Connect, Learn, and Share at Ethical Education & Membership Weekend

Melissa Sinclair, National Director of Ethical Education
Friday, Nov 4 - Sunday, Nov 6
Stony Point Center

Big plans are in store for Ethical Education this fall. I've had a chance to talk with most program organizers and representatives of Societies, and several needs have arisen. We plan to address as many of them as we can at the Fall Ethical Education and Membership Weekend.

First big plan is to merge the two conferences into one because the needs of Ethical Education and Membership overlap. Both want to attract visitors and have them commit to membership. Both want to address diversity, social media usage, and how to share programming ideas, along with more.

The Weekend is aptly named “Building Connections Within and Between Societies” and it will be held Friday, November 4 through Sunday, November 6 in Stony Point, NY. We chose the theme because that is what we need to do! We do so much in isolation. It’s not just isolation between Societies, but also within Societies. There is rarely a time we can gather in teams to work together, so we created that space to make it possible for more time and work to be done between committees.

Our hope is that several members of a Society, neighboring Societies, and far away Societies will join in so that they can bring back new skills, ideas, and partners to help implement them.

A strong theme of the workshops will be social media/technology-centered. This is an area where we vary greatly from Society to Society in its usage and practice and an area that is relatively easy to learn and to implement. There will be sessions on how to better use Facebook, Twitter, email, technology for face-to-face meetings and webinars online, and organizational systems.

A lot of time will be allowed for individual Ethical Education programs to share what they do and ask each other for what they need. We ask each Society to present on their program: highlights, structure, size, and challenges. There will be workshops on introducing and connecting Ethical Navigator groups, creative programming ideas, building/growing new programs, and more. Here’s a list of some workshops:

- Coloring White Spaces: Becoming More Truly Inclusive
- The Launch of our NEW Program Exchange Online & In Person!
- Effective Emails: Techniques to Reach, Engage and Retain Your Audience
- Intro to GoToMeeting & GoToWebinar
- How to Successfully Recruit New Families to Join Membership and Sunday School
- Starting and Connecting Society Ethical Navigator Programs
- Building a Strong Program with Limited Financial Resources

The key to success this Weekend is good attendance. We hope to see you there! You can register at aeu.org/event/ethical-education-membership-weekend.

After the Weekend, we’ll continue to stay in touch with each other and share ideas, especially with video chats and on social media. What better way for the world to find us than for us to show ourselves and work together to make it happen? See you in Stony Point in November!
Hello and welcome to my first Dialogue column. I’m excited to be your new American Ethical Union President, heading up a truly dynamite board. There are three new members including me: the others being Jill Aul, St. Charles, MO; and Tom Castelnuovo, Brooklyn, NY. Serving through current board terms are John McCormick, Philadelphia, PA; Ken Novak, Evanston, IL; Karen Elliott, Baltimore, MD; Carol Bartell, Chesterfield, MO; Bob Gordon, Upper Saddle River, NJ; and Linda Napoli, Mineola, NY. I, by the way, am from Manhattan, NY.

National Leaders Council Representatives are Hugh Taft-Morales and Randy Best. The Board also includes Law‘ence Miller, Administrative Director; Bart Worden, Executive Director; and Favio Apollon, Future of Ethical Societies Liaison, with Christian Hayden as FES Alternate.

As is customary at the beginning of the new fiscal year, the Board met at a conference center to review how Ethical Culture as a whole is doing, what we find challenging in meeting our mission (to govern the AEU on behalf of its membership using our talents and time to advance the national Ethical Culture Movement), and how to best use the present to get us a better future. It was also a chance to get to know each other and have some fun together. I do hope that fun will continue to be part of board service for us all—boring board meetings are anathema to me.

At our retreat, we had a colloquy on board service, teamwork, process, effectiveness, and innovation. We discussed what might be holding up membership growth and ways we might update the services of both the AEU and the Societies. Tom presented a workshop on how to do strategic planning focusing on a year-to-year basis rather than writing a five-year plan that might get stuck in a file and forgotten, and explained that in the future we’ll need to explore ways to enhance the appeal of Ethical Culture to Millennials, listing the various traits, views, and interests of that generation. Karen gave a workshop on how to use the Board Dropbox.

On completion of the second day of our retreat, we took a break, moved to a new location on the grounds, and proceeded to have our first “real” board meeting (we’d had a quick one at the end of the Assembly in July). We started by introducing ourselves again and naming our Society affiliations (Mid Rivers, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Chicago Circle, Baltimore, St. Louis, Bergen, Long Island, New York, Westchester, Riverdale-Yonkers, and Baltimore)—each of us adding what we thought would make us feel our meeting would be truly productive: mostly to make good plans and to make sure they were carried through. We approved the Consent Agenda, which included reports from 11 committees, and then made the necessary decisions on information presented to us. We worked through questions regarding Lay Leadership Summer School and the Assembly, made a list of over a dozen strategic projects to consider and prioritize (networking among Societies, connecting with peer organizations, etc.), approved a proposal on the subject of at-large members, considered endorsing the Pilgrim Pipelines project of Food and Water Watch, and more.

