

UNA-Westchester Global Connection



United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) Westchester Chapter
<http://www.unawestchester.org> April 2017

Don't Miss the UNA-Westchester Annual Meeting, May 7, 2017

Cosponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and
The Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation

“The United Nations at Risk: Taking a Stand”

Sunday, May 7, 2017, 4:00–6:00 (registration opens at 3:30)

Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 468 Rosedale Ave., White Plains, NY 10605

Please register at www.unawestchester.org!

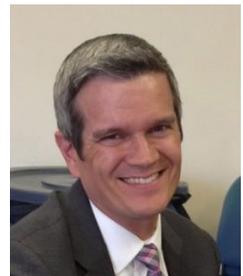


Featuring Keynote speakers:

His Excellency Bob F. Jalang'o, former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, is currently Adjunct Professor of African Studies at New York University and a public speaker who promotes Africa through workshops and seminars. Mr. Jalang'o also served as Ambassador of Kenya to Zambia, Malawi and Botswana, Italy, Greece, Poland, and the United Nations Agencies in Rome. He was an elected representative in the Kenya

Legislature and an IT expert in the private sector.

Chris Whatley is the Executive Director of the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA). Before joining the United Nations Foundation (UNF), Mr. Whatley served as Washington Office Director and Deputy Executive Director of the Council of State Governments (CSG), representing elected officials in 50 states and the six territories on Capitol Hill. Among other positions, Whatley earlier was field representative for the International Republican Institute (IRI), leading international election observation missions in four African countries.



Program includes:

- Short annual report and election of directors
- Keynote addresses
- Discussion and Q&A
- Recognition of winning Model UN teams in Westchester
- Reception with refreshments and Solar Punch Band

Doors open for registration at 3:30. The event is free and open to the public.

UNA-USA Leadership Summit

The UNA-USA 2017 Leadership Summit will be held in Washington, D.C., June 11–13. Register at: www.unausa.org.

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Editors: Scott C. Monje, Marcia Brewster	

Letter from the President



Dear Friends,

Our April newsletter is mainly devoted to the full Annual Report, so this letter will be brief. I would simply urge you

as UNA-Westchester members to participate and enjoy our Annual Meeting and reception from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, May 7, at the beautiful Community Unitarian Church in White Plains. We are excited to have H. E. Bob Jalang'o, former Ambassador of Kenya to the UN, and Chris Whatley, our wonderful Executive Director of UNA-USA, as our speakers. The theme will be "The United Nations at Risk: Taking a Stand." These two gentlemen are extremely qualified to address this subject. I also wanted to mention what a great celebration of International Women's Day we had at the Greenburgh Public Library on Sunday, March 5. The speakers were excellent and the room was packed with 80 enthusiastic and engaged participants.

Please bring your votes and ideas to the discussion at our Annual Meeting. We encourage our members to participate in and contribute to our committee work: advocacy, communications, education, membership and program. We would love your inputs on future programs, educational and youth outreach, and ways to invigorate our membership. Please bring your friends and enjoy an afternoon of discussion and fellowship. I also personally want to thank you all for your support to me and thank the board for its harmonious cooperation.

SAVE THE DATE—Our UN Day celebration will be held on Sunday, October 22, 2017. Details will be provided later.

Please join UNA-USA or renew your membership. Your support is more important than ever if we are to be effective advocates on behalf of the United Nations and its valuable

work. Please visit www.unawestchester.org to join or renew. Indicate your chapter as Westchester (NY).

—*Marcia Brewster*

UNA-USA Westchester Chapter Annual Report, May 1, 2016–April 30, 2017

The current year has started as a very challenging one for the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA), including the Westchester Chapter, as we face the threat of defunding support to the United Nations from the current U.S. Congress. UNA-Westchester and all its members will need renewed strength to advocate for U.S. leadership at the United Nations and to protect and support the valuable work of the UN on refugees, the sustainable development goals (SDGs), climate change, and other initiatives.

