Hello to All,

The 49th Annual Union of Black Episcopalians Conference and Business meeting hosted in Philadelphia this year was a huge success. This marks the 4th Young Adult Conference we have hosted since its foundation July 2013 in Atlantic City!

Since then a lot has happened and the program has grown tremendously, thanks to all for your support and efforts. At this year’s conference, we had 30 young adults registered! A huge jump from just 8 our first year. As a program, we have grown and really worked on trying to figure out our role in the Church. As well as figuring out how we can assist in the mission and vision of UBE. This year we really immersed ourselves into the “Adult Conference”. The Plenary Sessions shared with ADLA, our UBE brothers and sisters and represented by Ms. Christina Donovan & Mr. Dylan Sellers on behalf of the Young Adults was phenomenal. These are conversations we should always be having with one another. The fact that the Young Adults were invited to be a part of the plenary was and still is a pivotal moment for the program.

If there is one thing that we always get right each conference, it is the Eucharist we share together each night. The daily planning and small details never go unnoticed with the Young Adults! All the bells and whistles I think have them hooked but do not compare to the feeling the Young Adults get after Eucharist! I hear constantly at the close of each night, “I feel refreshed”. Although I push for us to come and “do work”, at the end of it all, sometimes we just need a little refresher of God’s Grace and Love.

Unfortunately, this year we were not able to host the Bookbag Drive as we did in New Orleans. Although we collected and donated over 150 Bookbags last year, the process and organization of the project was not as smooth as I liked it to be. Therefore we took this year to focus more on the one on one contact of doing service. We went to the Soup Kitchen at the Church of the Advocate!! However, since we showed up with double the number of Young Adults scheduled, they put us to work elsewhere. We were flexible and willing to help in anyway. The Young Adults were split into 3 groups. One group cleaned the chapel in preparation for a Fashion Show the Church was renting the space out for. The second group finished up painting a small wall. Our third group cleaned as well but in another part of the church. All in All, a great job was done and we later enjoyed Pizza and Wings before heading back for the Youth Service!

Ms. Brittney from the Seminary of the Southwest was kind enough to facilitate a round table on the next moves for the Young Adult Program. This is an ongoing conversation as we grow and develop the program. Although accountability, integrity, substance and sustainability were major things I got out of the workshop that may be lacking from the program. For me these are red flags and a call for restructuring the Young Adult conference. I am left to answer questions such as: What am I as Young Adult Advisor leading the Young Adults to? How do we get there? Who is ready to go? Answering these questions is now the focus for me. Keeping in mind the need for young clergy and the need to preserve the history of UBE. In many ways, the Young Adult Awards is an effort to preserve the history of each conference. This year we honored Ms. Leandra Lambert & Mr. Drew Simmons. Two outstanding individuals who have shown faith and dedication to both UBE and the Young Adult Conference. Madam President Annette L. Buchanan
received the “Randy Callender Award”. An award dedicated to those who have assisted in the creation and prosperity of the Young Adult program.

Finally, The Vendor table again this year was a hit! We cannot thank everyone who supported enough for their contributions! Each year I try to bring creative and Episcopal friendly designs. We have missed out on some due to size issues. No worries, California 2019 we will have everything from Baby onesies to XXXL shirts!!!

We are humbled and look for your guidance in many ways. Please continue to nurture us and fellowship with us. We shall be molded into better beings than we are today with grace, love and perseverance!

Peace,

Darius M. Jenkins- Hudgins

Nat’l Young Adult Advisor

Union of Black Episcopalians