I feel we all agreed that it was a productive retreat and are enthusiastic about the year to come. Now we each are working on the individual assignments we took on. Mine is to work on the organization of the next Assembly and to help write a questionnaire both for people moving away from their Societies and for those interested in an Ethical Culture connection but who are not living near a Society.

I would be happy to hear from any of you who have questions about the Board, and delighted if you might like to be considered for board service in the future. Please don’t hesitate to contact me at my email address: andramariemiller@gmail.com.
Teens Tackle Ethics in Education Nov 10-13
*Trish Cowan, YES Conference Coordinator*

Today’s teens are faced with a lot of pressures, both internally and externally. Often at the heart of these pressures are issues involving their education. This year’s Youth of Ethical Societies (YES) Conference will be tackling “Ethics in Education” and dive deeper into issues like:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Social media and schools’ roles in students’ and teachers’ usage of it
- Segregation
- College tuition, protection of athletes, affirmative action, and campus rape
- Standardized testing
- Varieties of educational experience (homeschooling, public, private, online)
- Sex education
- Harassment and bullying

Any teen age 13-18 and in 9th - 12th grade is welcome and encouraged to attend YES. One does not have to be affiliated with an Ethical Society to participate. This year’s YES conference will be taking place in Washington, DC, from November 10 through 13. For more information about the conference, please visit the [YES Event Page](http://www.yes-eventpage.com) or the [YES Facebook group](https://www.facebook.com/YESEventPage) or contact Trish Cowan at 314-680-3348 or trishhotze@sbcglobal.net. We would love to have teen representation from each Ethical Society!

Uniting LGBTQ People with Families, Friends, and Allies: Mid Rivers’ Jill Aul

Jill Aul has been named PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) National’s Regional Director for the Central Region. PFLAG is the nation’s largest family and ally organization defending the rights of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer) individuals. Beginning October 1, Jill will work to support 22 chapters within a 4 state region (Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska), while simultaneously acting as a liaison between the chapters and the national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Jill founded the St. Charles, MO PFLAG chapter in 2005, along with her spouse, Bill. Their chapter started their county’s Pride festival in 2014. Jill and Bill are active members of the Mid Rivers Society, and Jill serves on the AEU Board.

**Editor’s note:** Ethical Culture reinforces our good works inside and outside of our Movement. Do you do ethical work outside of your “official” Ethical Culture affiliation? Share it with the Ethical Action Report!
The American Ethical Union continues to evolve organizationally in the effort to be ever more effective and efficient in growing, nurturing, and sustaining the Ethical Culture Movement. Some of this evolution is cultural as we adjust to the realities of crowded schedules and a seemingly exponential growth in options for entertainment and other activities. Some is technological as we adopt new tools for communicating and organizing. Some is interpersonal as we work to incorporate new people from new places into our larger community.

Here’s a taste of some of the evolution we are already seeing: They say, “Don’t bury the lead!” so I’ll start with news of three—yes, that’s right three—new locations for Ethical Humanist groups. You’ve probably heard of the Atlanta group already since they were meeting before the Assembly, and now we have a group in Edmonton, Canada and another in Susquehanna, PA. All are connected with our Membership Team and have already begun meeting. I expect there’s more to come as we continue to get inquiries from all over.

The Union has been a primarily volunteer effort with staff support. We have a volunteer board and have relied upon volunteers to chair committees and task groups for almost all of our activities and programs. A downside to the strategy of relying heavily on volunteers is that volunteers often experience inadequate support, take on more responsibilities than desired, and find it difficult to recruit, activate, and sustain other volunteers to share the joys of committee work.

In order to get our work done effectively and sustainably we have looked to deploy staff as Team Leaders for Communications, Ethical Education and Fundraising and have also increased staff support for Membership and Ethical Action. By using a Team of Five approach (minimum of five members and each team includes a board member and National Leaders Council member as well as a lay volunteer and AEU staff person) we ensure that our committees have enough members to plan and implement programs and activities. The approach also brings enhanced opportunities for coordination and cooperation via the Board’s active engagement and through periodic meetings of the Team Leaders.

Our new President, Andra Miller, has helped the Board implement a process called a “consent agenda” that promotes the submission of written committee and program reports prior to Board meetings so they can be approved as a whole by consent. This is a significant timesaver for the Board and gives more opportunity to deal with substantive matters while providing encouragement to document our activities through the written reports.

We have also found more ways to utilize technology across the organization. GoToMeeting has become the default “location” for numerous committee and task group meetings. We are still adjusting to the intricacies of holding conversations when participants join sessions in different ways—some sharing their video camera, some joining via computer but use audio only, and others who join by phone. We are getting better at reducing cacophony and focusing more on content and less on connection issues.