The well-attended events organized by our Chapter for UN Day in October and Human Rights Day in December focused on the plight of refugees worldwide and what we can do to help at the local level. The Chapter has signed on to the Westchester Refugee Task Force and learned about measures we can take to welcome Syrian refugees to our communities whenever they are allowed to come. As the future of the families that we were expecting to arrive is uncertain, we can only speak out for them and others who have already arrived. UNA-Westchester and its partners, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (AKA), have also pledged to support the UNA-USA national initiative, Adopt-A-Future, which aims to support schools in refugee camps in Kenya. The program is responding to the request of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Southern NY State Division, including our chapter, has adopted the Gambela Primary School at Kakuma Refugee Camp for support and has invited Ambassador Bob Jalang'o, former Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations (and our keynote speaker at the Annual

Meeting), to be the Division's liaison to the camp for this initiative.

Chris Whatley, UNA-USA's Executive Director in Washington, has been a very effective advocate for UNA-USA's initiatives and we are thrilled to have him as a speaker at our Annual Meeting. He has been active in garnering Congressional support for payment of U.S. regular budget and peacekeeping contributions, and in promoting UNA-USA's programs related to refugees, climate change, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He also provided key leadership at the ninth annual UNA Mid-Atlantic Conference and Members' Day, "The U.S. and the UN: New Leaders, Pressing Challenges," held at the United Nations General Assembly Hall on February 17, 2017. Membership in UNA-USA now tops 22,000 nationwide, one third of whom are students.

Partnership with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

UNA-USA and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA), Inc., have engaged in a partnership at the national level since October 2014 with the aim of creating global citizens and fostering new audiences to better support the United Nations. The partnership, set to last until mid-2018, will engage a new generation of "ambassadors" in the vital work of the UN, through globally focused workshops and activities, including Model UN mini-simulations ("mini-sims").

This national partnership has thrived in our Chapter. Upon learning of the partnership, Brenda Smith, UNA-Westchester's Vice President and Partnerships Chair (and member of Zeta Nu Omega Chapter of AKA), contacted the leadership of the three Westchester Chapters of AKA—Zeta Nu Omega, Pi Iota Omega, and Xi Chi Omega—and requested their involvement in the work of our UNA-USA Chapter. UNA-Westchester and AKA have cosponsored UN Day 2016, International Women's Day in March 2017, and several other events. In addition, UNA-Westchester and AKA have been working on together on a Global

Classrooms Model UN mini-simulation for dissemination around Westchester and have collaborated with Mercy College and Westchester schools on a one-day mini-Model UN program on climate change. We have received a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to spread this "mini-sim" on climate change throughout the county.

As part of the partnership, UNA-USA has provided training, tools, and resources to ten AKA regional representatives to bring UN-centered educational programming to local high schools and communities. Alpha Kappa Alpha members now have the resources needed to organize classroom Model UN simulations, conduct community outreach activities, and celebrate UN milestones including UN Day. These activities will create new constituencies in support of the UN, while educating them on the global impact of the UN's transformative work. As a result of this partnership, 11 members of ZNO are members of UNA-USA and members actively participate in the work and events of the UNA-USA Westchester Chapter.

UNA-USA National Annual Meeting

President Marcia Brewster and two other UNA-Westchester members (Oneida Cabaleiro and Amanda Ready and their guests) attended the UNA-USA Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C., in June 2016. The conference took place at the National Education Association on June 12–14 and included a day of lobbying on Capitol Hill. There were several high-profile speakers whom we considered inspiring, in particular Robert Skinner, Executive Director of the UN Information Center in Washington, Peter Yeo, Director of the Better World Fund, and our own Chris Whatley. Attending the annual meeting is a good way to meet the leaders of UNA-USA and to get an idea of what the organization is doing at the national level. I encourage members of our chapter to attend the meeting this year, which will be held in Washington on June 11–13, 2017.

UNA-Westchester Board

In 2016 all five officers and four directors were up for election or re-election to the board. Officers who were re-elected for the term ending June 2018 were: Marcia Brewster, President; Scott Monje, Secretary; David R. Finch, Treasurer; and Marcia Wallace, Nominations Committee. Brenda L.G. Smith was elected Vice President. We elected three new directors: Myrna Anover and Mary Seward Downes for the class of 2018) and Victor Madubuko for the class of 2017, who have already made important contributions to the work of the board. Directors Joan Katen and Karen Rockwell El-Badry were re-elected for a two-year term, and four directors continued their terms through June 2017: J. Yuhanna Edwards, Andrew Laub, Martha Perez, and Lilli Schindler.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a harmonious Board of Directors. The board meets at the White Plains YMCA (250 Mamaroneck Ave, White Plains) at 7:30 P.M., normally on the first Monday of each month. (Note that this is a change from the previous schedule.) Check the website to make sure of the date in any given month. All UNA-USA members are welcome to attend.

