry of IL Response to the Fierce Urgency of Now

\$3,000 Grant / \$2,500 Challenge

To respond to the worsening COVID-19 related conditions in Illinois prisons by (1) supporting freedom campaigns for release of incarcerated persons, and (2) mobilize engaged networks to do administrative and legislative advocacy guided by pen pals and solidarity circle leaders. Pre-COVID, UUPMI organized people in prisons and jails via talking circles based in UU principles, open to people of all faiths and informed by restorative justice guidelines and worldwide traditions. Prisons and jails are not open to outside groups at this time for in-person work. UUPMI also organizes re-entry solidarity circles, centering around leaders returning to the community and organize to promote systemic change to reduce incarceration and build justice that is sorely missing in state law.

9 Grants / \$107,460 Total / \$39,000 Challenge / \$600 TA