

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council

FEBRUARY 2019

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WORKING TO AFFIRM THE DIGNITY AND EQUALITY OF ALL
“UNITING AGAINST RACISM, PREJUDICE, AND BIAS”

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“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

- Nelson Mandela





UNION COUNTY INTERFAITH COORDINATING COUNCIL Steering Committee Members

Deacon Tim Williams-Chair
First Baptist Church
Kenilworth

Sidney Blanchard
Associate Executive Director of Community
Relations— CAU

Rabbi Joel N. Abraham
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Ayaz Aslam
Muslim Community Center of UC
Elizabeth

Pastor H. Bryant
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Latino Outreach

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CAU Religious Services

Pastor Mertz
First United Methodist Church
Westfield

Michelle Mobley
Director of Youth Service
Residential

Pastor Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Rahway

Father Michael Saporito
The Parish Community of St. Helen
Westfield

Roderick Spearman
CAU Consultant

Reverend Ronald C. Thomas
Fountain Baptist Church
Summit

Elder Arthur "Skip" Winter
Cranford Presbyterian Church
Cranford

About the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council

Our Mission

The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council works to facilitate regular interfaith meetings in order to make way for the building of bonds within the interfaith community.

We respect and encourage the inclusion and welcoming of others regardless of faith, race or disability. We strive to be proactive on social issues.

Our Goals

- To grow the network of faith-based organizations in Union County.
- To encourage representatives from all faiths to join the Interfaith Coordinated Council including those of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Islamic, and other faiths.
- To be engaged in:
 1. **Community Building** within faith-based organizations and the general Union County population.
 2. The advancement of **Social Justice**.
 3. The intentional **inclusion** of others regardless of gender, faith, race.
- To be active in activities that are inclusive and community building.

Our Objectives

- Sponsor regular engagement opportunities that facilitate the building of bonds within the Union County interfaith community and their congregations.
- Strengthen the Union County religious congregations through involvement, action and education in self-help.
- Build working relationships between Union County religious organizations and Community Access Unlimited that create opportunities for youth and people with disabilities and their support staff.

Potential Advantages to Joining the Interfaith Community

- Develop interfaith solidarity.
- Avail yourself of increased visibility within the interfaith community and build opportunities to share educational and community events with the group.
- Build religious membership.
- Gain exposure for you and fellow congregation members to educational opportunities regarding entitlements, housing, and other services, including but not limited to: programs for seniors, youth, people with physical and developmental disabilities, etc..
- Create full and part time employment opportunities for congregation members with CAU.

guest message

By: Reverend Carmine Pernini
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rahway

NJ's Independent Prosecutor Bill (S1036)

Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation, the Independent Prosecutor bill, taking fatal police shooting inquiries in New Jersey out of the hands of county prosecutors and turning them over to state investigators on Wednesday, January 30, 2019. Many people worked in concert to bring this legislation to the Governor's desk, and many more helped with the final push to get him to sign it. Families who lost someone to police violence, activists, non-profits, religious and community leaders, advocates, and individuals all wrote letters, made phone calls, held and attended demonstrations, emailed, asked questions at Community Forums, and wrote op-eds.



For my part, I began working on this legislation with the New Jersey Clergy Coalition for Justice (NJCCJ) in 2015. We held our first demonstration at St. Matthew's Baptist Church, Roselle at Pastor David Ford's church in July of 2015. Later that year we held a State House Rally in Trenton with approximately 600 people in attendance. There, the NJCCJ, Faith in NJ (FinNJ), the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council (UCICC), Community Access Unlimited (CAU), and the National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) as well as many others stood side by side with legislators who supported the bill. After this event, clergy met with Senate President Sweeney who agreed to champion the bill. The bill worked its way through the Senate and later the Assembly where it would die on the then Governor Christie's desk.

Everyone knew that Gov. Christie's term was coming to an end. In anticipation of a new governor, the NJCCJ and FinNJ began scheduling meetings with gubernatorial candidates in the Summer of 2017. Candidate Phil Murphy met with the NJCCJ and FinNJ at Zion Lutheran Church, Rahway, where he promised to support the Independent Prosecutor should he become governor (along with Body Cams for all officers and Implicit Bias training – see pic above). Later, after we pushed the bill through the Senate and Assembly again, when there were rumors that the now Governor Murphy was hesitant to sign the bill, we reminded him of the promise that he made to 12 clergy a year before as often as we could.



It was a lot of work from a lot of different people and groups and the process was shot through with its awe inspiring peaks and demoralizing valleys. Yet, police related shootings are the most sensitive of cases which garner the most public attention and legislation which would provide increased accountability and transparency was desperately needed. Community's perceptions of police accountability are divided along color lines. National politics have politicized an already hotly contested debate over whose life matters: Black, White, or Blue? Locally, the suburbs and cities

lend their support to the police, PBA, and FOP or that of their communities depending largely on race and income.

guest message continued...