Advocacy Committee

Advocacy is education. The best way to advocate for the United Nations is to educate and consult with our UNA-USA members and others about the significant work done by the UN and the importance of engaging with other nations to foster a peaceful world. If things do not go our way, we can't just take our ball and go home. We have to make our positions clear to other nations and in turn really understand their positions. Thus, as advocacy cochairs, we will continue to convey to our constituents the good and important things the United Nations does, by written and spoken word—and we invite all of our members to do the same. Each year the United Nations feeds 80 million people, helps millions of refugees fleeing war-torn countries, and vaccinates 40% of the world's children. UN peacekeepers stand between civilians and

violence. Many who see the blue armbands feel relief that help is near. When disaster strikes, the UN is always poised to help with tents, food, water, and other necessities. We must all be advocates, and we in the Advocacy Committee encourage others to speak out. Bill H.R. 769 is intended to defund the United Nations. Please contact our senators and let them know your view of the value of the UN and that the U.S. cannot lead as a superpower by leaving the playing field: Contact Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand at 202-224- 4451 or <http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov//contact>; and Sen. Charles Schumer at 202-224-6542 or <https://www.schumer.senate.gov/contact/email-chuck>. We are trying to organize a visit to our senators with a group from UNA's Southern New York State Division.

Also, Cochair Joan Katen is now moderating the "Great Decisions" series of the Foreign Policy Association (FPA) as another way to engage more people in learning about decision making on U.S. foreign policy. "Great Decisions" takes place at the Harrison Library, 2 Bruce Avenue, once or twice a month. Interested participants gather at 1:30 P.M. to see a film on the topic of the day, hear a speaker well-versed in the topic, and then break into discussion groups to tackle a question that Joan, as moderator, poses to them. We then convene as a committee of the whole to discuss our answers. Each participant then fills out his/her policy views on an anonymous ballot supplied by the Foreign Policy Association. The ballots come in from similar groups all over the country, and are collated by the FPA. The results are sent to Congress and the executive branch of our government. In this way we make our views known to elected representatives; we have some input into U.S. foreign policy. The next session is on May 9, on the topic "Latin America's Political Pendulum." Calendars for future "Great Decisions" may be obtained from the Harrison Library System by calling 914-835-0324.

We are also still working on the Cities for CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Discrimination against Women) initiative. Councilman Yuhanna Edwards is monitoring the situation closely after his success in Mount Vernon.

Program Committee

The Program Committee, ably led by Myrna Anover and Lilli Schindler, organized, sponsored, and participated in many activities. The main events organized by our chapter are listed below.

May 1, 2016: Annual Meeting—UNA-Westchester teamed up with Sustainable Westchester for its annual meeting with the theme “Confronting the Challenge of Climate Change and Building Sustainable Communities.” The keynote speaker was H. E. Robert Van Lierop, the former ambassador of Vanuatu, who was the first chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and has been a leader in UN efforts to confront the challenge of climate change. Herb Oringel of Sustainable Westchester suggested ways that we can make a difference on a local level.

October 23-24, 2016: Marking *United Nations Day*, our UN Day in White Plains on October 23 at the YWCA of White Plains and Central Westchester had as its theme “*One Humanity, Shared Responsibility: Responding Locally to the Refugee Crisis*” and featured excellent speakers Mr. Bela Hovy, head of the UN’s Migration Division, and Ms. Munira Oković, a Bosnian refugee, who was able to personalize the refugee experience in America. Andrew Courtney and Mary Refling of the Westchester Refugee Task Force issued a “Call for Action on Syrian Refugees in Westchester” and provided information on what we can do. Over 130 participants attended the event, including many local high school students. On October 24, the actual UN Day, Mayor Thomas Roach in White Plains and Mayor Richard Thomas of Mount Vernon graciously presided over ceremonies to raise the UN flag at their City Halls and provided proclamations for the day. UNA-Westchester board members and partners from

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and The Links, Inc., attended all of the events.

