

Jaga Gavin, Jario and Leena Vincenz-Gavin, Toby Gullery, Dave Hunter, Manoj Jacob, Andrew Love, Ben and Shizuka Pehling, Shinyoung Chang-Simonds, Miilhan Stephens, and Dmitry Vilchitsky - Emerging Leaders of the American Unification Movement

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Increasingly young adults in their 20's and 30's are taking leadership roles in the Family Federation nationwide. Rev. In Jin Moon recruited some of them for Lovin' Life Ministry from 2009-2012, and the quest for new talent continued under Rev. Hyung Jin Moon and now Dr. Michael Balcomb. Some are serving as pastors for large congregations; others are working their way up the ranks as clipboard holders for District Pastors or as leaders in church media, the arts or education.

The following are profiles (in alphabetical order) of some of Unificationism's rising talent in 2013.



Jaga Gavin, 32, a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, developed the national-ministry training programs and serves as the Director of Ministry. Gavin directed the recent Lead With Impact conference of pastors held at the Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, N.Y. He helped develop a national network of pastors, a membership curriculum and pastoral guidelines. Prior to becoming director of Ministry, Gavin served as the National Youth Pastor. Along with David Hunter, he expanded the Blessed Culture Sports Festival. He took the lead on "Junction," a music-heavy youth worship event for college-aged youth in New York City. Gavin grew up in Virginia and Minnesota and currently abides in New Jersey with his wife, Tamara (Tami). The second-generation couple was Blessed on July 3rd, 2002.



Jario, 27, and Leena Vincenz-Gavin 26, serve as co-pastors for the congregation in Chicago and are respected for having ushered in new forms of worship. They manage and motivate many volunteers and teams: a music minister, volunteer coordinators, a Kids' Life coordinator, junior- high ministry youth pastors, high-school ministry youth pastors and the Sunday ministry team.

Jario spent most of his youth in White Bear Lake, MN and Leena, grew up in Illinois since she was eight, after having lived in Germany for several years. Jario holds a full-time paid position, while Leena supports as a full-time volunteer. Before getting recruited as pastors, they served on the front lines of youth ministry, witnessing, blessing education, young-adult ministry, worship and Sunday Service production. While serving as pastor, Jario is pursuing his Ministry degree. Leena has a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary education and has found this background useful in the Ministry field. They were able to create a church nursery in 2013 with lessons for preschool and kindergarteners. Blessed in Korea on July 5, 2007, the couple currently lives in Bartlett, IL with their daughter, Mirelle Claire, born in December 2011.



Toby Gullery, 22, serves as a full-time Youth Pastor and works closely with district pastor, Rev. Andrew Compton, as the Assistant to the Pastor at the West Rock Church in Tarrytown, N.Y. He is considered a media role model for Unificationist youth, having been featured in the documentary on the arranged marriage tradition of the Unification Church, *Mass Moon Wedding*. Gullery grew up and currently lives in Ossining, New York. He was Blessed to Sun-Young “Sunny” Biddle on March 24, 2012. Gullery says he felt called to Youth Ministry because he experienced a place where he felt accepted and loved and wants to give back that love to second-generation Unificationists. As Youth Pastor, Gullery has run workshops for high school and middle-school Unificationists. Gullery said, “Second-generation Unificationists should actually learn from our elders, because they have decades of experience. So, we should learn from that experience in order effectively to move forward.”



Dave Hunter, 35, formerly a middle-school social studies teacher, has spearheaded the creation of sports/cultural expositions and national workshops for second-generation members. He has been one of several lead organizers of the Blessed Culture & Sports Festival, which draws more than 500 young adults. Hunter currently serves as the National Youth & Young Adult Pastor for the Unification Church USA. Previously, he served as the Youth & Young Adult pastor in New Jersey.

Hunter made his mark as the booming-voiced emcee of Lovin’ Life Ministries' Sunday Service. This year he directs Camp Brave Heart, the national High School camp for young Unificationists and their friends, which serves 240 Blessed Children. He grew up in Maryland and currently lives in Fairview, New Jersey with his wife, Mitsuru, and their son, David. Dave and Mitsuru were blessed in Marriage in 2007.



Manoj Jacob, 40, originally from Kerala, India and now currently living in Nutley, New Jersey, is a first-generation Unificationist and a full-time pastor of the Clifton Family Church in New Jersey. Jacob is also a full-time student at the Unification Theological Seminary completing his masters in Divinity. He says, “Working as pastor and studying to acquire the necessary skills to do a better job is fascinating.” Brought up Catholic, Jacob was active in his childhood with many church activities such as Sunday school, Youth Ministry, service activities, etc. He joined the Unification Church because he sees the theology as a fulfillment of his Catholic beliefs and concepts, and is very happy that he chose this path. Jacob’s first contact with the Unification Church was in 1994, through the Religious Youth Service program. He has held positions such as center leader, regional director and national leader in India. He came to the United States in

early 2010 and got revived by the vibrant church community. Jacob was matched and Blessed to Denny Jose P. (Rany) by True Parents in 1998. They have three daughters.



