



# American Ethical Union

*Inspiring Ethical Communities*

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## ANNUAL AFFILIATE REPORT

### Affiliate Report for Future of Ethical Societies

AEU Representative(s): Julia Julstrom-Agoyo

**Please provide brief updates on the following areas of the AEU participation in or with the Affiliate that occurred or developed during 2020:**

**Affiliate's Description:** Future of Ethical Societies (FES) is a community of 18-35-year-olds across the country that connects online, through local gatherings, on various service projects, and during national conferences. Established in 2004 as an affiliate of the AEU, FES maintains and builds ties with the Ethical Culture Movement despite time and geographical constraints. We are excited to get to know people who share interests and values and to learn how we can support each other.

#### **AEU Program(s)/Event(s) in conjunction with the Affiliate, including date, location:**

-Our normal events and functioning were altered due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Our 2020 conference, which was to be held in conjunction with World Humanist Congress in August in Miami, FL, was cancelled. We had a Zoom check-in in the early days of the pandemic, and continued to hold space to connect virtually about once every other month, and also utilized Slack frequently to communicate and organize. This allowed for more members based across the United States and internationally to stay engaged, and connect more often than we may otherwise.

-FES member Christian Hayden has been interning with the Ethical Society of St. Louis as Clergy since August 2020. In addition, Christian has contributed to programing around the Movement. For the AEU Assembly in 2020, he ran a workshop, Beyond Knowing, that explored the impact of racial trauma on all people who live in the US.

-In October, FES member Anya Overmann was elected President of the Young Humanists International during the 2020 Virtual General Assembly.

-FES member Christian Hayden took part in the All-Society Platform in January 2021, Replacing Magical Thinking with Rational Discourse: How can Freethinkers help restore Democracy? In March, Christian worked on an event with Long Island Emeritus Arthur Dobrin called "History is Complicated: Is It Possible to Know the Lives of Others?" where Christian was part of a discussion that explored two of Dobrin's novels: Where We Started and Redland. Christian also participated in a program with the Student Secular Alliance called Dynamic Humanism: Finding/Seeing Paths to the Way, which included some of his work he has been developing for Leadership Training.



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-FES member Anya Overmann represented FES at the YES 2021 Virtual Conference in March.

-We submitted proposals and were approved to present two AEU FES-led Assembly Workshops, “*Humanist Youth Leadership*” - July 13<sup>th</sup> @ 8pm [EST] and “*Ethical Culture in 40 Years*” - Aug. 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 8pm [EST].

## **Goals for 2021:**

-We plan to hold our 2021 gathering virtually on June 20, 2021, and center on resilience through the pandemic. This will be a truncated version of our usual weekend-long affair, in which people will be able to “drop-in” as they feel, and allow us to engage people who might be interested in FES, but may have found it difficult to invest a weekend in-person before.

-We submitted a proposal which was approved to present an AEU FES-led Platform in October 2021, on stories of our personal growth and journeys surrounding recognizing our privileges, and contributing to antiracist work.

-FES continues to grow and be shaped by its members, which especially in this past year has manifested into more frequent communication and an organic distribution of labor. Seeing as this has brought in and involved more members, we expect to continue this method of organization.

-As always, we intend to foster a supportive and active community, online and in person when possible, that meets the spectrum of needs of young adults who are in the FES age range. This includes a stronger connection to YES teens and younger AEU members.