In the end, I applaud Governor Murphy for signing the Independent Prosecutor bill despite opposition from his own appointed Attorney General, the PBA, and FOP. As many have already state, this is a beginning of legislation that gets at the challenges of police and community relations. It is a beginning because for me and many others, #BlackLivesMatter is a matter of creed and not of fact legislatively nor economically. African Americans, especially after incarceration, are disenfranchised and racial profiling and use of force by police disproportionately affect people of color. NJ's prison population is still comprised largely of people of African descent. And, our schools are de facto more segregated than they were during segregation.

We still have much work to do. And, most gains in civil rights do not come without a fight, a long one.

In closing, below are some of my remarks from the 2015 New Jersey Clergy Coalition for Justice's State House rally in Trenton, NJ which provide a diagnosis of why racism is so intractable and perhaps a prescription for what we do now:



“Herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor, — all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked, — who is good? not that men are ignorant, — what is Truth? No, (the tragedy of the age is) that men know so little of men.” — W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903.

The consequences of not knowing each other is that the great chasm between person and person is filled with a diabolical inheritance of a history of unfounded assumptions and death dealing biases. Today, history's hold on us litters the papers with indictable evidence of police not knowing those whom they police, neighbors not knowing who lives next door, churches not knowing who is across town, and great religious traditions existing as islands. Yes, the great tragedy of the age is that we simply do not know one another, and the consequence of being strangers is death.

guest message continued...

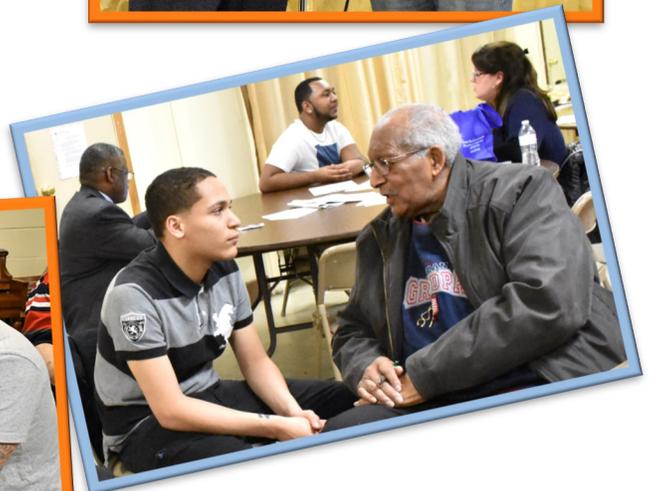
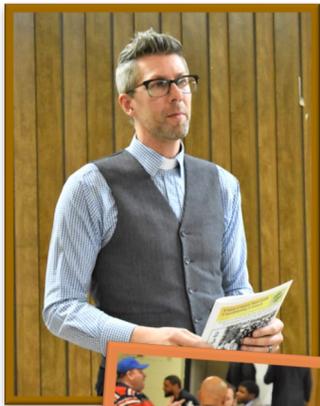
The tragedy of not knowing each other is that we no longer listen to the cries of all the weeping mothers and fathers; those whose sons and daughters were tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by police officers not in a court room, but on the streets, on the run, on the corners, and even beaten in our schools. The tragedy of not knowing each other is that we accept the dichotomy of black and white as essential. The terrible tragedy of our age is that we confuse what is legal for what is just, what is politically expedient for what is righteous, what is silence for solidarity, and what is permissible for democracy.

From here, I hope, we can learn from the passage of the Independent Prosecutor bill that the fight is a difficult one, one which began long before me and will in all likelihood continue long after I am gone. Reinhold Niebuhr said it best, “Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love. Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith.” Faith, hope, and love, in Niebuhr’s sense, is where we go from here, and remember to teach others, especially children, along the way.



It should be noted that on January 31st there was a police related fatality in the city of Passaic shortly before midnight. This is the first case that will follow the recently implemented procedures outlined in Senate Bill 1036 “The Independent Prosecutor Bill”.

Faith in Action



PICTURED

- Embodying MLK a Community Organizing Event 1/24/19 at Mt. Teman AME Church—Elizabeth NJ



FAITH INTO ACTION

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY

Are you a Union County citizen searching for a faith community within which to worship?

Perhaps we have what you are looking for!

This is an opportunity for you to meet representatives from a variety of houses of worship within Union county, and learn what they are all about!

Please join us as clergy and congregation members from all different faiths meet and welcome members of the community.

The **Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council** invites you to an interfaith reception on:

Wednesday, April 3rd, 2019
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Suburban Golf Club
1730 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ



**Will you Join us?
Please contact us at:**

Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council
c/o Community Access Unlimited
80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: (908) 354-3040 x4324 -Email: UCInterfaith@caunj.org

Proper Support Makes the Difference



Three years ago, Shameese Burnett's future came to a rather complicated fork in the road.

"I was talking to this lady who had helped me get an internship, and I was telling her how life is hard. My mom was losing her apartment, and I was staying with my friend at the time, but I was like, 'I think she wants her bed to herself.' You don't want to wear your welcome out," Burnett said.