Our Communications Coordinator, Emily Newman, has led the way to the next step in virtual meetings by offering our first fully featured webinar. Using our new GoToWebinar platform, Emily offered a wonderful instructional session on the topic of “tabling” for your Ethical Society and the AEU, which was very well received and also gave the opportunity to use some of the helpful GoToWebinar tools such as polling the participants, allowing participants to “raise hands” to ask questions, and selectively mute/unmute individual participants, which greatly improved the sound quality for participants.

Going forward, we will be offering more webinars on topics of interest to our member Societies and also extend our reach to supporters who are no longer connected with a brick and mortar group but want to engage with the broader Ethical Movement. A task force is currently developing a plan to replace the former “Member at Large” program with an updated one that makes full use of the new communication tools available to us.

So stay tuned and, if you can, come join us in person at Stony Point for the combined Ethical Education and Membership Growth weekend from November 4-6!
Lay Leadership Summer School 2016: Reflections and Update

Opening note by Hugh Taft-Morales: From August 13-20, twenty-one Ethical Culturists attended the 2016 Lay Leadership Summer School (LLSS) at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center in Highlands, North Carolina. Seven staff members and a helpful volunteer led the group through workshops, lectures, and activities. One attendee, Carolyn A. Parker of the Ethical Society of Austin, kindly responded to some questions below.

Why did you go to LLSS?
For my Society, I went because I wanted to learn more ways to serve and to help us grow. We are one of the smallest Societies in the American Ethical Union (AEU), but we are located in the midst of the most liberal county in Texas. It’s a university town and a place where Ethical Humanism could be flourishing. I was looking for tools to help us gain visibility and become more attractive to new members.

On a personal level, I was hoping for a deeper connection to Ethical Culture, both from the intellectual need for more information about history and philosophy, and the emotional/spiritual need for community.

What did you like best about LLSS?
Honestly, I liked the late night bull sessions. Our days started early and ended late; LLSS was pretty intense at times. Still, we often stayed up late talking about new strategies, swapping information about how we did things in our home Societies. It was a good chance to get to know people better and to learn more practical means for branding, outreach, and making interesting meetings.

I also loved our Day’s End Ceremonies (which offered ceremonial and celebratory creations to the whole Summer School), the Journey’s Groups (that explored personal themes in small groups), and working on Congregational Development. And, yes, I learned how to play Rummikub.

What did you like least?
I am so out of shape! The walk to the dining hall seemed much longer than it was—at least at first. The natural wonder of that walk made up for it. If I had to make the occasional pause, there was always some new mushroom or flower to see. Reaching the top of the hill and catching the view of the Blue Ridge Mountains—well, a little walk can be a good thing, right?

What did you take back from LLSS to your local Society?
Not home 24 hours and we were already talking about the things we learned. The first thing I did was slip in a couple of suggestions about outreach and branding that I picked up during class and those nighttime sessions. I am preparing a couple of platforms on Ethical Culture History and Philosophy using the materials presented at LLSS as a guide.

We are considering some board training on Congregational Development and more platforms/discussions on Compassionate Communication for the Society. I think our Solstice meeting will be a little livelier, too, with some of the ideas we gleaned from Day’s End ceremonies.

Closing note by Hugh Taft-Morales: Although final attendee evaluations of LLSS were positive, with students reporting greater confidence and competence, it was clear from daily evaluations and direct student contact that we should rethink the format, content, and pacing of the curriculum. The AEU Board is considering the best method for a fundamental re-visioning that will benefit the Ethical Culture Movement as we move into the future!
Notes from Your AEU Board

Karen Elliott, AEU Board Member

The American Ethical Union Board met on Thursday, July 14, 2016 and Sunday, July 17 in St. Louis, and again on Saturday, September 17, 2016 at Pendle Hill Retreat Center in Pennsylvania.

The AEU’s new President fills you in on the current Board in her column. But how are the AEU Board’s elected members chosen? The Board Development Committee puts together a slate for the election. Societies are welcome to provide suggestions to the Committee. Write in candidates are also allowed; ten signatures are required and must be submitted to the Board Development Committee at least seven days prior to their publication of the candidate slate for the Assembly. Three Board members are elected for a three-year term each year and, out of the total elected membership of nine, four officers are chosen for one-year terms. Delegates from each Ethical Society or affiliate elect the Board members and officers at the AEU’s Assembly each year.

Part of what the AEU Board does is to oversee the work of the AEU staff and volunteers. In an attempt to do an effective job of that and still have time to think strategically and innovatively, which sometimes has been difficult, we have begun to use a process taught at Lay Leadership Summer School called a Consent Agenda. Reports are sent to the Board ahead of time from key committees, the Treasurer, the National Leaders Council (NLC), and staff and these, along with the minutes of the prior meeting(s) are distributed to be read ahead of time and are accepted by the Board with one vote unless someone needs to have one or more items held out for discussion and approval separately. Our first meeting with a consent agenda was in September and it made a great difference in how much more we accomplished with the majority of the reporting being done in advance.