Andrew Love, 31, has pioneered stand-up comedy for Unificationists, and when he pastors, he manages to create plenty of laughs and gags, which comes naturally from his training as a stand-up comic. Love is a first-generation Unificationist born and raised in Toronto, Canada and currently lives in New Jersey with his Mongolian wife Uyanga. They were Blessed on March 24, 2012 in the Manhattan Center in New York City. They are expecting their first child in June. Love is a full-time, six days-a-week Pastor of the Manhattan Church at the 43rd Street building in New York City.

During his first year as Pastor, he had many 80-hour workweeks, but has been better at managing his time. Love writes books in his spare time and looks forward to being published. He joined the Unification Church in 2009 and was a full-time missionary for the first three years until he became a pastor. Prior to joining the church, Andrew moved to California at age 23 to pursue a comedy as a career. He had considered himself a “full-time God hater” and had never actually heard of the Unification Church until 2009. Love said, “At first my parents scorned the fact that I had joined the church four years ago, but they are much more supportive now, especially since my wife is the best thing that has ever happened to me!”



Ben and Shizuka Pehling, both 24, serve as co-youth pastors in Minneapolis, MN. They both have completed two years of STF (Special Task Force) and currently serve part time as youth pastors and host monthly activities for young adults. They also act as camp counselors during the summer and are involved in the Women’s Federation for World Peace. Ben was born in Mounds View, MN and Shizuka was born in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. They now reside in Minnesota. Ben works as a quality assurance engineer at a software-design company and Shizuka runs a business they own together. The second-generation couple was blessed on January 31, 2009.



Shinyoung Chang-Simonds, 35, serves as editor-in-chief of a new publication, *UC* magazine that illustrates the emerging culture of the Unification Movement nationwide. Simonds is a second-generation Unificationist who grew up in Toronto, Canada and currently lives in Irvington, NY with her husband Steve Simonds, from Saco, Maine. Before becoming Editor of *UC* magazine, she was the Editor-in-Chief of Unification News for two years. Prior to that, she was an assistant editor at UNEWS. Simonds attended the Unification Theological Seminary at Barrytown, NY where she earned her Master’s in

Religious Education (MRE). She has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in theater stage and costume design from the University of Toronto. She and Steve were Blessed in October 2009.

She considers working at *UC* magazine a way of putting her MRE to good use. Simonds said, "I am considered an elder sister wherever I go, mainly because of my physical age. And I take that as a serious responsibility. I also consider myself a representative of UTS, Father's school, as I'm sure all UTS alumni do. Working at *UC* magazine at the capacity that I do helps me fulfill the roles of UTS alumna, taking what I have learned there about Father, Divine Principle and God and giving it back to my community. I recommend that all second-generation Unificationists attend UTS. My time spent there opened my mind and spirit to what God wishes for us."



Miilhan Stephens, 25, pastors the Unification Family Church of Maryland, the largest Unificationist congregation south of New York on the East Coast. He preaches, makes the big decisions, manages a full-fledged ministry team, cares for hundreds of members, maintains the ucmd.org website, and practices time management. That's because pastoring is his after-hours spiritual contribution. He works full-time as an information specialist at a large federal-government agency. Stephens had his first spiritual revelation at age 16 and has been active in the Maryland congregation and served as guest care-team leader prior to becoming Pastor. He grew up in Bloomington, IL till 13 years old, and has lived in Columbia, MD ever since with his family. Stephens was blessed to Sayaka Inokuchi from Osaka, Japan on January 31, 2009 in the Manhattan Center in New York City.



Dmitry Vilchitsky, 39, enriched worship service and galvanized community involvement in the Boston Church as a full-time Pastor since 2011. Vilchitsky created the innovative World Scripture animated project and started the successful new developments at the Boston church like chapel and music ministry upgrade project, creation of leadership teams with the support of the district pastor, Rev. Richard Buessing and New England District Council chairman Jim Edgerly.

Originally from Belarus, first-generation Unificationist Vilchitsky joined in 1995 and was blessed in the same year to his Russian wife, Natalia Yankus. Vilchitsky has been active in pioneer witnessing and fundraising in Belarus and Russia, prior to coming to the United States in 2000 as a missionary. Before becoming Pastor of Boston Church, Vilchitsky conducted Divine Principle education and trained future leaders of the Unification Church via the International Educational Foundation (IEF) Mobile Fundraising Team (MFT) and International Leadership Training Program (ILTP) MFT. Vilchitsky studied at the Unification Theological Seminary, interned at New Jersey church and pastored in Rhode Island. Vilchitsky currently lives in Stoughton, Massachusetts with his wife and two kids.