It was not long before that lady, an employment counselor with Roselle First, called her with a placement within Community Access Unlimited's Transitional Opportunities Program (TOP), which provides a comprehensive set of supports to youth aging out of New Jersey's child welfare system. Burnett would have to move in by the end of the day to secure placement.

That same day, Burnett was set to compete in a basketball game attended by college recruiters.

"I missed out on that, but I had an opportunity for a better living situation, and I took it."

Burnett, now 22, said the benefits she has reaped as a TOP member were well worth making that difficult decision. Having lost all forms of identification when she and her mother were evicted from their apartment, TOP staff advocated for and provided guidance to Burnett to make sure her birth certificate, state-issued ID and social security card were restored.

"CAU did a lot for me. I would probably still be homeless or in a bad situation if I hadn't come here," she added. "I'm so grateful for that, because you need those things to get a job, to drive, everything. They also paid for my prom."

The time Burnett has spent with TOP has lead her to find acceptance as a queer-identifying person, a girlfriend -- Cassandra, whom she met through the program -- and a year ago, the medical care she needed for an unexpected lupus diagnosis that left her feeling weak and drained.

"My staff was really there for me. My mom wasn't there, my family really didn't know what was going on with me. At that moment, all I had was my counselor, Felina. To this day I am so grateful for her," she said.

To learn more about the Transitional Opportunities Program at Community Access, visit caunj.org or contact info@caunj.org.

"I am here for a purpose and that purpose is to grow into a mountain, not to shrink to a grain of sand. Henceforth will I apply ALL my efforts to become the highest mountain of all and I will strain my potential until it cries for mercy." - Og Mandino

A Reflection



In December, I traveled to San Diego, California where I participated along with 400 faith leaders in a march and protest of the militarization of the border wall. I had been to the U.S. Mexican border before, but never in California. It is disorienting to see a metal-slat fence about 30 feet high extend into the ocean. Almost ridiculous really to see the extent of militarization on this desolate beach.

After a mile and ½ walk, we gathered on the US side of the border, on our knees facing concertina wire. The California Border Patrol agents quickly gathered in front of the wire and placed clubs in our faces. Behind the agents, we saw children running back and forth across the border wall, trying to peek through the slats in the fence to catch a glimpse of us.

When you encounter the border wall, or fence as it is in California, you remember the arbitrary nature of borders. Mexico is just feet away. The border divides the Kumeyaay people nearly in half. As Dr. Barber reminds us, many of the folks are not crossing the border but rather the border has crossed them over time. Birds, the ocean, sunlight, the falling rain and the winds all ignore this arbitrary border as it divides people, disrupts the natural landscape and wreaks havoc on our people (and in many cases on wildlife as well).

What I want you most to hear is that acts affirming human dignity are radical now and desperately needed.

As we gathered at that border and fell to our knees, these heavily armored patrol under orders to "push" us back, well they backed up. They seemed almost baffled by our sincere demonstration both of our beliefs in a collective dignity for the families that our President characterizes as monsters simply because of their place of birth and skin color as well as our belief in the dignity of each of those agents. Here we faced the fullness of a military presence—agents themselves ill-equipped for the humanitarian crisis we find ourselves in.

Not a crisis of migrants rushing the border, but a crisis of how we understand who gets to be human in this world.

There was a wind that moved through the gathered body, traveling from the yet to be United States of America on over to the land now known as Mexico. And for a moment, we were kissed by the same sun, washed by the same ocean, and held by the same winds.

Take courage.

I believe we could yet learn how to be human together.

With abiding and activated faith,

Rev. Robin Tanner



FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THE DEPORTATION MACHINE - ONE STEP FORWARD IN NEW JERSEY

By: Sara Cullinane, Esq.
Make the Road New Jersey

New Jersey has become ground zero in attacks on immigrant communities. In Trump's first year in office, ICE increased arrests of immigrants in New Jersey by 42%, higher than almost any other place in the country. Immigrants in New Jersey have been arrested for civil immigration violations while dropping their kids off at school, in pre-dawn raids at their homes, while seeking justice at our municipal and county courthouses - missing the opportunity to fight their case in court. Local law enforcement in New Jersey - from police to sheriffs to prosecutors - have aided ICE in these arrests at an alarming rate, often in violation of the constitution and at great expenses to families across the state. In early 2017, a mother and her two children - one a toddler - were subject to a raid by ICE in their small business in Elizabeth, NJ. The mother, a survivor of domestic violence, refused to open the door because ICE did not have a warrant. ICE then called the Elizabeth Police Department, which helped them gain access to the business and attempt a warrantless arrest. This sent a wave of panic through our community. Parents pulled their children out of school, families were reluctant to approach the police for a restraining order and many individuals ceased to use critical public services. Make the Road New Jersey responded by holding a week of rallies and a community forum. Later that year, a young father from Union County was detained by immigration after being stopped by police in Monmouth County for a minor traffic violation. Because of a contract between ICE and Monmouth County, this father of four was detained by ICE and jailed for a year in immigration detention before he could be reunited with his family.