The report from staff at this year’s Lay Leadership Summer School was positive, but it is twenty years since the first LLSS (which I attended) and they suggested it would be worthwhile to re-imagine LLSS instead of just tweaking it based on feedback as has been done in past years. The desired outcomes of Summer School as defined by staff member and AEU Treasurer Ken Novak are: increased knowledge base, skill building, deeper understanding of Movement identity, and making connections with others within the Movement. Executive Director Bart Worden (also a 1996 LLSS attendee) was asked by the Board to form a task force charged with this re-envisioning.

At the Board retreat, Board member Tom Castelnuovo shared research about ways to do strategic planning and much discussion ensued. The Board agreed that it was worth continuing with further planning and will be looking into which of the potential strategic projects developed during the retreat should be acted on first.

Treasurer Ken Novak reported for the task force on AEU support for those wanting to connect with the Union individually for various reasons. They would include former Society members who no longer belong to a Society due to move or other reasons, orphaned Leaders, and others hearing about us who are not near a Society. The task force has come up with some possible ways of addressing their needs and the Board asked them to continue working on this and report back again.

NLC President Hugh Taft-Morales and Presidents Council representative Emil Volcheck proposed a more comprehensive Assembly Committee structure to allow for better communications and sharing of resources during the planning and execution of Assemblies. In addition to the on-going members (AEU Director of Administration Law’ence Miller, AEU Communications Coordinator Emily Newman, AEU Executive Director Bart Worden, and AEU Assembly-specific staff Sue Walton), these additional members would be included as standard in future: AEU Board President (Andra Miller), host Society Leaders and Board Presidents (or their designated representative) who this coming year will include Leaders and lay leaders from the Baltimore Ethical Society, the Washington Ethical Society, and the Northern Virginia Ethical Society, the President and Vice-President of the NLC, and representatives from the Presidents Council and Future of Ethical Societies. This was approved by the Board.

A new process has been put into place to have the Ethical Action Committee, chaired by Kate LaClair, determine whether to review proposed endorsements, taking into account position statements made by the AEU in the past, and recommend them for approval to the Board. Using this process, the EA Committee asked the Board to endorse on behalf of the AEU a letter initiated by the Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipelines-NY (CAPPNY). The letter “calls on the Cuomo Administration to conduct an exhaustive examination of the risks of the Pilgrim Pipelines, a proposed set of oil & petroleum products pipelines that threaten the health and safety of New York communities.” There are two AEU resolutions that are related to this: a 2011 resolution against fracking and a 2014 resolution opposing the Keystone-XL pipeline.

New groups are in the works, and some have formed and are meeting. The Board approved a request from continued on p.7
the newly formed Chicago Ethical Humanist Circle to recognize them formally as a Circle. The Ethical Humanists of Atlanta Meetup Group is progressing. And there are two new groups: the Edmonton Ethical Culture Circle (Edmonton, ON, Canada) is now active, as is the Susquehanna Valley Ethical Society.

Executive Director Bart Worden is talking to people from two organizations (United Coalition of Reason and the Foundation Beyond Belief) about possible shared events, projects, etc. The Board agreed that Bart should move forward with these discussions. The AEU signed on, at the National Leaders Council’s request, as sponsors of Kean University’s conference and seminars on Large Scale Violence and Its Aftermath.

Here are current Society/Board liaison assignments:

- **Andra Miller** – New York
- **Bob Gordon** – Bergen, Essex, Riverdale-Yonkers
- **Carol Bartell** – St. Louis, Northern Westchester, Triangle
- **Jill Aul** – Mid Rivers, Washington DC

The next AEU Board meeting will be on Saturday, November 19, 2016 starting at 9am at the New York Society for Ethical Culture. Members of member Societies are always welcome to attend.

**Wall of Remembrance**

Compiled from Societies’ newsletters and websites, and newspaper obituaries

**Beulah “Bubbles” Blinder** *(Northern Virginia)* – Longtime Northern Virginia and Washington DC member Bubbles Blinder died on August 11 at the age of 92. For decades she was an active participant in demonstrations on social justice issues, and at WES was deeply involved with the Sunday School. Her husband Herb, also a former NoVES/WES joint member, was for many years the AEU’s representative on Capital Hill and the editor of the AEU’s Ethical Action Report. Her son Josh is a former member and a frequent platform musician.

**Elinore Heppe** *(Northern Virginia)* – Eleanor Heppe, a founding member of the Northern Virginia Society along with her late husband, Robert, died on July 16 at age 89. To many older members she will be remembered for the warm welcome she provided to all at the greeting table on Sunday mornings. She was also a Julliard-trained concert pianist, and frequently enriched our Sunday mornings with her magnificent piano performances. Prior to the formation of NoVES, Eleanor was an active member of the Washington Ethical Society (WES).

**Ruth Papa** *(Northern Westchester)* – Ruth Papa, 91, passed away on August 2. Ruth is survived by her husband Sam Papa; daughters Maureen Cole and Linda Rosado; her six grandchildren Russell Cole, Meghan Quinlan, Rachel Oliva, Kaitlin Cole, Bethany Cole and Marissa Rosado; and four great grandchildren Penelope Cole, Jake Oliva, Elliot Cole and Sam Oliva. Ruth and Sam had been regular attendees at the Northern Westchester Sunday Meetings as well as other events until the last few years when physical conditions made it difficult.

