

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

14 November 2012

Transmitted by email: [usnsa@usbnc.org](mailto:usnsa@usbnc.org)

The National Spiritual Assembly of  
the Bahá'ís of the United States

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

As you are aware, the Universal House of Justice recently had the opportunity to consult with the International Teaching Centre and the Counsellors serving North America regarding the process of growth in that region. It was pleased to learn of the enthusiastic response to the letter dated 9 August 2012 and the progress made in orienting the new Regional Bahá'í Councils and training institutes. Your ever more robust, collaborative relationship with the Counsellors and the promising developments unfolding in your most advanced clusters, particularly those that have benefited from their association with the learning sites for the junior youth spiritual empowerment program in North America, were a source of great joy. Indeed, it is understood that about half of the current junior youth groups and their participants are found in these thirty-one clusters. The experience of these clusters, carefully garnered over several years, portends the revitalization and further acceleration of your existing programs of growth, as well as the establishment and rapid advancement of many more.

Throughout the world, across all classes and social groups, there has been a ready response from youth who are invited to examine the forces shaping their society and their role in contributing to its constructive transformation through service as animators of junior youth groups. Time and again it has been seen that consideration of, and reflection upon, the profound concepts addressed in Book 5 of the Ruhi Institute release the deep reservoirs of commitment to significant social change that young people possess. Engaging their fertile minds in an exploration of such ideas gives rise to profound conversations that leave their mark and find expression in action. Those who are inclined to establish a junior youth group are assisted to do so, and in this way, the program's reach in a town or neighborhood is expanded in a relatively short period, even if there are only a limited number of human resources available within the Bahá'í community.

The merit of the junior youth spiritual empowerment program lies, first and foremost, in its effectiveness at enhancing the power of expression and the quality of spiritual perception within its participants and in assisting them to develop the capabilities necessary for a life of meaningful service to their communities. Repeated accounts from officials, parents, and young people themselves testify to the power of the program to shape character and bring forth the praiseworthy qualities latent in junior youth. Yet, even more, the benefits of the program are experienced in every stage of the educational process in which the Bahá'í community is engaged, as well as in the scheme of community building in which the spiritual empowerment program is embedded. By multiplying vibrant junior youth groups, a community learns a great deal about, for instance, how capable human resources are increased and deployed; how capacity for service is raised within cohorts of individuals;

how an expanding program can be effectively coordinated; and how initiating one activity can, quite naturally, lead to the emergence of others. And as a consequence of the organic unfoldment of the educational process and the participants' ongoing spiritual and moral development, all facets of the growth program are, in time, extended and enhanced.

Galvanized by such a perspective, the Counsellors left the Holy Land with renewed resolve and focused purpose. They will soon consult with you about possibilities for accelerating progress in clusters with established programs of growth by disseminating learning through regional institutes, as well as for finding capable individuals who can carry this dynamic approach to hundreds of additional clusters. To support this effort, it is envisioned that the number of learning sites in North America should rise to seven and the associated clusters to seventy; the House of Justice has asked the Office of Social and Economic Development to attend to this vital need.

The House of Justice is confident that the devoted endeavors of your Assembly, grounded in the experience derived from those clusters at the frontiers of learning, will yield abundant results and enable you to achieve all of your objectives in the current Plan. You are assured of its fervent prayers in the Holy Shrines to this end.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

cc: International Teaching Centre  
Board of Counsellors in the Americas  
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