After nearly two years of campaigning from immigrant groups like Make the Road New Jersey, our partners at the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice, including faith in New Jersey, ACLU of New Jersey, American Friends Service Committee and Wind of the Spirit were able to secure a significant victory for immigrants - and for due process - in New Jersey. In November 2018, New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal signed an "Immigrant Trust Directive" into law, which formally ends most relationship between ICE and New Jersey law enforcement.

The new directive not only limits local law enforcement's interactions with ICE in jails and with police, it also includes measures to make law enforcement more accessible to immigrants by including training and visa certification processes for immigrant victims of crime, protocols to make sure that language barriers does not keep people from receiving police support, and training on various immigration-related issues for all law enforcement.

While most states with similar directives, like California, Oregon and Illinois, just prohibit holding individuals on ICE detainees, New Jersey's version goes beyond by also covering prosecutors, not just police and wardens. It also prevents local police from notifying ICE about an individual.



FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THE DEPORTATION MACHINE - ONE STEP FORWARD IN NEW JERSEY CONTINUED

The new directive is a groundbreaking effort to ensure New Jersey law enforcement builds trust with immigrant communities rather than use state taxpayer dollars to further the federal administration's attempts to detain and deport immigrants and separate our families. New Jersey is again leading the way in fighting back against the cruel and inhumane attacks on immigrant communities and in making our state a more fair and welcoming place for all residents.

As one of Make the Road NJ member leaders, Olga Armas, said: "For years now, my family and I have lived with the fear that a simple traffic stop or any interaction with the local police could lead to deportation. As ICE arrests mothers and fathers across New Jersey at home in the middle of the night, when they are dropping their kids off at school or seeking justice in the courts, it is such a relief to know that our local New Jersey law enforcement agents will no longer do the work of immigration enforcement."

Some key components of the new directive include:

- ◆ Prohibitions on when law enforcement can inquire about an individual's immigration status
- ◆ Strict limitations on when local law enforcement can notify federal immigration agents regarding community members in their custody or continue to detain individuals for immigration agents
- ◆ Prohibitions on entering, renewing, or extending 287(g) contracts which essentially deputize local law enforcement agents to do the work of immigration enforcement
- ◆ Limitations on when and how immigration enforcement agents can enter local jails and clear advisals for individuals in custody regarding their rights with regard to immigration
- ◆ Strict prohibitions on local law enforcement assisting immigration agents in carrying out civil immigration enforcement efforts
- ◆ Guidelines for how to respond to and support requests from immigrant victims of crime who cooperate with law enforcement and seek protection regarding their immigration status

New Jersey has had a landmark year in fighting for immigrant rights. Since January 2017, New Jersey has passed several pro-immigrant measures including a law granting state financial aid for dreamers; it has invested \$2.1 million in deportation legal defense funding, and has divested from private immigration prisons. Immigrant rights groups are continuing to fight to expand access to drivers licenses to all qualified drivers in New Jersey, regardless of status.

Launched in November 2014, Make the Road New Jersey builds the power of immigrant and working class communities in New Jersey to achieve dignity and justice through community organizing, legal and support services, transformative education and policy innovation.



DIALOGUE CIRCLES ON RACE: CONVERSATIONS WORTH HAVING



By: Dr. Claudia Cohen

Member of Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Summit

As both the current national dialogue and local events in Union County have revealed, race and racism continue to impact societal structures and the daily lives of our citizens, in pervasive and often painful ways. Yet, productive discussion about race, especially across racial lines, is all too rare.

Over the last four years, close to 350 members of the Summit community have participated in Dialogue Circles on Race, sponsored by the Summit Interfaith Council's Anti-Racism Committee. Dialogue Circles are facilitated two-hour group sessions - running over five consecutive weeks- in which selected readings about race and racism, and participants' lived experiences of race are discussed and shared. The Dialogues Circles are designed to create a safe space that promotes listening with curiosity and empathy and speaking one's truth. While participants experience safety, they are also encouraged to lean into the discomfort that honest dialogue about the history of race and racism may elicit.

In follow-up evaluations six months after the Dialogue Circles concluded, participants reflected on their lasting impact: "Increased self-awareness of race and its impact on the interactions I have and witness"; "Increased comfort level in discussing race with both Black and White community members"; and "It was so powerful to see a wide range of people concerned with these issues, a strong counterweight to screaming talk show hosts and social media." (The Summit Interfaith Council Dialogue Circles have been supported by funding from the Summit Area Public Foundation and the Margaret Baker Fund at Christ Church, Summit.)

