

ATTACHMENT A

UU/JPD Chalice Lighter Grant Application

Grant Summary

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Centre County (UUFCC) requests funds for a three-year project that will increase the number, diversity, and leadership contributions of young adults in the UUFCC. Reaching out to faculty, staff and students at Penn State's University Park campus, this five step project includes: 1) expansion of UUFCC outreach and promotion efforts; 2) leadership training specifically designed for young adults; 3) recruitment of more young adults for leadership roles; 4) establishment of a "volunteer" position of Volunteer Coordinator to enlist membership support with child care, transportation, and other program needs; and 5) enhanced evening Sunday services to increase their impact on and appeal to young adults. The project will contribute to the congregation's growth by doubling annual membership increases during the project period and beyond while building diversity at the same time. Project implementation will be documented and lessons learned from the project distilled into a report that will be available to the JPD and/or other congregations.

4. Innovative Growth

A. Describe your project:

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Centre County (UUFCC) requests a Chalice Lighter grant for an Innovative Growth Project to build young adult leadership in our congregation. We are a member congregation of the UUA and a Full Fair Share congregation in the Joseph Priestley District. Our vision is "to be a place where individuals feel safe, supported, empowered, challenged, and energized to share their talents, live their values, and be part of a beloved community."

The 257-member UUFCC congregation is located in State College, a small town in Centre County, Pennsylvania that is home to the University Park Campus of Penn State University. The county's estimated population of 140,561 includes approximately 42,000 students plus post-doctoral research associates, young faculty and staff. Despite the high percentage of young adults in the area, more than 60 percent of our congregation is over 50 years of age.

We would like to serve young adults better, and we believe it is critical to bring them into the UUFCC and increase their leadership roles. Our board and committee members tend to be retirees and in the language of one such member, are "recycled;" that is, they have served in the same leadership capacity multiple times. We are also seeking a more diverse congregation, in all aspects. As a Welcoming Congregation, we reach out to the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgendered (LGBT) community, but we would like to do this better as well as increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of our membership.

We have initiated a major undertaking to do so: The Sunday Services Committee of the UUFCC has decided to offer two additional and different kinds of services, each held one Sunday evening per month, beginning October 2006. One evening service per month will be based on the Soulful Sundown model, developed by the Young Adult/Campus Ministry office of the UUA. These services will focus more on contemporary music, poetry, sharings, and meditation than does the traditional service which has a sermon as its core. The Soulful Sundown services will incorporate traditions and music of diverse ethnic groups, address the particular concerns of young adults, provide a vehicle for exploring social justice issues, and help create a spiritual community among them.

The second new Sunday evening offering is a family-oriented service that will appeal to young people with children. It too will be more experiential and be focused on music, story, and other modalities than a sermon.

We believe these new service offerings will be a significant step in attracting more young adults, but they will not be enough. Therefore, we have crafted a five-step plan to increase both the number and diversity of young adults in which we will: 1) expand our outreach and promotion efforts; 2) provide leadership training opportunities specifically designed for young adults; 3) recruit more young adults for leadership roles; 4) establish a “volunteer” position of Volunteer Coordinator to enlist membership support with child care, transportation, and other program needs; and 5) enhance the evening Sunday services to increase their impact on and appeal to young adults.

To carry out our plan to reach and serve the young adult community, we will need additional resources; therefore we seek a three year grant in the amount of \$19,985. Our project is described below.

Purpose: The purpose of the project is to increase the number, diversity, and leadership contributions of young adults in the UUFCC with a program that addresses their spiritual needs, builds community, and provides leadership development training.

Activities

The proposed project includes the following components:

1. Expanded Promotion & Outreach: We will expand our outreach in two ways: first, by strengthening our Campus Ministry presence at Penn State; and second by expanding promotional activities in the community at large.

Strengthen Campus Ministry at Penn State, University Park Campus: The Unitarian Universalist Students group currently meets at Penn State. Officially recognized by the university, the group is advised by a UUFCC member who is also on staff at Penn State and is himself a “young adult.” To increase awareness of the UUFCC on campus, we will:

- Renew a currently dormant practice of contacting UU congregations in Pennsylvania and neighboring states to request names of students attending Penn State. A

welcoming letter and an invitation to visit the Fellowship will be sent to those students whose names we receive. To the extent possible, the written invitation will be followed up with a personal phone call. This student identification and invitation process will become an annual Fellowship activity.