**William J. Scribner** *(Riverdale-Yonkers)* – William (Bill) passed away September 16. Bill was the Founder and Director Emeritus of the Bronx Arts Ensemble, which began its debut at the Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture. “We will greatly miss his kind and generous spirit, commitment to excellence, great sense of humor and overwhelming energy and devotion that inspired each of us,” wrote the BAE. “As Founder of the BAE in 1972 as well as bassoonist/performer, Bill early recognized the need for fully professional performances in the Bronx. From modest beginnings as a wind quintet, Bill developed an orchestra with the finest colleagues in the city performing with him, giving hundreds of concerts annually.”

**Martha Snegroff** *(Westchester)* – Long-time member, and dear friend, Martha, had taught science at Ardsley Middle School for 49 years. At her memorial at the Ethical Society, many of her students and former students and their parents came to remember her. Students wrote hundreds of tributes to be given to her family. Louis Dunefsky, an 11-year-old student of Martha’s, wrote a rousing appreciation of Martha as a teacher and a person.

**Irma Zeiger** *(Long Island)* – Irma and her husband Al were active in the Long Island Society Colloquy group and involved in many aspects of the Society’s life. Irma will be especially remembered for her warmth and bright smile.
Ethical Action Feature: 
Ethical Navigators 
Lance Finney, Ethical 
Society of St. Louis 

As a Navigator I promise to do my best to create a world free of prejudice and ignorance. To treat people of every race, creed, lifestyle and ability with dignity and respect. To strengthen my body and improve my mind to reach my full potential. To protect our planet and preserve our freedom. 
– Navigators USA’s Moral Compass

Since 2012, a chapter of Navigators USA has been active at the Ethical Society of St. Louis, bringing all-inclusive scouting to the youth of the Society, and giving non-Society families in the area an alternative to other scouting organizations. We call ourselves the Ethical Navigators, and we connect the humanist philosophy of the Ethical Culture Movement and the humanist-compatible outdoor scouting philosophy of Navigators USA.

In June 2012, several parents started looking for a scouting organization that was inclusive of all races, religious perspectives, and sexual and gender orientations. We also decided to look for a co-ed organization because we wanted to provide an equal opportunity to all of our children. After considering several options (with the Baden-Powell Service Association as a strong alternative), we chose to work with Navigators USA.

Navigators USA was started by a New York City-based Unitarian Universalist affiliated Boy Scout troop that was kicked out of BSA because of incompatibilities on religious and sexual discrimination. Navigators has a focus on inclusiveness and diversity, stemming from its history as a group that worked to give inner city kids a chance to experience nature. Though Navigators USA is significantly smaller than Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and thus doesn’t have the resources or prestige of the larger groups, we were willing to make that sacrifice because it had the same inclusive policies that we sought. It was more important to us to help build an inclusive organization than to fit into an established organization that required ethical compromises. The focus on humanism and diversity born out of an urban environment made Navigators a strong fit for us.

Now we’re Chapter 33 of a small-but-growing national organization. We have also become an integral part of the Ethical Society of St. Louis community. Once we chose to affiliate with Navigators USA, we presented our reasoning to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

With their approval of our choice, the Society signed on as official sponsors of our Chapter, including covering our activities within their existing insurance policy. Within the past year, we have also incorporated our monthly meetings with the Sunday Ethical Education for Kids (SEEK) program as one of the Special Interest Group options for SEEK students. Additionally, we participate in Society-wide charitable activities, have cleaned the auditorium twice, and have twice served meals at the Society as fundraisers and community-building activities.

Navigators USA builds its curriculum around the four areas of Mind, Body, Planet, and Freedom, and we have been able to help the children of members and visitors of our Society appreciate the human experience in outdoor fun, survival skills, and cultural events.

Though our group tends to be on the young side (mostly around eight years old), we have some older scouts in the group who have built leadership skills by making the ‘chore chart’ at camping, leading food preparation, helping the younger ones, and even by volunteering to plan an entire outing.

Navigators USA has been a great cultural fit for the Ethical Society of St. Louis, and it has brought families into the Society who otherwise might never have entered the building. We encourage all Societies to consider developing their own Ethical Navigators group.

Navigators Slogan 
The more you give the more you get

Navigator Traits 
Truthful, Respectful, Inclusive, Generous, Dependable, Resourceful, Cooperative
More Than a Banner: Working to Make Black Lives Matter

Editor's note: A number of Ethical Societies have put up Black Lives Matter banners. Obviously what is important is the work behind the banner. What can we do practically to help our nation transform itself into a racially just society? While we all have a long way to go, below is a statement prepared by the Philadelphia Ethical Society that offers ideas. Also see Brooklyn’s website about their banner.