December 11, 2016: As a follow-up to UN Day, the Human Rights Day program, held at the Harrison Public Library, had the theme, “Shining Light on a Dark World: South Sudan.” The event was organized by the UNA-Westchester Young Professionals group, led by Martha Perez and Andy Laub. It featured Mr. Jean-Victor Nkolo (Office of the UN Special Adviser on Africa) and Ms. Nya Chambang, a South Sudanese refugee and the founder of the Thon Met African Peace Foundation. Members of the Westchester Refugee Task Force were on hand to assist. We will continue to follow this initiative throughout the year.

December 17, 2016: Alpha Kappa Alpha (Zeta Nu Omega Chapter), in partnership with UNA-Westchester, sponsored an interactive panel discussion at the Greenburgh Public Library to expand the community’s understanding of the UN and its role, mission, and focus and to raise awareness of the increasingly global and complex society in which we live. The panel was moderated by George Garland, President of the Southern New York Division, and panelists included three UNA-Westchester board members: Lilli Schindler, a UN staff member at the Department of Public Information; Myrna Anover, recent retiree from the UN Department of Public Information; and Martha Perez, Chair of the Young Professionals and a graduate student at New York University.

February 17, 2017: Ninth Annual Mid-Atlantic Conference and Members’ Day at the General Assembly Hall, United Nations. The theme was “The U.S. and the UN: New Leaders, Pressing Challenges.” The event attracted more than 800 members and students from around the country and included some outstanding panels on the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, engaging youth in the UN, displaced humanity (refugees), and the role of the UN in conflict resolution. The interaction with the participants was lively. This conference has become one of

the main vehicles for raising awareness of the work of the UN among U.S. citizens.

March 5, 2016: *International Women's Day*—UNA and AKA organized a fabulous Women's Day event this year at the Greenburgh Public Library, with the theme "Women's Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work." The keynote speaker, Michaela Walsh, panelists Kecia Palmer-Cousins and Antoinette Klatzky, and moderator Judith Beville were excellent, and the discussion about women in the changing world of work was fascinating, partly because our three speakers represented three different generations of women entrepreneurs. We welcomed an enthusiastic crowd of over 80 people, including many local leaders, and had a very lively discussion. Cosponsors included: the Town of Greenburgh, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

May 7, 2017: *Annual Meeting*—UNA-Westchester is thrilled to have Ambassador Bob Jalang'o, former Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN, and Chris Whatley, Executive Director of UNA-USA as keynote speakers at its annual general meeting with the theme "The United Nations at Risk: Taking a Stand." The meeting will be held at the Community Unitarian Church in White Plains from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. (registration begins at 3:30). A short business meeting will be held and officers will be elected. We would love the input of all members on directions for the future. A reception will follow with music from the solar-powered band, Solar Punch. Please register for the event at: www.unawestchester.org.

Education Committee

The Education Committee, chaired by Mary Seward Downes, has been participating in UNA-USA's featured project, Model UN mini-simulations in local schools. The project was designed to extend this valuable concept to students who do not have the opportunity to take part in the traditional Model UN conferences held each year. The UNA-USA provides

material for teachers, including background information on topics of interest, briefing cards pertaining to individual countries, and guidelines for conducting simulated meetings of the UN General Assembly. In partnership with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and the Links, Inc., the Education Committee organized a successful full-day mini-Model UN at Mercy College in February 2017 on the topic of Global Warming/Climate Change, which was attended by students from Sleepy Hollow High School and Woodlands High School of Greenburgh. The partners received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a special campaign to inform students about how the UN works and the various issues related to climate change. Additionally, this spring (2017), students from the Model UN Clubs of Mount Vernon and Woodlands high schools will implement an AKA 1908 Gardens Project, associated with the EPA "Road to Paris Grant." The students and their advisers, Mr. Mihalides and Mr. Vaccaro, are currently searching for an abandoned plot or designated area in the City of Mount Vernon and the Town of Greenburgh where they will launch a clean-up campaign and prepare a garden.