- Provide informational materials about the UUFCC to Penn State staff at the University's Pasquerilla Spiritual Center, who will then distribute these to self-identified UU students as a service to students and recognized campus ministry organizations. These materials will include information about our planned activities and an invitation to participate in our community.
- Initiate a drive at the beginning of fall and spring semester each year to identify new young faculty and staff through current UUFCC members and friends. Particular attention will be given to identifying and reaching out to under-represented groups as part of our interest in increasing diversity in the congregation.
- We will also coordinate with the Sunday Services Committee to conduct at least one evening Sunday service per semester at the Penn State Pasquerilla Spiritual Center or the adjoining Eisenhower Chapel. This will increase our visibility; provide an opportunity for students, faculty, staff and others to experience a UU service; and enable students to meet members of the congregation.

Finally, we will create an outreach group of UUFCC members and friends to staff a table during the various "getting to know you" events for students. This outreach group will provide informational materials about Unitarian Universalism and the UUFCC and offer a warm invitation to the Fellowship. Here too we will reach out to minorities and the LBGT community.

b) Expand Marketing & Promotion: To generate interest and build a reputation on campus and in the wider community, we will increase advertising in the commercial media about Sunday services, Campus Ministry events, and other activities. We will also enhance our existing listserv for young adults on the UUFCC website, to increase its effectiveness in creating an internet community among UU students, as well as faculty and staff at the University. Further, we will distribute informational materials to organizations representing minority and LGBT faculty, staff and students. Because State College is a relatively small town, the need for extensive promotion will diminish after our programs for young adults and welcoming of diversity are well known.

2. Leadership Training for Young Adults

Leadership development will be critical to the implementation of the Fellowship's Long Range Plan approved by the congregation in May of this year, particularly as related to Priority Goal #2 that targets organizational and governance structure. The proposed project is designed to jumpstart our efforts to achieve this goal. We believe that providing such opportunities will not only build skills and commitment but will also, if well designed, attract to and retain more young adults in our Fellowship. We intend to offer three kinds of training:

- ***Leadership Development Workshops:*** The workshops, which will take place at the UUFCC over a 2-day period in each year of the project, will be attended by 15-20 young adults. Led by an external facilitator, these workshops will build skills related to strengthening the internal and external work of the congregation: that is, they will develop skills for building a congregation that is spiritually nourishing, builds community, seeks and supports diversity, and pursues social justice issues.

Workshops will cover such issues as strategic planning, outreach for greater diversity, team building, and volunteerism. They will also include specific exercises that nurture the spirit, both to support the participants themselves and as part of the learning experience. We recognize the time constraints of this (and all) groups—people are busy; therefore, the workshops will be designed to be “hip” in both design and promotion and present very obvious benefits of attendance.

- ***Unilead:*** The project will fund participation of two young adult members in the Unilead program in years one and two of the project. Unilead provides the opportunity for participants to learn not just leadership skills but also spiritual leadership, self-awareness about spiritual beliefs, and skills in developing worship services. Participants will be selected by a group of their peers, in concert with the Fellowship Minister and the Director of Lifespan and Religious Education.
- ***Young Adult Leadership Training Scholarship Fund:*** The UUFCC will create a scholarship fund for two young adults that will be available by the third year of the project and will pay for attendance at two additional training events per year. These may be UU offerings or training opportunities offered by other organizations that develop skills needed in the UUFCC. Criteria for eligibility of workshops and participants will be developed as part of the project. Selection of scholarship recipients will be made by the Minister and the DLRE, with a committee selected from the young adults.

We hope to institutionalize the Scholarship Fund as part of our annual budget (e.g., line items for Campus Ministry and Denominational Connections) and/or through an endowment. Initiating this component in the third year of the project allows time to demonstrate to the Board of Trustees the impact of this focus on young adults. We will also seek out training events that offer scholarships as a way to build leadership skills.

