

# Introducing the 2017 Social Transformation Cohort...



## NICHOLAS TANGEN



**AGE:** 32

**DEGREE:** MAL

**HOMETOWN:**  
Rosemount, MN

**CONTEXT:**  
University Lutheran  
Church of Hope

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

...[A] process and a practice of engaging with the world in justice, mercy, and hope. For me it is the life that follows the example and the call of Jesus in humility.

### WHY UNITED?

I was drawn to United because of its progressive reputation and its strong sense of community.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

...[T]he kind of transformation that leads towards justice and mercy, and reminds every person of their fundamental identity as Beloved.

## CLAIRE CURRAN



**AGE:** 25

**DEGREE:** M.Div

**HOMETOWN:**  
Lake Forest, IL

**CONTEXT:**  
MN Interfaith  
Power & Light

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

...an ongoing process of coming into right relationship with our true selves, one another, and the earth community, so that we may build the Kin-dom of God.

### WHY UNITED?

Where else could I honor all the parts of me with the support of such brilliant and gracious faculty and peers? It didn't take long for me to know that United is where I'm called to be.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

...[A] world where everyone's needs are fully and fairly met, where we live in right relationship with one another and the earth, where everyone is supported to live into their truest sense of calling...

## KYLE SODERBERG



**AGE:** 28

**DEGREE:** M.Div

**HOMETOWN:**  
Minneapolis, MN

**CONTEXT:**  
SoulMedic

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

Growth. People need to grow before they can change, and personal change transforms society.

### WHY UNITED?

The inclusivity. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to be a part of the community. United is committed to helping you develop as a person, vocationally and academically.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

A more peaceful world with less pain and suffering. My hope is that through an increased sense of inner peace, people will be empowered to share their unique contributions to society as priceless individuals, benefiting the entire world.

United  
prepares  
leaders and  
change-makers  
for social  
transformation.



**UNITED**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
OF THE TWIN CITIES

## SAMANTHA FIELD



**AGE:** 29

**DEGREE:** MA

**HOMETOWN:**  
Washington, D.C.

**CONTEXT:**  
Religious Coalition  
for Reproductive  
Choice

### WHY DID YOU CHOOSE SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION?

I want training to become an effective activist and advocate.

### WHY UNITED?

I found United through the Gay Christian Network Conference. As an LGBT+ person, it was important for me to attend a seminary that would accept me.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

I want to see the Church become a refuge for women and children, not an institution causing some of the most damage to them.

## KIM GRAFF



**AGE:** 45

**DEGREE:** M.Div

**HOMETOWN:**  
Cottage Grove, MN

**CONTEXT:**  
Christ Episcopal  
Church, Woodbury

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

In order to eradicate injustice, we must change the underlying systems that have been the cornerstones of oppression. Social Transformation provides a frame to do that.

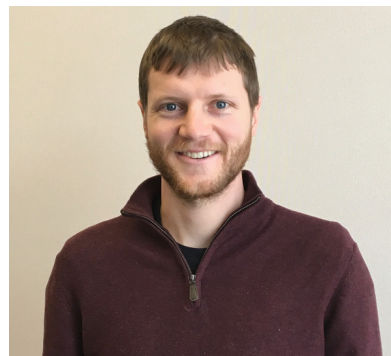
### WHY UNITED?

UTS provides a community of teachers and students who all believe that faith is deeper than simply sitting in a pew on Sunday morning.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

I want a world where the color of your skin, sexuality, gender, country of origin, or religion is not an excuse to deny the belovedness of every person.

## CHRISTOPHER LUND



**AGE:** 25

**DEGREE:** MA

**HOMETOWN:**  
Salina, KS

**CONTEXT:**  
Duluth YMCA

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

Social transformation is a re-constructive work done on the identities of people within a society and the rules--written and unwritten--that impact their interactions. Conforming these identities and 'rules' to the ethics of Jesus is the transformation I seek.

### WHY UNITED?

...[f]or the progressive starting point for theological discussions. This pushes the conversation deeper and further on how to address today's most pressing challenges.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

I seek the conformation of evangelical Christianity to the ethics of Jesus.

# THANK YOU FOR JOINING UNITED & THE KALEO CENTER TO WELCOME THE FIRST EVER SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION COHORT

## RIVA TABELISMA



AGE: 39

DEGREE: MAL

HOMETOWN:  
Manila, Philippines

CONTEXT: TBD

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

...[M]aking sure that the marginalized will be equipped to be productive part of the society so that their children will have a brighter future.

### WHY UNITED?

United is a very diverse community which allows me to understand the different contexts of helping the society.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

For all of the children to have a brighter future.

## ASHLEY AAMOT



AGE: 23

DEGREE: MAL

HOMETOWN:  
Eden Prairie, MN

CONTEXT:  
First Covenant  
Church, Mpls

### WHAT DOES SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION MEAN TO YOU?

...[W]orking to restore the world and to promote the common good (simple, right?).

### WHY UNITED?

UTS stood out to me because it was so inclusive regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, faith background, etc.

### WHAT TRANSFORMATION DO YOU SEEK?

Currently, I wish...that we begin to recognize the humanity in each person - the inherent worth and dignity of each individual. Restoring this to our primary focus I think will do a lot to promote the common good, to uncover the beauty inherent in the world, and to restore the broken places.

## EFREN MALDONADO



United is pleased to announce that Efren, a social transformation student, has been hired as the new Admissions Counselor for Social Transformation beginning on March 27.

Efren's experience and expertise is an exceptional fit for this position. His work has included advocacy, public speaking, community mobilization, media and communications. His leadership and people skills, work in social transformation, and being familiar with United as a student will be great advantages to the seminary.