

# THE GCC CONNECTOR

JULY 2012

BUILDING CONNECTIONS. INFORMING OUR WORK.

**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:**

- Antioch Baptist Church
- Beth Israel- the West Temple
- Bethany Baptist Church
- Catholics for a Greater Cleveland
- Cleveland Jewish Federation
- Christ Episcopal Church
- Community of St. Peter
- Cuyahoga Mission Area Council
- ELCA Gift of God
- ELCA Synod
- Elizabeth Baptist Church
- Euclid Ave. UCC
- Fairmount Presbyterian Church
- Fairmount Temple
- First Baptist Church
- First Unitarian
- Friendly Inn
- Islamic Center of Cleveland
- Jewish Secular Community
- Kol Halev
- Liberty Hill Baptist Church
- Mt. Zion UCC
- Olivet Institutional Baptist Church
- Park Synagogue
- Pilgrim UCC
- Progressive Action Council/ Caring Communities
- Shiloh Baptist Church
- St. James AME
- St. John AME
- St. Malachi
- St. Paul AME Church
- St. Paul Episcopal Church
- St. Paul UCC
- St. Thomas Episcopal Church
- Suburban Temple Kol Ami
- Temple Emanu El
- Tifereth Israel
- Trinity Cathedral
- UU Society of Cleveland
- West Shore UU

**GCC UNIVERSITY**

Congratulations to the Spring 2012 graduates of GCC University!

On June 9, 10, and 11 nearly 60 leaders from GCC member congregations filled two rooms at Trinity Cathedral. IAF co-director, Arnie Graf and lead organizer, Ari Lipman led participants to embrace power, strike a balance between “the world as it is” and “the world as it should be,” and how to channel anger into action. GCC was reminded about the importance of individual meetings and learned the tools to conduct one-on-ones effectively. Most importantly, new relationships were build, old relationships were strengthened, and new leaders emerged equipped with the necessary skills to take GCC to the next level.



Trainings are necessary to GCC in order to bring clarity to the IAF organizing model and enhance skill sets. If you have not been to training, we look forward to seeing you at our winter session! There will be more information forthcoming in the near future.

**HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

Greater Cleveland Congregations is a new coalition of religious congregations and community organizations who are working together to make our region a more just and prosperous place. If you are interested in supporting or joining Greater Cleveland Congregations, please contact us.



**Ari Lipman**, Lead Organizer..... 614.557.5650  
ari.lipman@greaterclevelandcongregations.org

**Khalilah Worley**, Organizer..... 773.269.1736  
khalilah.worley@greaterclevelandcongregations.org

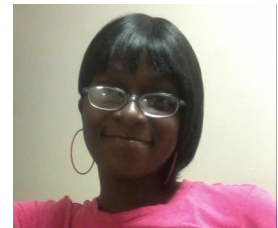
**Monique Smith**, Organizer..... 216.854.6590  
monique.smith@greaterclevelandcongregations.org

## GET OUT THE VOTE

Voter registration is about power for positive change. It is currently estimated that there are 200,000 eligible unregistered voters in Cuyahoga County alone. If we want to make an impact on the state policies in education, criminal justice, health care, and jobs that affect our region, we need to demonstrate the ability to get out the vote. There will be a GCC-wide voter registration training at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church on **Tuesday, July 24 at 7 pm**. This training will include a thorough workshop on who can register, how to complete forms accurately, and the best practices for engaging in conversation with potential voters. Additionally, we will allocate assignments for voter registration canvassing.

## PARENT ORGANIZING

**Andrea Joyner** is the proud mother of two students attending Case Elementary School. Andrea has come a long way from her shy demeanor as a parent when first entering Case School. Now, Andrea serves as president of the Case Elementary School Parent Organization. Andrea credits the strong support system at Case Elementary for making her feel comfortable speaking up for her children needs and her own. She is really excited about the partnership Case has with GCC and the work to increase parental engagement. She believes the partnership will bring awareness to the issues impacting CMSD students and families.