For the 11th consecutive year, the Chapter brought its peace/art project, Peace Makes the World a Better Place, to third-grade classes in some of the Yonkers public schools. Board members and volunteers from UNA members and Mercy College students participated. The project provides an introduction to the United Nations and the concept of peace making. With a view to making this successful project available to other chapters or groups, we are putting a digital version on the Chapter website, with descriptions and links to pictures used in the classes. From our resources, a classroom presentation may be prepared using a large poster board with pictures or as a power-point presentation.

The Education Committee also had a display table and presenters at the annual conference of the Westchester-Lower Hudson Council for the

Social Studies in December. We had a variety of materials on hand to assist teachers in incorporating the United Nations into their social studies curriculum.

Nominations Committee

The 2017 slate required nominations for five directors for the class of 2019. The five officers and three directors elected in 2016 will continue their terms into 2018. Two directors, Victor Madubuko and Andy Laub, have decided to step down for the time being because of other heavy commitments. We are most grateful for all their important work in the communications and young professional areas. We thank them both for their dedicated hard work.

The slate for the upcoming term was accepted by the Board of Directors on April 3, 2017, and is presented to the membership in this newsletter. We will ask all members to vote on the slate at the Annual Meeting on May 7, 2017. The slate is as follows:

DIRECTORS, Class of 2019 (beginning July 1, 2017)

J. Yuhanna Edwards
Ambassador Bob Jalang'o
Martha Perez
Lilli Schindler
Patrick Sciarratta

Respectfully submitted by Nominations Committee: Marcia Wallace, Chair; Doris Benson, Lilli Schindler, Patrick Sciarratta, and Robina Singh, members.

Young Professionals Program

The Young Professionals Program (YPP), co-chaired by Martha Perez and Andy Laub, remains very involved at the heart of UNA-Westchester's events. The group organized the Human Rights Day event, which focused on the refugee crisis in South Sudan, and is currently working on an event regarding the Geopolitics of Climate Change for 2017. The Young Professionals Program is also focused on

expanding, working with UNA-Women's Young Professionals Program in New York City, as well as the UNA Southern New York State Division's Young Professionals Program.

The YPP is excited about hosting career and networking events in the future, as well as more educational events to inspire the community to become more involved in promoting the UN Sustainable Development Goals both locally and globally. We also plan to hold more events this year, particularly on climate change, women's empowerment, refugees, and the strengthening of global citizenship amongst youth. Please visit our link at www.unawestchester.org or e-mail questions to yp.unawestchester@gmail.com for more information on how to become involved!

Finance Committee

Dave Finch has continued as our loyal treasurer and kept us solvent. These were the finances for calendar year 2016:

Balance: January 1, 2016:	\$ 8,275
2015 Income:	4,600*
2015 Expenditures:	2,170
Balance: December 31, 2016:	<u>10,705</u>

*Includes \$2,275 EPA grant, for which there were no related expenditures in 2016.

We opened a Chapter account with the UN Federal Credit Union during the year. They provided us a grant of \$250 to open the account. UNFCU is a partner of UNA-USA and we look forward to working with them on financial matters.

Communications Committee

Website and Social Media

The Communication Committee's work focused primarily on maintaining the organization's website. Among the work done, we:

- Updated website to show upcoming events and board meetings, September 2016–May 2017;
- Prepared and sent out VIP letters for UN Day;

- Publicized UN Day, updated the UN day/flag-raising ceremony information, and created a UN Day 2016 page;
- Uploaded the newsletters on the website and updated the newsletters section of the website so that it looks uniform;
- Publicized Human Rights Day and the Interactive Panel discussion by putting them on the website and updating it after the event;
- Advertised the mini-model UN at Mercy College and posted related information;
- Advertised Mid-Atlantic Conference, updated related information on the website;
- Updated the YP page and the Facebook page;
- Updated the Membership section of the website.

Newsletter

Scott Monje has maintained a high standard for our newsletter, *The UNA-Westchester Global Connection*, which was issued three times during the past year. We plan to disseminate the newsletter increasingly via electronic distribution to save on costs during the coming year. If you would like to contribute an article to the newsletter, send it to unawestchester@gmail.com.

Membership

The fiscal year statistics for membership were fairly consistent with past years with regard to new and lapsed members. The numbers are adjusted according to the 2016 decision by UNA-USA National to remove student members from the membership lists.