The Philadelphia Ethical Society has a history of working to confront and deconstruct systemic racism. Below is a list of some of the ways we are “walking the walk” supporting people of color in a nation still burdened with the legacy of slavery.

Given recent examples of excessive police force leading to the deaths of black citizens, especially young unarmed men, a diverse and broad social movement has coalesced around the phrase, “Black Lives Matter.”

As an expression of the Philadelphia Ethical Society’s on-going commitment to racial justice, our Board voted to put a large “Black lives matter” sign in our window. This acknowledges that the African-American community is experiencing a new version of Jim Crow due to systemic racism. Currently, in our country, Black lives do not matter as much as White lives.

Be assured that we support those in the criminal justice system that work with integrity and zeal to make the system truly just. We hope to work with them and others to rid our justice system of racism—from interactions between citizens and police on the street, to the courtroom, to our racially biased incarceration system. We hope working together spurs more conversation about how to assure justice for people of color in the criminal justice system and beyond.

We look forward to the day when we truly do become a “post racial” society.

When we at the Ethical Society say “Black Lives Matter,” we have done more than just display a banner. We have:

• For decades, organized and funded Camp Linden, a summer day camp on the Brandywine River for underserved children, primarily children of color.
• Since 2014 been active participants in actions of POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild), an interfaith coalition that speaks truth to power with regard to adequate education funding, a just justice system, a living wage, and other issues disproportionately affecting people of color.
• Supported members’ attendance at “Whites Confronting Racism,” a yearlong study and program organized by POWER.
• Organized and conducted numerous ongoing discussions of current articles, books, and other media pieces relating to racism and white privilege. Topics have included articles by Ta-Nehisi Coates, videos by Tim Wise, and more.
• In June 2016 hosted #RacismIsASickness, an anti-racism art installation and community engagement project created in 2015 by Tieshka K. Smith, Philadelphia-based photographer, blogger, and community activist.
• In 2014 hosted work from Art for Justice, a non-profit that supports and exhibits the work of incarcerated artists in order to: 1) promote public dialog on ways to prevent crime; 2) reduce levels of incarceration; and, 3) find effective, humane ways to improve the criminal justice system.
• Organized a Criminal Justice Reform Summit in September of 2014 that drew over 150 people and included many of the most active reform groups in Philadelphia, including: Prof. Jill McCorkel; Reuben Jones of Frontline Dads & Focused Deterrence; Tyrone Werts (lifer commuted by Rendell and recipient of a Soros Fellowship); J. Jondhi Harrell of The Center for Returning Citizens; Pam Superville from the Mayor’s Office of Reintegration Services; Harold Wilson, sponsored by Witness to Innocence; and Ann Schwartzman, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society.
• Organized a public workshop on Multicultural Fluency and Anti-Racist Activism.
• Recently formed an Anti-Racism Subcommittee of the Ethical Action Committee, actively trying to educate membership and the public about what we can all do to counter racism.
• Sent speakers to numerous issues-of-race workshops, sponsored by multiple organizations including the Unitarian Society of Germantown.
From the United Nations: Prejudice & Discrimination
Dr. Sylvain Ehrenfeld, IHEU and National Ethical Service representative to the UN
Dr. Reba Goodman, Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County


The painful reality of prejudice and discrimination is a global issue. Shiite and Sunni Moslems are killing each other. Anti-Semitism surged nearly 40% in Europe and especially in France. Feeling against gays is high in many countries. In 76 countries homosexuality is a crime. Many of these countries are in Africa, are Islamic countries, or in the Russian Federation. Not surprisingly, the Pew Research organization found that there is less tolerance for homosexuality in more religious countries. Another example of ongoing discrimination is the treatment of Palestinians in Israel and the West Bank.

According to UNICEF and HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, caste discrimination affects an estimated 250 million people and is prevalent mainly in Asia. In India discrimination of DALITS (formerly known as untouchables) was recently declared illegal but is nevertheless pervasive. However, the most flagrant violation of human rights is discrimination—and often violence—against women as well as of people of color.

CONDITION OF WOMEN
A recent UN report found that women worldwide have made progress; they live longer, have fewer children, are less likely to die of childbirth and have made strides in literacy. However, the story is different in the poorest communities where women’s status, maternal death, child marriage and other indicators of women’s well-being have seen little progress. According to the UN POPULATION FUND women continue to be paid less. Also, one in three women reported being physically or sexually abused. More than 125 million girls and women alive today have been subjected to genital mutilation across Africa and the Middle East.

Every year, since 2006, the World Economic Forum has published a Global Gender Gap Report based on data from 145 countries. Countries are ranked by evaluating four areas: Health (life expectancy, etc.), Access to Education, Economic Participation (salary, job type and seniority) and Political Participation.

According to the 2015 report, an additional quarter of a billion women have entered the global work force since 2006 and wage inequality persists with women only now earning what men did a decade ago. The global gender gap across health, education, economic opportunity and politics has narrowed by only 4% in the past 10 years. The top leading countries in the ranking are Iceland (1), Norway (2), Finland (3), Sweden (4) and Ireland (5). The US ranks 28 due to fewer women in high government jobs and less wage equality. On average, women in the US make 77 cents for every dollar a man makes. For African-American women it is 64 cents.

