

# Uncommon Alliance

## Highlights of Progress: *REPORT*

Spring 2010



*"Promoting public trust through; transparency, verifiable results and ongoing dialogue to address racial disparities..."*



Uncommon Alliance meeting at Fletcher Library between Ethnic and Cultural Diverse Leadership and Local Law Enforcement

**VISION/MISSION:** Created in February 2007, **Uncommon Alliance (UA)** is a grass-roots organization guided by a steering committee comprised of racial, ethnic, religious, and national minorities who guide the process to address the racial and ethnic disparities within Law Enforcement and the Criminal Justice System.

UA's mission is to use the forum created as a vehicle/instrument to bring local law enforcement official and community together in a collaborative effort to continue to build and promote public trust through; accountability, transparency and ongoing dialogue.

Uncommon Alliances vision is to dismantle racial profiling in the Criminal Justice System. This objective is realized by building positive relationships between members of affected communities and criminal justice professionals and by providing continuing opportunities for dialogue and study around issues of race and cultural diversity.

The Peace and Justice Center, a registered non-profit is the fiscal sponsor of UA which manages financial activities.



### Vermont House of Representatives passes UA Resolution H.C.R. 330

*House concurrent resolution commending the community outreach activities of **Uncommon Alliance***

Offered by: Representatives Lorber of Burlington, Aswad of Burlington, Donovan of Burlington, Head of S. Burlington, Heath of Westford, Larson of Burlington, Lippert of Hinesburg, Pearson of Burlington, Sharpe of Bristol and Zuckerman of Burlington

Whereas, tolerance and concern for all people, regardless of race or ethnicity, is a fundamental part of Vermont's historic legacy as the state was the first to outlaw slavery, and it was an early leader in antidiscrimination efforts in

public accommodations, banking, insurance, and housing, and

Whereas, many Vermonters are concerned about racial profiling in which law enforcement officers treat persons of color with less than full respect and dignity, and identify them for arrest based on their racial makeup and not their actions, and

Whereas, local citizens, in association with the Burlington, South Burlington, University of Vermont, and Winooski police departments, the Chittenden County state's attorney, and the Vermont state police, and others, have together established an organization called Uncommon Alliance with the stated purpose of improving the interactions between police officers and members of racial and ethnic and religious communities, and...

( **Uncommon Alliance Resolution HRC 300** (continued on page three...)

## **UNCOMMON ALLIANCE**

*Dismantling Racial and Ethnic Profiling in the Criminal Justice System of Vermont*

### ***A Grass Roots Initiative based on:***

Trust through continued dialogue and a commitment of collaboration, verifiable results, transparency and accountability to community

### **HIGHLIGHTS of PROGRESS:**

*The needed dialogue and work begins....*

*\*\*\*Over 31 UA facilitated meetings; average attendance 16*

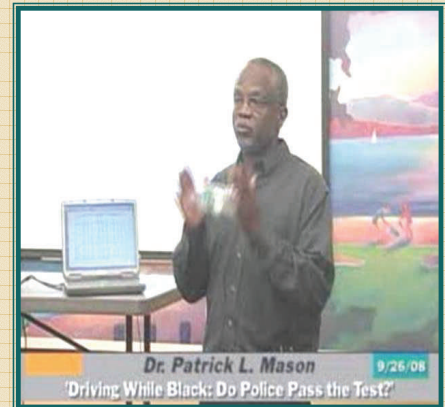


**Public Forum at Burlington College**, Topic, Racial Profiling, May 24, 2007

**Fighting Racial Prejudice in Vermont**, Burlington, VT June 20, 2007  
WCAX

**Racial Profiling Presentation**; Jack McDevitt Director, Institute on Race and Justice; Director, Center for Criminal Justice Policy Research, July 2007

**A Community Engagement Process**; Burlington Police Department, Sept. 2007



**JOINT CONCURRENT HOUSE RESOLUTION: H.C.R. 330**, passed a Vermont House of Representatives praising the work of Uncommon Alliance, 2008

**Police Target Racial Profiling**, WCAX News Report, 5/21/08

**Community Forum Winooski Family Center**, 9/11/08, *Courtesy of Channel 17*

**Uncommon Alliance a Community Partnership**, Members of this newly formed organization aimed at addressing racial profiling, discuss the formation and call for community participation, 4/02/09 -- *Courtesy of Channel 17*

**Burlington Police Department Directive: Bias Free Policing**, WCAX, Aug. 2008,

**Driving While Black: Do Police Pass the Test?**; Dr. Patrick Mason speaks on biased policing against racial and ethnic minorities. Sponsored by Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Uncommon Alliance and UVM, 9/26/08

**Uncommon Alliance a Study about Racial Profiling**; Outreach, Education and Awareness Panel Discussion, 5/21/09 --*Courtesy of Channel 17*

**What should law enforcement know about the Muslim Community in Vermont?** Informative educational literature, provided by UA Identification Committee, 2008

**FEDERAL PANEL TO HOLD BRIEFING ON RACIAL PROFILING**; Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights at Vermont State House, 7/17/08

**United States Commission on Civil Rights: Briefing Report**; The Vermont State advisory Committee Submitted this report, Racial Profiling in Vermont, as part of its responsibility to advise the Commission on Civil Rights issues in Vermont. The committee approved this report in a vote 17 to 0, 7/17/08.

