



United Congregations of Metro-East
a peace & justice institution

The Newsletter of UCM

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2009 AD BOOK

UCM is an inter-faith, power organization that goes beyond charity, seeking justice through empowered leadership. Our vision is to ensure a strong base of diverse, powerful, and committed leaders with the courage to face the many challenges that confront our values.

At the last board meeting, we summarized our progress. Some businesses cannot take a \$50 ad, but are able to contribute a smaller amount. For them, we are having a UCM Business Friends page. Likewise, we have our UCM Friends pages from the congregations; these friends are listed by name and there is no set amount to donate. This year we are planning the book by clusters. Each cluster will have their yearly summary and the ads from their businesses, friends, and churches all together in one section. Hopefully we'll have many contributors from the cluster congregations. And if possible we could have Union Friends pages.

We do need financial help from our members but we are aware that some cannot contribute the same as in the past, but many can contribute a smaller amount. The ad book friends pages can help. We decided to end Ad Book sales by July 15th.

Thank you.

Mary Trimmer, Treasurer

UCM AND HEALTH CARE

UCM and its allies continue efforts focused on national and state health care issues.



On June 24th UCM members met with policy staff for U.S. Representatives Jan Schakowsky, Jerry Costello, and John Shimkus. In addition, our UCM leaders and over 500 others marched to the Chamber of Commerce headquarters in D.C. in reaction to the Chamber's pledge to spent \$100 million to OPPOSE health care reform. The marchers knelt on the sidewalk in front of the Chamber's offices to offer a prayer for health care justice.

On June 25th UCM and Gamaliel of Illinois members met with Senators Dick Durbin and Roland Burris. Father Dubi, Pastor of St. Vincent Catholic Church, was the spokesperson and told the Senators that the group was a portion of several thousand citizens who came to D.C. to talk to elected representatives about health care, immigration reform and transportation equity.

Senators Durbin and Burris were invited to a forthcoming Town Hall meeting in the Metro-east area to discuss these issues. They both accepted the invitation.

On June 6th UCM, along with allied groups, provided health care reform informational materials at the Goshen Farmers Market in Edwardsville. Several speakers took to the courthouse steps to express their views about the need for a single-payer health care system. Larry Evans, from UCM, said that the main goal of the event was to keep health care reform in the minds of the people and to communicate to elected officials that people are concerned about health care.

Larry Evans



JOBS TASK FORCE REPORT

In collaboration with allies, the voices of UCM’s **Jobs Task Force** leaders have joined in a call for a just economy which includes government investments in opportunities for those who have been shut out – investments which will provide the foundation for a sustainable economy.

Because of UCM leaders’ reputations, knowledge, and ability to think outside the box, trips to our nation’s capital are able to be funded by other organizations than UCM. At the national level, UCM, as part of the Gamaliel network and the Transportation Equity Network (TEN), has helped formulate stimulus policy (“*American Re-investment and Recovery Act*”) so that the communities which are hardest hit by the economic downturn are to be given priority. UCM played a major role in formulating the **Jobs Now** policy which has been incorporated into the **Green Jobs** legislation.

UCM joined its sister organizations from Gamaliel Metro Chicago and the new groups from Springfield – the Faith Coalition for the Common Good and the Beardstown/Rushville Immigrant Families United – for a Gamaliel Capital Day and Press Conference in Springfield Illinois on May 13th. The central theme for the day was jobs – jobs for those that need them the most. The focus was on the jobs aspects of the Federal stimulus money – including maintaining accountability and transparency; developing legislation that includes training; creating a responsible budget; and funding transit operating expenses. On May 14th we met with senior staff at IDOT regarding workforce development, not only about the new Mississippi River Bridge but construction across the state.

UCM was pleased that the new IDOT director responded to our request and appointed UCM Jobs Task Force member **Toni Perrin** to the IDOT Diversity Economic Council. On Friday May 15th, those attending the new Mississippi River Bridge Stakeholder Meeting for Workforce, approved ten consensus points. The point promoted by UCM and the United Steel Workers, that only *Made in the USA* steel and other materials be used in the bridge, was approved. In the few areas where UCM felt the consensus points did not go far enough, UCM got a commitment that their position would be considered.

We thank God for those who have answered God’s call to support our work for the “least of these” and for those who make financial donations which allow us to have the office space and staff needed to continue this work. God bless.

Ron Trimmer

Send items for the UCM newsletter to the editor, **Mary Johnson**, mejohanson@mindspring.com

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAN HINES



The Alton Area Cluster is proud to announce that Jan Hines was among ten women given a YWCA “Women of Distinction” award at a ceremony held on May 31st at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, IL.