January 1, 2016:	164 members
	- <u>23</u> student members
	<u>141 Total without students</u>
	- 57 members who dropped
	+ <u>33</u> new members
December 31, 2016:	<u>117 Total membership without students</u>

From 2012 to 2015 there was a similar number of gained and lost members each year with a stable year-end total membership. Despite letters of welcome to new members and efforts to contact lapsed (about to be dropped) members, announcements and appeals at all events, the ebb and flow remains unchanged.

Membership Chair Marcia Wallace also observes:

- Members themselves often do not attend UNA-Westchester public events, although these are very well attended by interested nonmember guests;
- Members are located over a vast geographical territory, many living outside the area; and
- There is a noteworthy very loyal core of members who have maintained membership over many years despite their lack of participation in events.

Efforts to maintain and reach new members have been given impetus by the current U.S. administration's threats to reduce financial and other support for the United Nations. The negative change in policy can be used to energize member support and encourage new interest. We will encourage constituents to join and renew UNA to support the work of the United Nations through a variety of methods.

Interns

We have benefitted greatly from a series of student interns over the past year. They include: Basil Michelon (EF Language School); Faraj Haddad and Smahane Nounouh (Mercy College); and Maricielo Gomez (Pace University). We also had the assistance of Katarina Hoeger, a recent graduate, who helped with our communications needs. These interns helped organize volunteers, programs, and outreach for our program events, kept the website current, and assisted the president in a number of critical ways.

Conclusion

Thank you to the committee chairs who have contributed to this report. We invite more of our members to participate in our program, education, advocacy, and membership committees. Members, your association needs your contributions to help support the work of the United Nations. Please contact us with your ideas at unawestchester@gmail.com.

- Marcia M. Brewster, President

Nominees for Directors



J. Yuhanna Edwards is a member of the Mount Vernon City Council. He has held other city government posts, including Commissioner of Parks and Recreation and Director of Civil Defense and Emergency Services. He is also a New York State

licensed insurance consultant. He has served on the Board for two years in the capacity of Advocacy Committee Cochair. As a combat paramedic in the Vietnam War, Mr. Edwards received a gunshot wound and was honorably discharged in 1968. In addition to the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Distinguished Service Military Awards, Mr. Edwards has received numerous awards for his dedication to youth and senior citizens and outstanding community service. He holds several leadership positions, board appointments, and organization memberships, including Omega Psi Phi's Omicron Iota Chapter. Mr. Edwards is a graduate of Mercy College. He has been married for 42 years and has three children and five grandchildren.

Ambassador Bob F. Jalang'o is currently an Adjunct Professor of African Studies at New York University and a public speaker who promotes Africa through workshops and seminars. Mr. Jalang'o began his diplomatic career as Ambassador of Kenya to Zambia, Malawi and Botswana, and then served as

Ambassador to Italy, Greece, Poland, and the United Nations Agencies in Rome. In 2000 he was posted to the United Nations in New York as Permanent Representative of Kenya and served in that position until 2004. Mr. Jalang'o was initially trained in Information



Technology and worked in the private sector in East Africa for 14 years as IT Manager for a U.S.-based petroleum company that provided marketing services to six Eastern and Central African countries. This was the beginning of his travels within Africa and internationally. Prior to his diplomatic service, he also served as an elected member of Kenya's Legislature. He is a member of UNA-USA and a Peace Ambassador at the Global Prosperity and Peace Initiative. Ambassador Jalang'o has been actively involved in volunteer work including supporting an Orphanage in Kenya for children from HIV/AIDS families. His wife, Prof. Jeannette Monaco Jalango, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at New York University School of Professional Studies.

Martha Perez is currently a master's degree student at New York University with a concentration in International Relations and Global Futures. She



graduated with honors from Mercy College in International Relations and Diplomacy in May 2015. She has been involved in volunteering her time to address pressing world issues that will and have directly affected our youth. Mercy College gave her the opportunity to be a part of excellent extracurricular activities such as the Environmental Sustainability and Justice Club, and the Model United Nations club (she was head delegate). These clubs strengthened her role as a global citizen and enabled her to address issues like climate change, gender

inequality, and sustainability. She was brought onto the Board of UNA-Westchester in 2014 as Cochair of the Young Professionals Program. She feels that the YP program is an excellent platform for the youth to come together and become more involved in order to achieve global progress and further understand the fundamental role of the United Nations.