Andrea Joyner, SPO President  
Case Elementary School

GCC held Individual Meeting trainings at Carl & Louis Stokes Academy and Case Elementary. All schools partnering with GCC will receive trainings and materials to help support parental engagement. GCC will launch “door-knocking” campaigns at the beginning of the school year to increase school and parent relationships. Andrea is personally excited to go door-knocking and to help lead Case to a great school year!

## GCC LEADER SPOTLIGHT



**Thomas Johnston** is a member of Fairmount Presbyterian Church and the President and CEO of SearchPath International. Tom is a professional head hunter with a passion for increasing employment opportunities for residents in Greater Cleveland. Tom has successfully provided services to Fairmount Presbyterian and the Shaker Launch House. With his knowledge and connections Tom has now volunteered

his services to launch a GCC Job Hunters Group. Every Tuesday and Thursday you can find Tom sharing his wisdom of seeking employment to members of GCC. If you know of community and congregation members interested in seeking employment please inform them of our Job Hunters Group. Thanks Tom and all the GCC member volunteers!

## ACTION TEAM UPDATES

### EDUCATION TEAM:

GCC's Education Team will be spending the summer meeting with CMSD parents to hear their ideas about their childrens' schools, their concerns about the upcoming budget cuts that will be implemented this fall, and their judgement about the proposed school funding levy. If you are interested in participating in these conversations, please contact **Khalilah Worley** ([khalilah.worley@greaterclevelandcongregations.org](mailto:khalilah.worley@greaterclevelandcongregations.org)).

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE TEAM:

After a healthy discussion about how GCC should address concerns about the death penalty in Ohio into our overall agenda, the Criminal Justice team voted unanimously to incorporate this issue into our work with the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's office on eliminating racial disparities and overcharging. GCC's co-chairs met with Tim McGinty, the winner of the Democratic party primary for County Prosecutor, as he had committed at our Feb. 20 Candidate Forum. We are optimistic that this relationship, built on transparency and mutual accountability, will lead to real changes in how our county criminal justice system operates. Additionally, the Criminal Justice team will continue to be involved in the implementation of the Collateral Sanctions legislation sponsored by Senator Shirley Smith and recently signed into law by Governor John Kasich.

### JOBS TEAM:

The first Job Hunters Group meeting was held at Trinity Cathedral on June 26<sup>th</sup>. The group is open to all who are seeking employment, no matter their stage in life. It continues to meet on **Tuesdays at 7 pm and Thursdays at 8 am** at Trinity Cathedral (2230 Euclid Ave.). If you know of community and congregation members interested in seeking employment, please inform them of our Job Hunters Group. For more information please contact **Khalilah** ([khalilah.worley@greaterclevelandcongregations.org](mailto:khalilah.worley@greaterclevelandcongregations.org)).

### HEALTH CARE TEAM:

The Health Team is continuing its research into the status of behavioral health in Cuyahoga County. Our next meeting will be with Bill Denihan, CEO of the Cuyahoga County ADAMHS board, on **Monday, July 23 from 6-7:30 pm** at the ADAMHS board offices (2012 West 25th St, 6th Floor). Please confirm your attendance by RSVPing to **Ari Lipman** ([ari.lipman@greaterclevelandcongregations.org](mailto:ari.lipman@greaterclevelandcongregations.org)).

## GCC CORE TEAM SPOTLIGHT



Mt. Zion UCC is determined to re-organize and strengthen their congregational base in GCC. They sent members from their congregation to GCC University, and have begun participating in several of GCC's issue action teams. Since the training, leaders in the congregation have committed to doing one-on-ones to build relationships and to bring new leaders to be involved in GCC. Their work extends beyond their congregational walls as they do outreach to job seekers, ex-offenders, and small business owners. We applaud the Mt. Zion UCC core team in their efforts to build internally, which strengthens our entire GCC body.