Inspired by the impact of the Summit Interfaith Council program, members of two anti-racism organizations, Social Justice Matters, Inc. of Scotch Plains and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Westfield, have joined forces to offer Dialogue Circles on Race in *their* communities, under the auspices of the Anti-Racism Community Collaborative (ARCC.) ARCC was created to magnify the impact of individual anti-racism organizations by working collaboratively to bridge divides, create awareness and develop innovative actions toward building just and equitable communities. Dialogue Circles on Race is the first project of the newly formed ARCC.



A pilot program for the Westfield and Scotch Plains/Fanwood communities is being offered during the month of February and is at capacity. Interested community members should send an email to 4ARCC.comm@gmail.com for more information and/or to be notified when signups for the next semester of Dialogue Circle sessions begin in Spring-Summer 2019.

PEOPLE CARING FOR PEOPLE



Adapted from: Elder Rafael Rodriguez; RRF Coordinator
The Red Ribbon Fellowship Ministry of The First Presbyterian
Church, Elizabeth

People Caring for People

**For those infected, affected and concerned about HIV/AIDS and
other Health Issues**

HOW WE STARTED AND WHAT WE DO. The Red Ribbon Fellowship was started in March 24th 1994 with the approval of The Reverend James L. Reisner and the Session of First church Elizabeth, The Elizabeth Presbytery and the support of the then unincorporated PRISM (Presbyterians Renewing In Spirit and in Mission) A committee made up of pastors from the Presbyterian churches of the Elizabeth area, who had began to develop urban strategies and ministries in their churches in the late 1980s'

By 1987, The First Presbyterian church of Elizabeth had began an HIV/AIDS support group ministry called, The Wednesday Night support group.

It was there at that group, in the beginning of 1993 that a young man living with AIDS commented, that he was a Christian and had attended services at his church the previous Sunday, he went on to say; " My church was crowded, I sat in a back pew, people were standing in the back behind me and my pew was empty, only I was sitting there, I felt so alone and discarded that when the next Hymn came up, I got up and walked out in tears. I don't know if I will ever return there again. I wish there was a church that would receive me just as I am. Can this church start a worship service for people like us?"

That young man's story brought tears to my eyes that Wednesday evening and recollecting it, still does today. The group took his question and request very seriously as well as those from other individuals in the group who had been discussing issues of spirituality for several weeks prior. The group decided to ask Pastor Jim Reisner if developing a worship ministry was possible. He presented the request to the session and they approved the proposal.

In that same year 1993 the Presbytery of Elizabeth approved the Reverend Charles L. Hale Jr. to come to First church and form a Steering committee from members of the existing Wednesday Night support group. It took that steering committee one year of planning to fully realize a functioning ministry that would address the spiritual, educational and supportive needs of the infected, affected and concerned individuals dealing with health issues and the plight of AIDS in the communities of our Presbytery and beyond.

Their wish to support one another, gain knowledge and praise God through prayer and worship is evident in our mantra, "People Caring for People"

Our Lord Jesus charges us to care for one-another. In Matthew 25: verse 40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

Our mission statement was established to read as follows.

- ◆ We are a community of infected, affected and concerned individuals about HIV/AIDS and other health issues.
- ◆ We are committed to create educational and supportive systems to address the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of individuals.
- ◆ We seek spiritual healing, growth and faith and we invite you to share your journey with us.
- ◆ We are patients, care givers, families, friends, partners, spouses, service providers and more.
- ◆ We understand that HIV and other infirmities do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation or whether one is a Christian.
- ◆ In light of this; We seek to love God and one another in the context of Christian worship and fellowship.
- ◆ We are an open community accepting all who come to us, just as the love of God is extended to all his children.

We gather every Friday evening at 6pm for worship. Our ministry also observes AIDS Awareness Sunday on the second week of October, World Aids Day on December 1st and Good Friday with special worship services. During the first year of the ministry, our worship services were led by either one of the Reverends, Jim Reisner or Chuck Hale. As time moved forward our services were led by Pastors and Lay people who volunteered their time including students who were doing internships in our area from various seminaries. Tina Mc Cormick was one of those students at the time in the Mid 1990s'.

SUPPORT GROUPS

- ◆ Twice a month the DIABETES GROUP meets on Wednesdays at 1:00pm without a facilitator to have discussion regarding their illness.
- ◆ UNITED IN SPIRITUALITY The group plans collectively training and work shops seasons that may take place on Monday evenings from 5 to 8 p.m. offering a variety of programs through out the year such as: Games, Arts and Crafts, Remembrance QUILT panel-making, Workshops on Healthy Relations, HIV management, Prevention Education, Mental Health, Diabetes and more. Refreshments are provided.
- ◆ WELLNESS SUPPORT GROUP For the HIV Positive Community, meets every Thursday evening from 5 to 8 p.m. Dinner is included. The group is facilitated through a partnership with the HYACINTH AIDS FOUNDATION.
- ◆ We sponsor a free concert every second Sunday of the month which we call, SUNDAY SERENADES, professional opera singers volunteer their time to entertain people in the community who other wise would not have the opportunity to visit an opera hall or concert hall to listen to classical music.

