



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

New Member Spotlight



*Married couple **Jordan Norton and Rosario Marroquín-Flores** are two of our newest members. Clint Nicely interviewed them separately for this new member spotlight.*

The Shenandoah Valley, flanked by the Allegheny and the Blue Ridge chains, is a world vastly different from the desertscapes and the Sandia Mountains around Albuquerque, New Mexico, where **Rosario Marroquín-Flores** grew up. Rosario, who prefers the nickname “Sari,” given her by her sister in childhood, loves her new western Virginia valley home. While most of her immediate family still reside in New Mexico, the majority of her extended large family is in Ohio.

Sari’s BS in Biology from the University of New Mexico was followed by a PhD in Biology from Illinois State University and two years of postdoc work in Texas. Sari and Jordan settled in Staunton about a year ago when she accepted an Assistant Professor position in the Biology

Department at JMU, though her primary research in education designates her as a discipline-based education researcher. As a biologist, she has spent a great deal of time outdoors studying many varieties of small mammals, birds, turtles, and the like. Her love of ecology and the outdoors provides her now with a chance to encounter many different species from those native to the desert regions of the Southwest.

Sari attended a UU church in Albuquerque many years ago, and more recently one in Lubbock, Texas, but she really was not moved to join until she and Jordan attended UUFW. Sari says Jordan was initially more interested in UUFW than she, but she was greatly encouraged when she saw the UUFW booth at Staunton Pride. She is particularly happy to find and to be part of a community of diverse faiths and levels of spirituality. Sari is also quite encouraged to find a congregation based on shared values and so dedicated to helping those in need.

Sari loves ceramics, and she also enjoys gardening and baking sourdough. But her greatest joy now is centered around her love of the outdoors. Along with the two pups and a cat she shares with her husband, she also shares his love of hiking and camping. But perhaps most of all it is the idea of *place* that intrigues her. Green mountains. Vistas. Lakes and rivers. Streams with waterfalls, lots of beautiful waterfalls. Distinct seasons. All of these characteristics differ from those in the places she has lived before, especially the Southwest. And now she is eager to pursue more outdoor activities, especially

ones involving water: kayaking, whitewater rafting, maybe even cave diving. She would be happy to entertain suggestions concerning any of these interests and activities.

Like her husband, Sari is eager to become a greater part of the UUFW and of the broader SAW community. Her interest in our shared values and her zeal for life make her a welcome addition to our UU family.

Born in the mountainous region of East Tennessee, **Jordan Norton** is happy to be in the SAW area where he can once again enjoy the beauty of the valley and the mountains, with the many rivers, streams, and hiking opportunities. This year, Jordan is enjoying his first Appalachian-type Spring in nearly a decade, and it feels a bit like a homecoming to nature. A lover of the outdoors, Jordan looks forward to working with hiking trail cleanup organizations and hopes to complete his Wilderness First Aid Certification in the near future.

Currently, Jordan works at UVA as a Chaplain Resident and hopes to continue to use his chaplain experience with nonprofit and outreach groups in direct service to the community, as he has a rich history with nonprofits and volunteerism. After completing his undergraduate work at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Jordan spent three years in Spokane, Washington, as an AmeriCorps volunteer in homeless shelters and community centers, while at the same time earning his degree in Massage Therapy, a skill which serves as a valuable resource for extra work. After a year back in Tennessee helping his family nurse his father through a frightening health scare, Jordan moved to Illinois for graduate work in Community and Economic Development. It was there that Jordan met Rosario. After finishing

their studies, the couple moved to Texas, where Jordan worked as an Advocacy Coordinator for the Court Appointed Special Advocates. From Texas, Jordan and Rosario settled in Staunton, where they feel they may have found a good place to put down roots.

Having studied Buddhism for the last five years, working one-on-one with a Buddhist teacher, Jordan has found that the UU principles and values are a good fit for his continued spiritual growth. With a childhood and youth background in small rural Appalachian Methodist and Southern Baptist churches, where the purpose and organizing focus were based on community and shared values, rather than on beliefs, Jordan finds that those same ideals and values at UUFW provide a most familiar and comfortable setting. Jordan is excited to bring his experience and knowledge to UUFW, and he hopes to be able to apply his chaplaincy skills in our congregational community. He invites conversation with anyone who may have ideas that will help him facilitate a greater involvement with UUFW. We are fortunate to have a member with the experience and knowledge of Jordan Norton, and we welcome him wholeheartedly. Oh, by the way, if you have an interest in scary stories, Jordan is just the person to talk to.



Our pledge goal has been exceeded! Thank you all for your generous support of our beloved Fellowship and congratulations to the Stewardship Committee for your success this year.