Lilli Schindler has worked for the United Nations in the Department of Public Information (DPI) for the past 20 years. She is currently Acting Chief of the Visitors Services Section in the

Outreach Division of the UN Department of Public Information. Previously, she worked in the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Section of DPI. She began her career in the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General. Having grown up in Westchester, she comes from a UN family, as her father, a Brazilian national, and her mother, a Dutch national, both worked for the organization from its inception. She holds a B.A. from Brown University and an M.A. from Columbia University. She has served on the Board for three years in the capacity of Program Committee Cochair. Lilli lives in Rye with her three children.



Patrick Sciarratta has been Special Advisor to the Permanent Mission of São Tomé and Príncipe to the United Nations since 2014. He was Executive Director of Friendship Ambassadors Foundation in Greenwich, CT,

from 1993 to 2015. Patrick has addressed global conferences and universities on topics related to cultural exchange, peace building, and youth leadership training. From 2003 to 2015, he co-created and directed the Annual Youth Assembly at the United Nations.[®] In 2012, Patrick cosponsored the first-ever TEDx conference at the UN: TEDxUNPLAZA. He and

FAF provided development consultation to the country of Bulgaria from 1999 to 2001. He was Director for Performing Arts at Hunter College of the City University of New York. Mr. Sciarratta has received many awards, including the MacArthur Award presented to the Palenville Interarts Colony under his direction (1980–1992), among the first MacArthur “Genius” Awards ever presented to an organization), and the Governor’s Citation for Excellence from Governor Rockefeller. He is listed in four editions of *Who’s Who* internationally for contributions to culture and community. Patrick served on the UNA-Westchester Board for several years until 2009.

Commentary: Donald Trump and UN Peacekeeping

On March 29, in discussing prospective reductions in the American contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping budget, Ambassador Nikki Haley said, “Everyone knows there’s fat at the UN.” For people not familiar with the language of U.S. federal budgets, that means the administration has no idea what, if anything, we can afford to eliminate. An effective translation would be, “We’re going to cut it because we want to, and we really don’t care what the consequences are.”

It is true that the United States pays a considerable portion of the peacekeeping budget, 28.5 percent of the total. That comes to about \$2.2 billion a year, and the Trump administration wants to cut that by about 40 percent, or nearly \$1 billion. For purposes of comparison, \$2.2 billion is a bit less than the cost of two B-2 bombers; the United States spent about \$2 billion on the Iraq War *every week* in 2006, rising to about \$12 billion a month in 2008. According to a report from Brown University’s Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, the United States spent roughly \$1.7 *trillion* over the course of 15 years for direct military costs in Iraq and

Afghanistan—\$4.79 trillion if you include all war-related expenses and the long-term care of wounded veterans. (Remember when George W. Bush fired Lawrence Lindsey, the director of the National Economic Council, in 2002 because Lindsey projected that the Iraq War could cost as much as \$200 billion instead of the \$50 billion that the administration was claiming?) The United Nations spends about \$7 billion a year running up to 16 different peacekeeping operations around the world. Yet, somehow, one U.S. administration after another insists on lecturing the UN about how it spends its money.

The UN's record of success in peacekeeping operations is not perfect, but it is not at all bad. When UN peacekeepers are present, there are fewer civilian deaths and fewer military deaths and violence is geographically contained. When outbursts of violence do occur, they tend to be shorter than in situations in which peacekeepers are not present. Situations that the UN peacekeepers monitor are ones that the United States does not have to deal with (for considerably more money) itself. They generally do not become terrorist havens or generate massive waves of refugees streaming across borders.

Slashing the UN peacekeeping budget is not a way to make America great, or the world more stable.

—*Scott C. Monje*

Main Source: Lise Morjé Howard, “Trump Wants to Cut U.N. Funding—But Peacekeeping Saves Money, Lives,” *Washington Post* (Monkey Cage blog), March 31, 2017. Howard is also the author of *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Board Members, Officers, and Committee Chairs

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9764, myrnaanover@msn.com
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