

*Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association
Presents its 2022 Creative Sageing Award to*

Jaco B. ten Hove

UURMaPA is delighted to honor Jaco B. ten Hove with its 2022 Creative Sageing Award in recognition of the new forms of ministry that he has embraced since his retirement in 2017 from 30 years of parish ministry in Washington, Maryland, and Colorado.

After Jaco and his co-minister spouse Barbara retired from leadership at Cedars UU Church on Bainbridge Island, WA, in January 2017, Jaco had his hip replaced in February and they then moved to Bellingham, WA, just 30 miles south of the Canadian border, to join Bellingham Co-Housing, a community of 33 homes with around 75 people. They loved the Pacific Northwest and wanted a new congregation—Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship—where they could easily fit in.



UURMaPA Vice-President Ned Wight reading text of award to Jaco at Annual Luncheon at General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, June 24, 2022.

While Jaco chose to stop doing the traditional ministry in which he had been immersed for 30 years, he pivoted to a different focus of care and concern: the “Ministry of Waste Diversion.” Concerned with environmental issues since he was a child picking up trash in his New Jersey neighborhood, Jaco took a course through Washington State University that led him to be certified as a Master Composter and Recycler. In that role he began to educate and support his Co-Housing community in doing a better job of diverting waste from the dumpster into various recycling and composting stations. At community meetings, he would lead an educational moment to enable people to create less trash. He was so good at this that he saved the community almost \$900 a year!

Beyond his Co-Housing community, Jaco led recycling workshops at the local UU Fellowship, UU Eliot Institute Camps, and in wider Bellingham. Using his artistic and editing skills, he created slide shows and Zoom presentations that proved to be both popular and persuasive.

During the pandemic, he became more knowledgeable about and experienced in building compost piles, both hot and cold. He continues to provide the Cohousing landscape with much needed nutrients to keep things growing—and diverting considerable waste from landfills.



**Jaco in “Comptown,”
sitting on a worm bin,
with two hot compost
piles in front and
three cold compost
bins behind.**

Expanding his environmental reach, he collaborated with others at Bellingham Co-Housing to found their Climate Action Group, which has endeavored to lessen reliance on fossil fuels. This has resulted in the installation of EV chargers for fully electric cars and replacing a common space gas furnace with electric heat pumps. He also helped lead the charge to replace asphalt roofs with more environmentally friendly metal ones.

Rounding out his environmental commitments are classes, programs, workshops and political gatherings (many online) about issues and pathways related to mitigating the impact of Climate Change, including

the growing challenge to reduce plastic pollution, a particular passion of his. Though Jaco can, at times, despair at the slow pace of change, he continues to offer his perspective to inspire others to become better stewards of their environment, and he does what he can to model hands-on leadership (including still picking up trash in the neighborhood).

In retirement, Jaco has also continued service to his fellow UUs as a regional retreat leader and an active musician. Having determined upon retirement that he would take a “permanent sabbatical from the sacraments,” he has nevertheless found joy and a creative outlet by singing in two congregational choirs and providing regular musical accompaniment with his drums, other percussion instruments and harmonicas. Congregants delight in the lovely ways his music supports and enhances fellow musicians in his church community.

While this award is mainly for all Jaco's environmental work, we'd be remiss if we didn't also mention the extraordinary creativity he brought to his recently completed four years as editor of Elderberries, our own UURMaPA quarterly.

This combination of hands-on environmental activism in his residential community, his congregation, and wider community, as well as his creative enterprise in service to his congregation and to UURMaPA, demonstrate Jaco ten Hove's continuing commitment to creative engagement and sharing his skills and wisdom to “work toward a planet transformed by our care.” We are pleased to honor him with this 2022 Creative Sageing Award.

*Presented by his UURMaPA colleagues
at the UURMaPA Lunch in Portland, OR
June 24, 2022*