Jan is the coordinating director of the Alton Area Cluster of UCM and has been an active member of College Avenue Presbyterian Church since her return to this area. She is involved in community events and getting UCM’s message out to the public.

Good Luck Jan ... We are Proud of You!
Karen Gunter



ALTON AREA CLUSTER PLANNING AN “ECOLOGY AND THE ECONOMY” WORKSHOP

On Saturday, October 3rd, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Trimpe Advanced Technology Center (ATC) at Lewis & Clark Community College in Godfrey, IL you can learn how preserving the environment can pay off in these tough economic times. Green Jobs will be a primary focus, augmented by informative break-out sessions geared to timely topics such as alternative energy, recycling, buying locally, legislative environmental issues, community gardens and green plants, green investments, or going green at home and saving money doing it.

Lunch will be followed by a closing session devoted to Spirituality and Environmental Sustainability. Our goal is to offer effective environmental choices that will guide individuals in their quest for work and search for meaning in their daily lives. Arrangements are still in process so ideas and input from others are welcome.

Caring for Creation is just one of the issues being addressed by UCM’s Alton Area Cluster. The group is committed to promoting individual environmental awareness and racial reconciliation within congregations and the community. Find out more by calling (618) 377-8257.

Jan Hines

Recognizing the importance of continued training in developing a skilled and inspired leadership base, UCM has instituted a multifaceted approach to training. Included is participation in Gamaliel Training, ongoing training at monthly UCM General Board Meetings, workshops held by local faith communities and those sponsored by area UCM clusters as well as regional workshops conducted in cooperation with SIUE.

In January, twelve UCM women participated in NTOSAKE, developing new leadership skills and committing to increased leadership roles in UCM. A follow up brunch and agitation session indicates many actions based on commitments made. This group of women will meet, on a quarterly basis, to continue their work.

Other people attended Advanced Training and a group will be participating in weeklong training in upcoming months. If you or others you know are interested in weeklong training please let Ken, Larry or Johann know. They can answer any questions you may have.

The April 3rd Workshop held at SIUE and cosponsored by UCM attracted 60 people for an all day workshop which featured Gamaliel Trainers, SIUE faculty and community presenters. The event was well received and the next session is planned for October.

Board meeting training focused on issues identified by UCM leadership. Ad Books, Cool Cities, Individual Donor Campaign, and Fund Raising have been among topics thus far. Jim Ford was the most recent presenters giving excellent insights into the importance of individual donors.

One-to-One Training, Workforce Housing, Cool Cities, and In-reach Training have been highlighted at the local faith community and cluster level. UCM members have offered excellent leadership and continue to expand their training skills.

Plans are in place for the remainder of 2009. Power Analysis, Power One-to-Ones, and Public Meeting Skills will be addressed in upcoming months. In addition a major focus will be preparation for the In-Reach effort in our local churches.

Johann Ellerbrake

For more than a year, UCM and its allies spent much time and effort on the issue of the Madison County Sheltered Care Home. In April of 2008 the Madison County Board voted to close the Home. The Home provided extended care to patients who did not qualify for nursing home care, but due to their mental and physical disabilities could not live unsupervised.

Numerous groups including UCM, the United Steelworkers of America, American Association of Retired Persons, the Association of State and Municipal Workers, One Hundred Black Men of Alton, and Friends of the Sheltered Care, launched a referendum campaign. Six thousand signatures were needed to get the Sheltered Care question on the November 2008 ballot as an advisory issue. A total of 10,000 signatures were turned in to the County Board. A voting campaign was then launched which resulted in 96,000 voters in Madison County (70%) approving the County's continuing operation of the Sheltered Care Home. Still, the County moved to close the Sheltered Care Home.

Mr. John Amman and Saint Louis University graduate law school students filed suit on behalf of the residents of the Sheltered Care Home. Mr. Amman and his group secured the rights of the residents to be placed in venues appropriate to their needs as well as financial assistance for the next ten years for families to whom the closing of the Sheltered Care would cause hardship. A commitment was also obtained from Madison County to build more housing for its citizens with mental illnesses.

Larry Evans

As some of you may know, I got my start as a community organizer with a Gamaliel affiliate in Chicago I learned that meaningful change always begins at the grassroots, and that engaged citizens working together can accomplish extraordinary things."

Barack Obama

CHECK IT OUT ...

**The Gamaliel International Newsletter
"Organizing"**

<http://www.gamaliel.org/organizing/0609ORGANIZING/0609Organizing.htm>