AT THE PRESENT TIME:

- ◆ We are serving an estimated 450 individuals in various capacities throughout each month.

God's work has become so wonderful at the Red Ribbon Fellowship, out of that community of broken people, a piano player has emerged and he has developed a choir. Imagine that.

I urge all of you who have read this story, to come and experience the miracle of God's love for your selves as His love is extended to all who seek His refuge.



Elder Rafael Rodriguez



Office supplies shouldn't be a financial burden.

By partnering with a large, financially stable organization like Community Access Unlimited, you can leverage our buying power and put more money toward your mission.

CAU Wants to Reduce Your Office Supply Costs
Join our Office Supply Cooperative for Savings as **BIG** as Your Mis-

Staples is partnering with CAU so you can enjoy major discounts on orders of \$50 or more through a special online portal.

For just \$25, you can purchase an annual membership for savings of **60-80%** on office supplies and 40% on toner cartridges. *All you have to do is join!*

Customized pricing based on your organization's specialized supply needs is available.

Your Staples representative is there to serve you. Membership is nontransferable and must be renewed annually and is open to any organization or business.

For more information about our office supports, please contact
Laura Hankerson at 908.354.3040, ext. 4240 or visit the Resources tab on **caunj.org**.

Community Home Care Solutions

From home repairs to personal care and more, our expert staff provide home-based assistance throughout New Jersey that can meet your individual need and lifestyle.

Services can be purchased via Medicaid or through private insurance.

This program trains and employs Certified Home Health Aids who deliver quality services that help you maintain independence.



COMMUNITY ACCESS
UNLIMITED

We provide help for your health and home that include the following services:

- Personal Care Assistance
- Errands & Transportation
- Meal Preparation & Dietary Information
- Light Housekeeping
- 24-hour on-call services with registered nurses
- Advisement from Certified Dementia Practitioners
- Home transition from hospital or nursing home
- Home & Property Maintenance
- Home Repairs, Chores & Improvements
- Snow & Leaf Removal
- Cleaning Clutter Removal
- Moving & Relocation Assistance

*Interested in becoming a Certified Home Health Aide?
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Contact us for a free consultation & assessment!
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BUILDING A TRULY INCLUSIVE CONGREGATION

Community Access Unlimited (CAU) has embraced and promoted spiritual worship for people with Intellectual and developmental disabilities and for At-risk youth for almost 40 years.

This area of service began when the staff who worked on Sundays begin to take CAU members to church at their request. The rejection we faced in the community was a regular occurrence but unwelcoming attitudes within the congregations were a rude awakening. We have come a long way but we need to make greater progress. There are invisible walls everywhere designed to divide and conquer. In a spirit of unity we can tear down those unnecessary walls of discrimination as we act on our faith, hope and love.

The support from Faith Based organizations in Union County is amazing and it continues to increase at each community gathering where worship leaders are invited.

For those who have not made a decision to join the UCICC team maybe it's because you are not sure of how you can contribute your gifts to this ministry.

Listed below are some suggestions for how to strengthen the gifts that you are now sharing or to begin new ministries.

- ◆ Schedule a date to join us for Saturday worship services and bring your Praise dancers.
- ◆ Schedule a date to bring your youth Group.
- ◆ Schedule a date to bring your choirs.
- ◆ Perform a play for the holidays or for any occasion.
- ◆ Schedule a date to deliver a message
- ◆ Encourage members of your House of Worship to attend the services at CAU to get acquainted with CAU members.
- ◆ Invite CAU members to attend your worship services and other programs at your place of worship.
- ◆ Designate two member of your congregation to support them when they attend your facility.
- ◆ Invite the youth to attend your youth meetings to get acquainted.

We have a slogan for our church, "*Mount Teman is a Church where everybody is somebody and Christ is all.*" These are some of the winning tools we have used to engage people with different abilities to allow them to fulfill some of their dreams of serving in God's house.

- ◆ A licensed Sign Language Interpreter was hired to teach members of the congregation basic signing for someone who is hearing impaired.
- ◆ Through observation we learned that everyone loves music. If they were interested they were invited to join the choir and the musicians and choir members supported them.
- ◆ Some of the church members wrote a proposal for a grant and started a dance ministry named "Cup of Blessings". CAU members joined that group.
- ◆ Twins in the congregation have served as greeters since they were young.
- ◆ CAU members have worked at the soup kitchen.

- ◆ The church covered tuition for two church members to attend a course in Basic Signing at Union County College.
- ◆ A church member advocated for CAU members to participate in the Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration.
- ◆ At the end of every service a CAU member who is hearing impaired stands before the congregation and signs the Doxology and the benediction with assistance.

Everyone has a gift. It's just a matter of getting to know the person and to recognize their gift.

“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people” (Isiah 56:7 KJV)

We are excited and we would appreciate an increase in your support.

Rev. Aleyah Lacey

Religious Services at CAU

Did you know that the CAU community is exploring religion and having worship in a unique and innovative way?



