



# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

A Place to Connect, Grow and Serve

December 5, 2018 – Connections article

## Connecting with the Ministerial Search Committee

### By Bee Moradi, MSC role: Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop, Process Observations

Hello from another member of the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC)! My name is Bee Moradi and I have been attending UUCA since 2011. I was born in Tehran, Iran, and at the age of three, moved to Virginia where I quickly became responsible for translating language and culture between my family and our new surroundings. I went to college in Charlottesville (Go 'Hoos!), and consider myself a Virginia girl who loves kabob, rice, and Rumi.

Because of my multicultural upbringing, I have an innate ability to understand multiple perspectives, bridge divides, and respect differences. The neighborhood I grew up in consisted of predominately white, Christian families, teaching me at a very young age the value of diversity in every community. In college, I established a chapter of a national multicultural service-based sorority on my campus – the first and only of its kind – for which I served on the National Board of Directors and that has since grown to over 2,000 members. The organization intentionally recruits members from different backgrounds and celebrates those differences.

After college, I returned to northern Virginia, where I found UUCA through a Google search for an inclusive, progressive, and multicultural spiritual center. A few years later, I visited UUCA for the first time when I convinced a couple of my local sorority sisters to volunteer with me at a luau fundraiser held at the church.

The reason I came back to UUCA for worship is the same reason I felt compelled to serve on the MSC – UUCA gives me hope. I firmly believe in social justice, equality, inclusivity, and multicultural appreciation, and when I found a community that held those values to be sacred, I immediately felt connected. By joining the MSC, I'm taking the next step in growing that connection. By sharing my perspectives as the only person of color on the MSC, I am hopeful that I can inspire new ways of thinking, viewing, and considering our path forward. And, I'm grateful to the MSC and to UUCA for making space for my voice in this process.

Over the next few weeks, you will hear from each member of the MSC and learn about our unique stories – but one thing that we all have in common is our commitment to the task you all have elected us to undertake. Our search process will involve meeting you where you are to hear from you about what qualities you would like to see in our next called minister. And we want your honest and thoughtful feedback.

To that end, the MSC is organizing a workshop called Beyond Categorical Thinking (BCT) for our congregation on February 23, 2019, facilitated by Rev. Keith Kron, UUA Transitions Director, who will also give the sermon during services the next day. The UUA website describes BCT as “a program designed to promote inclusive thinking and prevent unfair discrimination during a congregation’s search for a settled minister.” The UUA Resource Guide describes BCT as “one of several efforts that the UUA is making as part of our institutional intentional effort to attract, affirm, and serve a diverse membership.”

I have taken on the role of organizing the workshop for our church because I personally see this as a way to put my faith into action. While a mandatory part of the UUA search process, the BCT workshop is also a critical part of our search because it allows us, as a congregation, to educate ourselves about unconscious bias. The approximately three-hour workshop will be catered to our congregation and involves discussions surrounding case studies of situations that have occurred at other UU churches. Everyone is invited and we look forward to a majority of our congregation being there!

For more information on BCT, please visit: <https://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/transitions/bct>.