

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE NEWS

UUSC, Human Rights, and the Presidential Election

Shelley Moskowitz, UUSC Manager of Public Policy, has reviewed the results of the 2008 presidential election. She noted that the election was a culmination of years of grassroots work, showing us the efficacy and importance of grassroots campaigning.



In New Hampshire, a UUSC's 501(c)(4) organization, *JustDemocracy*, played a major role in engaging progressive, faith-based communities in several key counties. *JustDemocracy* organized people around issues of war, peace, and climate change. It is now clear that strategic faith-based work can make a difference on issues that matter to us. The work we are doing through *JustDemocracy* is building a base that will continue to push on critical issues and hold our elected representatives accountable.

Now there is a real opportunity to make progress on the policy goals we have held for so long. Senate-election results have led UUSC staff to expect more robust debate and less delay on action on key human-rights issues. As we consider members of the Obama transition team, it appears to us that there is a seriousness of purpose, a true intent to make progress.

The ballot initiatives that successfully restricted marriage equality, however, show us that more work remains to be done. We can not assume that people share our perspective on what is a civil right. Groups like UUSC must redouble their efforts to achieve the change they hope for.

UUSC recently sent an e-mail to supporters inviting them to take part in an action organized by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), calling on Obama to pass an executive order banning torture. UUSC will continue to work with our partner, NRCAT, on this key issue. UUSC is also carefully watching for opportunities for environmental legislative advocacy. We will be quick to engage our members and supporters in key efforts.

Join UUSC's e-Community to stay informed about the latest news on these and other UUSC issues. You will receive a monthly e-newsletter and periodic alerts about urgent actions and humanitarian crises, and get a chance to make your voice heard when decision-makers most need to hear from people committed to human rights and social justice. Register for UUSC's e-Community at www.uusc.org. For more information, contact Jack Maniloff (jkmf@mail.rochester.edu), St. Lawrence District UUSC Regional Coordinator.