Catherine Hill, director of research for the American Association of University Women said overt discrimination is less of an issue but implicit bias still hampers women in the workplace. She cites a paper that when the identical resume was sent to university faculty the applicant listed as John was more likely to be offered a bigger salary than the applicant listed as Jennifer.

The UN is currently in the process of choosing a new Secretary General. Never in its 70 year history has a women been Secretary General. Many experienced and capable women are running for the job but it is likely that a man will again be chosen. [Editor note: A man was chosen.] The UN is still a man’s world. In 2015 the bulk of the senior appointments were men. Twenty years ago the UN set a goal of appointing 50 percent of the top jobs to a woman. It is nowhere close to meeting this goal. Worldwide women’s condition has improved but much work remains to be done.

RACISM
Racial inequality in the US is as urgent an issue as ever. Blacks still face many obstacles. Many experience a lack of jobs, being treated less fairly in the workplace, or discrimination when applying for a loan or a mortgage. Further difficulties are dealing with the police or the courts as well as experiencing lower quality schools for their kids. These are ongoing issues that can lead to explosions at any time.

The killing of young black men by the US police sparked the current wave of protests. In 2015 the
continued on p.11
The number of young black men killed by US police was 1134, a rate five times higher than of white young men of the same age that same year. The camera made all the difference. Sixty nine percent, in a recent poll, say race relations are generally bad and some are not hopeful it will get better in the near future. When asked to rate the job their local police are doing four in five whites say good or excellent. A majority of blacks answered fair or poor. Many blacks say the police make them feel more anxious than safe.

The US Justice Department has criticized a number of police departments nationwide for unfairly targeting blacks. The report about the Baltimore police was scathing. Boston, with a history of racial tension has been comparatively calm in recent years. In an interview the police chief of Boston said police involvement in the community is crucial. The police appear at school events, have coffee chats with local citizens, stage peace walks and generally work to obtain the public trust.

We clearly need an adequately trained police force. They often have to function in difficult situations. The pervasiveness of guns makes their job even more difficult. Their training is of vital concern.

What about the future? In the near run it looks pretty bleak. However, based on US and world history we are hopeful.

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News from 101st AEU Assembly - July 2016

We congratulate the AEU staff, volunteers, and Assembly Committee on a wonderful Assembly! Thank you to the Mid Rivers Society for hosting the pre-conference event. Special appreciation to the St. Louis Society for their support in making our 101st Assembly a huge success. If it weren’t for their generosity and their awesome volunteers we would have never been able to produce such a successful event. Here are some highlights:

Recognized our dedicated volunteers from across the Ethical Culture Movement with the Anna Garlin Spencer Award (click here to see awardees and their remarks).

Honored Brittany Ferrell and Alexis Templeton of Millenial Activists United with the Elliott-Black Award (left photo, video coming soon). We raised about $1000 to support their legal fees.

Trained with Democracy Spring on non-violent direct action (center photo). Also learn about our continued work with Democracy Spring on the next page under Movement News.

Enjoyed the play “Black and Blue”. You can listen to a special panel held on local television, including Ethical Society of St. Louis Board Member Krystal White, discuss the play and the racial issues facing St. Louis.

Passed resolutions on Systemic Racism, Living Wage, Move to Amend Citizens United, & Requiring Corporate Political Expense Disclosure. Also updated the AEU bylaws and passed a new budget.

Certified Dr. James Croft as an Ethical Culture Leader (right photo, click here to see a video of the ceremony).
The Rose L. Walker Fund Grows
Martha Gallahue, Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

The Rose L. Walker Fund, launched in 2008 by National Ethical Service (NES), now has grown to $82,000. The Fund was named after my mentor/friend and the former President of NES to celebrate her longtime service and because she and her family were its largest initial contributors.

The Rose L. Walker Fund exists to provide a more secure financial platform for the work of NES, and to provide seed grants to those groups working to fulfill the aims of the organization itself. This Fund prioritizes grants that have arisen within the Ethical Culture Movement or in areas where clearly a humanistic initiative is being implemented. It does not cover the entire cost of any initiative; rather it serves as a catalyst for developing initiatives.

As a rapid response to the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, NES offered $1,000 and asked Societies to contribute to this effort. Together we raised $12,000, which was sent to Doctors Without Borders as they were already working in Haiti and could readily respond. That was the beginning of seed grants offered by the Fund through NES. The Fund also enabled us to help the national Future of Ethical Societies (FES) cover costs of leadership training offered by the International Humanist Ethical Union (IHEU) during a conference.

Examples of other grants are:
- Project in Bergen Society supporting refugee settlement.
- Programs with Breaking Walls, an international youth group promoting leadership empowerment among young people from the Acorn High School in Brooklyn and refugee camps in Palestine, Berlin, Barcelona, South Africa, and cities like Detroit.
- All-day workshop, “Evolution, Consciousness and Altruism” held at the New York Society linking altruism with Science. This program was videoed in segments and can be made available in local Societies to spark discussions upon recent findings in evolutionary biology and ethical humanism.