In summary, the project will provide a rich mix of leadership training opportunities to 20-25 young adults at an affordable cost. The “in-house” training events will help build community as they build skills. Unilead will immerse participants in the UU experience, provide both organizational and spiritual leadership development opportunities, and build relationships between participants from the UUFCC and other congregations. The Scholarship Fund will allow young adults to take advantage of additional training opportunities, which may be within or outside the UU community during and after the project. A Volunteer Coordinator (see below) will help identify and recruit workshop participants.

3. Recruit young adults for leadership positions

Recruiting young adults will be an explicit objective of our Nominating Committee and the Board of Directors. For students, young faculty, and staff, UUFCC leadership roles offer a chance to stretch, shape change, and have an impact, which we will note in our outreach materials. We will also emphasize the benefits of leadership experience on resumes, as a way to encourage young adults to assume leadership positions.

4. Establish a “volunteer” Volunteer Coordinator position

In order to participate in Fellowship activities, young adults may require child care; some University students will require transportation from the University to the Fellowship for Sunday services, meetings, and other events. Volunteers will be needed for campus ministry events as well. We plan to meet these needs primarily with volunteers. This will require a well-oiled system of volunteer recruitment and retention. To develop such a system, the UUFCC will establish a position of Volunteer Coordinator, which was identified as Priority Goal #4 in the current Long Range Plan. Although this initially will be on a voluntary basis, our Long Range Plan (Appendices B, E, and H) calls for this to become a paid position. In the meantime, a UUFCC member has already expressed interest in filling this role.

5. Enhance the evening Sunday services to increase their impact and generate interest among young adults.

The new Sunday evening services have been initially developed to function with an absolutely bare-bones budget, which will cover basic costs through Fellowship contributions and donations requested at the door. This may limit worship service program possibilities and outreach potential. Therefore, to take full advantage of the potential impact of these nontraditional services, we hope to increase resources through this Chalice Lighter Grant request, which will pay for wider advertising, musicians, travel expenses for a presenter, and other costs. We also hope to seek additional funds for these services from the Billings Fund and/or other Young Adult/Campus Ministry funding sources.

B. Impact on growth

We believe that the leadership development training offered over three years, the continuing availability of scholarship funds for training, evening Sunday services designed specifically for young adults, opportunities to take a leadership role, a Volunteer Coordinator, and a congregation awakened by this project to the contributions and interests of young adults will create and retain a core group of young adults, as well as continue to attract new young adults to the Fellowship.

This project will thus contribute significantly to our congregation’s growth. Young adults are a relatively untapped segment of the community. Our Fellowship came to this conclusion only recently, when we looked at the demographics of our members and realized our membership is aging. Currently, our net membership increase is between four and five members per year. We believe we will be able to at least double this rate of increase, for a total of at least 30 additional

new members by the end of the project, of whom at least 25 will be young adults. Thus the expanded outreach program will continue to attract and retain new members at a faster pace than we currently experience, returning more in pledge funds than the cost of the project within three years. We believe this is an excellent investment that will bear long term fruit for our UUFCC, for the young adults, and for the JPD and Unitarian Universalism overall.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by (young adult and Board member) John Schmidt will work with other appropriate committees to organize baseline data on numbers of young adult members and friends participating in leadership roles at the start of the project. The Committee will track changes in such participation throughout the project. Also, at the end of each year, we will convene a one day workshop of relevant UUFCC staff and committees to review progress, draw lessons learned from our experience, and make mid course corrections as necessary. The end-of-project workshop will function as an evaluation, the results of which will be summarized and made available for the JPD and/or other congregations.

Budget

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Expense	\$	\$	\$
Leadership Training Workshop Consultant – 3 days (includes 1 prep day + 2 days training delivery) @\$500/day + \$300 expenses; add \$50/year	1,800	1,850	1,900
Unilead – 2 people	1,560	1,600	-
Scholarship Fund	-	-	1,500
Volunteer Coordinator (for expenses, including training of coordinator in volunteer and data management for programming & performance, publications, local travel, training of volunteers)	2,000	800	100
Evening Sunday Service expenses including musicians, special guests, advertising, 9 months x 2 services x \$125 avg; decreases in year 2 because of increasing contributions from participants.	2,250	1,125	-
Child care	1,500	500	200
Advertising & printing costs	600	200	100
Communications expense of contacts with UU congregations for names of Penn State students	<u>200</u>	—	—
Total	9,910	6,075	3,900
Grand total \$19,885			