**Police at UVM--3 Communities Recording Race**; *Associated Press*, 8/3/09

**As of January 2009, four of the five participating Police Departments began collecting race data in routine traffic stops**; the fifth agency, the Vermont State Police, recently announced its intention to join in the race data collection statewide mid year 2010.

**Vermont Community Foundation awards UA Successful Communities Grant**; the \$5000 grant will used to continue community dialogue and efforts to create tools to address racial disparity in Vermont. January 2010.

**UA adopts newly formed Youth "FC Vermont-Champlain" soccer team** to serve as a symbol of hope and unity for all UA partners and affected community members, March 2010.



**UNCOMMON ALLIANCE  
Adopts YOUTH  
"FC Vermont-Champlain"  
SOCCER TEAM**



Far left, Assistant Coach Odysseus Manzi; kneeling center Wanda Hines Uncommon Alliance Steering Committee member and far right Coach Luis Lazaro Tijerina with the UA Youth Soccer Team... "A Team of Hope and Unity"

Helping to build stronger communities, UA has adopted the newly formed "FC Vermont-Champlain" soccer team to serve as a symbol of hope and unity for all UA partners and affected community members.

"FC Vermont-Champlain" was founded by UA Steering Committee member Luis Lazaro Tijerina; who has an extensive background in Soccer Coaching and Team Development.

Luis is a visionary and believes like UA that by supporting/rallying around the "FC Vermont-Champlain" soccer team is a way to unite around our differences and take pride together/equally by supporting our newly formed mutual soccer team.

The "FC Vermont-Champlain" soccer team is UA's soccer team which we shall nurture and support...another symbolic action step to build and promote public trust...through UNITY.

**Uncommon Alliance Resolution HRC 300** *(continued from page one...)*

Whereas, Uncommon Alliance seeks to create tangible outcomes and opportunities for building relationships of trust, and

Whereas, Uncommon Alliance has added a youth outreach group to work with younger members of different ethnic, racial, and religious communities, and

Whereas, the organization has formed a persons of color steering committee to review programmatic activities, including the development of written materials relating to citizens' rights and obligations when they are interacting with law enforcement authorities, and

Whereas, Uncommon Alliance represents a creative initiative intended to improve relations between the police and different ethnic, racial, and religious communities, and

Whereas, this summer, Uncommon Alliance is launching a new project designed to help discourage racial profiling incidents, and

Whereas, Uncommon Alliance represents a creative measure to help improve relations between the police and different ethnic, racial, and religious communities, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the general assembly commends the community outreach activities of Uncommon Alliance, and be it further

Resolved: That the secretary of state be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Uncommon Alliance



*The Uncommon Alliance Resolution was passed 2008*

## **STATISTICS: “Strictly by the numbers”**

**Since the early 1980’s, statistically in Vermont especially within the greater Burlington area; racial, ethnic, and national minorities populations continue to increase substantially**

<b>STATISTICS</b>	<b>Source</b>
From 2001 to 2006, 1 in 3 people moving to Vermont were racial, ethnic or national minority	Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity
“...Chittenden County, the state’s most populous region, had some of the largest percentage gains among blacks and Hispanics, with roughly 40 percent increases in those populations.”	August 2007, Burlington Free Press
From 1989 to 2009, about 5,000 refugees resettled into Vermont; 98 % in Chittenden County.	United States Committee on Refugees and Immigrants
29% of Burlington School District students are ethnic and cultural diverse with 53 languages spoken from 60 countries.	Burlington School District
In two Burlington elementary Schools, the ethnic and cultural diverse students ratio is 45% of the student population with no teachers of color	Burlington School District
327 Vermont State Police uniformed officers: one is African-American and one is Latino. Burlington’s 91-officer force includes one African-American and one man of Vietnamese descent	Time Argus, June 2008
10% of inmates incarcerated in Vermont were African Americans	Vermont Department of Corrections, August 31, 2009
Vermont ranks second only to Iowa in racial disparity in incarceration rates, with African Americans imprisoned at a rate 1,250 percent more per 100,000 residents than whites.	U.S Sentencing Project

### Special Acknowledgement and Thanks:

- Burlington Police Department
- Chittenden County States Attorneys Office
- City of Burlington Mayors Office
- CCTV/Channel 17
- Greater Burlington Multicultural Center
- South Burlington Police Department
- Social Equity Investment Project
- UA Steering Committee
- University of Vermont Police
- Vantage Press
- VT Human Rights Commission
- Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Public Safety Commissioner
- Winooski Police Department



*Editor: Wanda Hines; Uncommon Alliance Steering Committee Member*

### WHAT'S NEXT?

#### **Next Action Steps...**

- Growing UA capacity; 501c status, sustainable funding
- Strategic Plan: 5-year
- Board Development
- One year race data analysis results: dialogue and process
- Criminal Court System?
- UA Youth Soccer Team
- UA Newsletter

#### **Commitment...**

Vermont’s growing racial, ethnic, religious and national minorities; and law enforcement and the criminal justice system remain committed and will continue their enriched community dialogue to explore methods and effective tools to address racial disparity.

*For more info e-mail:  
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