NES began through connecting the women of Ethical Culture Societies, thus forging a shared identity for the purpose of promoting world peace through discourse.

In 1947, they entered into formal association with the United Nations through its Department of Public Information. Their work at the UN in recent years has been largely to building coalitions between both inter-faith and inter-spiritual non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote the cause of world peace. While we focus upon educational initiatives, we also are advocates for human rights and universal values. NES links members interested in the global scene, delivers program talks in local Societies, and heightens awareness of the work of the national Ethical Action Committee, especially with regard to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

We always appreciate our donors contributing to promote the ideals of Ethical Culture and invite members to join us. For more information, contact www.nationalserviceaeu.org.
Movement News

Emily Newman, AEU Communications Coordinator, presented a webinar on tabling to train us on how to promote our Ethical Societies and the Ethical Culture Movement. [Watch the presentation here.](#)

Lee Smalley, of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island, recorded four of Felix Adler’s 1904 addresses titled “The Essentials of Spirituality.” [Listen to them on LibriVox](#) (the link is also available on AEU website under History section).

Sabine Salandy is the new Director of Ethics for Children at the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester.

Richard Koral is the new Acting Leader at the New York Society for Ethical Culture.

Planned Parenthood won the New York Society for Ethical Culture’s 2016 Ethical Humanist Award on September 30th for its over 100 years of fighting for reproductive rights.

ArchCity Defenders won the Ethical Society of St. Louis’ 2016 Ethics in Action Award on October 20th for providing holistic legal advocacy and combating the criminalization of poverty and state violence against poor people and people of color.

After learning about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals during a Platform, the Ethical Society of Austin voted to focus their Ethical Action on: Climate Action, Quality Education, and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

The AEU is now a Foundation Beyond Belief National Partner! When an Ethical Society joins the [Beyond Belief Network](#) and selects the AEU as its National Partner, we both get credit and perks (prizes, awards, etc.) for service hours. Foundation Beyond Belief also has resources to help plan and execute events, and can run Giving Games for your group—a unique opportunity to discuss values in philanthropic giving.

The AEU Ethical Action Committee is working with Democracy Spring on [Equal Voice For All campaign](#), which urges politicians to declare their commitment to democracy. Please encourage your public officials to make this pledge:

“Our government should be free from the corrupting influence of big money in politics and solely dependent upon the People. I declare my support for pro-democracy, anti-corruption reforms, including voting rights protections, citizen-funded elections, and a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United.”

Tuesday, November 8th is Election Day. Remember to vote and remind others to vote.
Indigenous People’s Day
Emily Newman, AEU Communications Coordinator

To honor Christopher Columbus’s arrival in the Americas on October 12, 1492, Colorado made Columbus Day an official state holiday in 1906 and the U.S. made it a federal holiday in 1937, celebrated on the second Monday of October. However, not all states recognize the holiday (Alaska, Hawaii, Iowa, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont), several do not close schools and government offices (California and Texas), and some cities have canceled celebrations.

Knowing that Columbus did not discover America and was brutal to the original inhabitants, many cities are changing the name and focus of the holiday to celebrate Native Americans. A delegation of Native nations brought up the idea of replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day in 1977 at the United Nations’ International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas. It wasn’t until the 1990s that changes were made:

1990: South Dakota (Native Americans’ Day)

1992: Berkeley, California

1994: UN declares August 9 International Day of the World’s Indigenous People

2009: Richmond, California; Sebastopol, California; Santa Cruz, California

2014: Minneapolis, Minnesota; Seattle, Washington; Red Wing, Minnesota (Chief Red Wing Day); Grand Rapids, Minnesota; and Bellingham, Washington (Coast Salish Day)

2015: Traverse City, Michigan; St. Paul, Minnesota; Anadarko, Oklahoma; Olympia, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Carrboro, North Carolina; Albuquerque, New Mexico; San Fernando, California; Belfast, Maine; and Alaska

2016: Durango, Colorado; Asheville, North Carolina; Eugene, Oregon; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Boulder, Colorado; Bainbridge Island, Washington; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Denver, Colorado; Yakima, Washington; East Lansing, Michigan; Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; Phoenix, Arizona; and Vermont

The Zinn Education Project has gathered resources on how to Abolish Columbus Day in your school, university, or city. It provides background information on the holiday, resolution samples, and campaign actions to use. Do you want your city, your state, your Ethical Society to fight in solidarity with indigenous peoples? Do you believe we should continue to recognize Christopher Columbus’ voyage, celebrate the original Americans, or both? Will changing the holiday change America’s relationship with Native Americans?

Write for the Dialogue
We are accepting submissions for Winter 2017!

Send submissions to communications@aeu.org by Sunday, December 25, 2016.

Please include a headshot and relative images with your submission.

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