UCICC member, Reverend Aleyah Lacey of Mount Teman A.M. E. Church on Saturdays gathers members of CAU's (Community Access Unlimited) DD Community and TOP youth to explore faith and worship. You are invited to share your faith and talents at these interfaith services. Services are held on Saturdays at 11am and 1pm and are for an hour long. If you have a positive inspirational message, would like to provide worship, and have a willing heart to serve please consider being a blessing at these interfaith services.

Rev. Aleyah Lacey pictured left

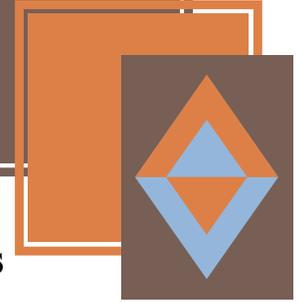
Our objectives are:

1. To provide a safe space for our members to worship God
2. To foster spiritual growth through the diverse understandings of God
3. To build up the community in faith, hope, and love

If you would like to volunteer in this amazing ministerial opportunity or find out more, please contact Rev. Aleyah Lacey at Alacey@caunj.org



NJ Office of the Attorney General's 21-County, 21st Century Community Policing Project



By: Mark Spivey
Union County Prosecutors Office; Director of Communications

The Union County Prosecutor's Office is partnering with the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council and Union County College to host two public informational forums during the last week of February as part of the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General's 21-County, 21st-Century Community Policing Project.

The first forum, with a topic of bias crime investigations, is scheduled to take place at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, February 26 at Union County College's main campus in Cranford, in Room N-4 of the Laboratory building. The second forum, with a topic of immigration, is scheduled to take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, February 28 at Union County College's Elizabeth campus, in Room K-517, fifth floor of the Kellogg Building at 40 West Jersey Street.

Presenting information on these two topics and answering audience questions during the forums will be members of the three partner hosting organizations, as well as representatives of the local chapters of the Anti-Defamation League and the American Friends Service Committee. During the immigration forum, there will also be a detailed presentation outlining Attorney General Directive 2018-6, titled "Directive Strengthening Trust Between Law Enforcement and Immigrant Communities."

Full agendas and additional information about these events, which are open to the public and free to attend, will be posted online by the Prosecutor's Office on its Twitter page, accessible at <https://twitter.com/UCPONJ>, throughout the month of February. And for more information about the 21-County, 21st-Century Community Policing Project, go online to <https://www.nj.gov/oag/2121/>.

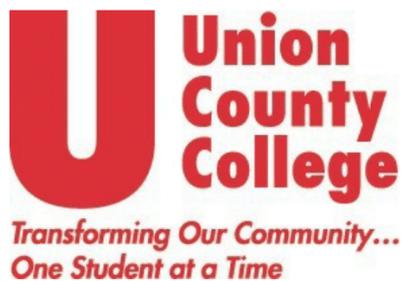
For answers to questions about either forum, please contact Union County Prosecutor's Office Director of Communications Mark Spivey at 908-527-4621 or mspivey@ucnj.org.





Immigration Laws in Union County, NJ
Inmigración en el condado de Union, NJ

What are your rights?
¿Cuales son tus derechos?



Thursday, February 28th
6:00 pm
Union County College
Kellogg Building, K-517
40 West Jersey Street
Elizabeth, NJ

Guest Speakers:

John Esmerado,
Investigations Supervisor /Acting Assistant Prosecutor,
Union County Prosecutor's Office



Nicole P. Miller, Esq.,
American Friends Service Committee



American Friends
Service Committee



Bias Crimes Investigations in Union County, NJ



Tuesday, February 26th
6:00 pm
Union County College
Cranford Campus
Laboratory Building, Rm N-4

Guest Speakers:

Melissa Spagnoli,

Special Deputy Attorney General/Acting Assistant Prosecutor

Special Prosecutions Unit Supervisor, Union County Prosecutor's Office

Detective Rudolfo Correia,

Special Prosecutions Unit, Union County Prosecutor's Office

Alex Rosenberg, Associate Regional Director

Anti-Defamation League NY/NJ





JOIN OUR TEAM!

Community Access Unlimited welcomes those with a big heart! Due to our continuing expansion, there are a number of **full time** and **part time** openings for those interested in guiding people with disabilities and youth at risk who are on the road to independence.

For those looking for part-time positions, CAU offers available house on the weekends and overnights! Minimum requirements are:

- Valid driver's license
- Access to vehicle daily to use for work purpose
- Original High School Diploma/GED/College Degree

Experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities and/or youth at risk are a plus! Of course compassion for the work and a flexible schedule is also required when providing support to our members.

Working at CAU is not just a job but a career! We offer promotional opportunities for employees, competitive salaries and a comprehensive benefits package to full time employees!

Please take the time to visit our agency website www.caunj.org for more information and current listings.

CAU Hosts a weekly Open House Mondays from 4 PM -6 PM

80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ
07202

Don't forget your resume and come prepared to fill out an application

To make an appointment, please call an HR representative at (908) 354-3040 ext 4203. If you are unable to attend the open house, please fax resume to (908) 354-0283 or email to rwright@caunj.org.

UCICC –CAU COMMUNITY HELP LINE

**DO YOU NEED HELP WITH FOOD? HOME HEALTH OR PERSONAL CARE
HOME AND PROPERTY CARE
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES?**

Call CAU's Information and Referral Office at
908-354-3040 [X 4272] for answers and resources.

CAU's community service mission includes providing direct services to people in need as well as information on how to locate services provided by other agencies.

This month we highlight **one of CAU services available to qualified recipients** in our Union County communities.

1] **Free home delivered meals** [6 week program; one meal per person per day] for Union County residents who are US citizens and their families who need food and who are:

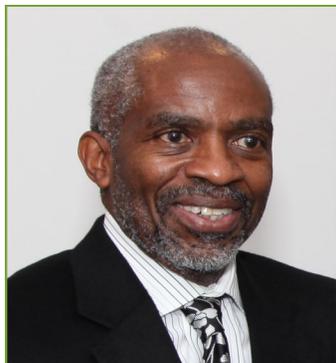
- *Age 59 or younger [head of household]; *Living in low income households;
- * Unable to access adequate food for themselves and their families.
- * Documents and interview are required to qualify.

Contact Gene Tavera X 4272.

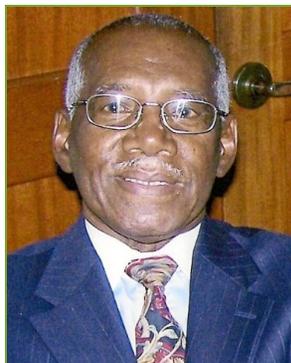
UCICC Outreach Coordinating Team



*Sidney Blanchard,
Associate Executive Director
Community Relations
Community Access Unlimited
sblanchard@caunj.org*



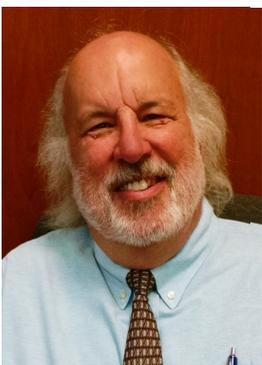
*Roderick (Rod) Spearman
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
rspearman@caunj.org*



*Pastor Howard A. Bryant,
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
hbryant@caunj.org*



*Pastor Carmine Pernini
UCICC Interfaith Coordinator
cpernini@caunj.org*



*AH 'Skip' Winter
UCICC Steering
Committee Member*



*Michelle Mobley
CAU Director of Youth
Service Residential
mmobley@caunj.org*



*Charlene Walker
UCICC Administrative Assistant
cwalker@caunj.org*

Join & Be Active Today!

- Attend monthly meetings.
- Invite other community leaders to attend our meetings and events.
- Support or host fundraising programs to support the Record Expungement Grant Program.
- Sign up for our mailing list.
- Share useful information about your organization.

Contact Rod Spearman at
908-354-3040 x 4324
for more information on becoming
a member

Advertise in the UCICC Newsletter!

Have an exciting event or program happening?

Reach out and build bonds with members of the interfaith community in Union County by advertising in this newsletter!

Please send all print-ready ads to Rod Spearman at rspearman@caunj.org by the **13th** of every month to save a space!



Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council c/o Community Access Unlimited
80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: (908) 354-3040 x4324 • Email: UCInterfaith@caunj.org

www.facebook.com/UnionCountyInterfaithCoordinatingCouncil



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PERMIT 225
Elizabeth, NJ

80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: 908-354-3040 TTY/TTD: 908-354-4629
Fax: 908-354-2665 www.caunj.org

Community Access Unlimited's Mission: *To provide community access through effective and comprehensive support services for people with disabilities and at-risk youth, giving them the opportunity to live independently and to lead normal and productive lives in the community.*

UCICC & STEERING COMMITTEE UP-COMING EVENTS

UCICC Steering Committee

February 7, 2019 at 10am
80 W. Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
See Right side

Bias Crimes Investigations in Union County

Date: February 26, 2019 Time: 6pm
Location: Union County College –Cranford Campus
Laboratory Building, Rm N-4
1033 Springfield Ave, - Cranford, NJ 07016

UCICC Steering Committee

March 7, 2019 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202

Bias Crimes in Union County Investigations

Date: February 28, 2019
Time: 6pm
Location: Union County College –Elizabeth Campus
Kellogg Building, K-517
40 W. Jersey Street—Elizabeth, NJ 07016

UCICC Steering Committee

April 4, 2019 at 10:00am
80 W Grand St
Elizabeth NJ 07202
See Right side

Faith in Action

April 3, 2019
Time: 5pm-8pm
Location: Suburban Golf Club
1730 Morris Av. Union, NJ 07083



Rod Spearman
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