



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Westchester Chapter

The Global Connection

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Volume 1 #6 Online • Annual Report and Meeting • April 2019

CALLING ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

Come join us at the

UNA-Westchester Annual Meeting

Brief Meeting and Election of Board of Directors, UNA-USA Westchester Chapter

Followed by a full program:

“Climate Crisis: Westchester Takes Action!”

The event is free and open to the public. Networking reception with refreshments.

SEE BELOW:

2018 Annual Report Information Follows

Please register [HERE](#) or at www.unawestchester.org

Sunday, May 19, 2019, 2:00–4:00

(registration opens at 1:30) Please bring your ideas and friends!

Harrison Public Library

2 Bruce Ave., Harrison NY

Cosponsored by Harrison Public Library and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

UNA-Westchester Annual Report, 2018-19

UNA-Westchester is pleased to submit a report of its activities and accomplishments over the last year. We look forward to hearing your ideas and getting members involved in all of our committees and events in the coming year.

UNA-Westchester Board of Directors (2018-19)

In May 2018, all five Officers were up for election, as the incumbents had reached their term limits. The new officers elected for the Class of 2020 were: David Finch, President; Jan Fischer, Vice President; Karen Rockwell El-Badry, Secretary; Oneida Cabaleiro, Treasurer; and Joan Katen, Nominations Chair. We re-elected four directors for the Class of 2020: Myrna Anover,

Marcia Brewster, Mary Seward Downes and Brenda L.G. Smith. Newly-elected directors for the Class of 2020 were Aicha Bargo (Young Professionals Chair) and Christopher Swain. Five directors continued their terms through June 2019: J. Yuhanna Edwards, Ambassador Bob Jalang'o, Martha Perez, Patrick Sciaratta, and Lilli Schindler.

There were a number of changes in the Board that occurred over the reporting period, so we have had a shuffle in the responsibilities of some of our Board members. President Dave Finch resigned in February, and Vice President Jan Fisher has been appointed as interim President. Martha Perez resigned, and the Board elected Tricia Baldes as a new director to fill out her term. We are asking for certain directors to take up new responsibilities, as outlined by the Nominations committee.

We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of the directors who have stepped down this year: David Finch and Martha Perez. We were also indeed fortunate to have had the important contributions of one other member who will step down in June 2019, Myrna Anover. We hope these outstanding board members will continue to make contributions to our chapter. 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. Check the website to make sure of the date in any given month. All UNA-USA members are welcome to attend.

Former President Marcia Brewster was elected to represent the Mid-Atlantic Region on UNA-USA's National Council. She has been participating in monthly meetings by conference call and attended her first Council session in New York on February 23, 2019. She remains on the board as Chair of the Program Committee.

UNA-USA Leadership Summit, Washington D.C.

President David Finch and Membership Chair Mary Seward Downes attended the UNA-USA Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. in June 2018. The conference took place at the National Education Association on June 10-12 and included a day of lobbying on Capitol Hill. 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. We encourage members of our chapter to attend the meeting this year, which will be held in Washington on June 9-11, 2019.

Chris Whatley, UNA-USA's executive director in Washington, has been an effective advocate for UNA-USA's initiatives and provided key leadership at the Global Engagement Summit in February. Membership in UNA-USA now tops 22,000 nationwide, of whom 35% are students.

Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee, chaired by J. Yuhanna Edwards, concentrated mainly on implementing the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW). The city of Mount Vernon, N.Y., passed a Resolution in 2015, the first city in the state to pass such Legislation. The objective of the committee is to implement CEDAW as a local ordinance, making it law with enforceable consequences, if not followed. This would set an example for other municipal governments in Westchester.

The requirements for successful implementation are: gender analysis; an oversight body; and funding. We are working to create a framework for improving the status of women and girls by mobilizing stakeholders to include elected officials, the media, business, youth, NGOs, the faith communities and women leaders. On April 8, 2019, the work session of the City Council discussed the desire of the UNA-USA Westchester to see Mount Vernon's resolution turned into an ordinance. The Advocacy Committee asks that we all be advocates for the United Nations in our local communities by encouraging them to seek a local law and getting CEDAW

legislation implemented. The Chair has also met with Congressman Eliot Engel's office; they have promised to send us suggestions on how our Chapter can help him advocate for the UN.

In addition, former Co-Chair of the Committee, Joan Katen, moderates 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, Harrison NY once a month. Interested participants gather at 1:30 pm 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. The participants then reconvene as a whole to discuss their answers. Each participant also fills out his/her policy views on an anonymous ballot supplied by the Foreign Policy Association. The ballots are sent in from similar groups all over the country, are collated by the FPA and sent to Congress and the Executive Branch of our government. In this way, we, the citizens, make our views known to our elected representatives, and we have some input into U.S. foreign policy. Calendars for future "Great Decisions" discussions may be obtained from the Harrison Library System (914) 835-0324 or at <https://www.harrisonpl.org/events/harrison/8364>.

We encourage our members to speak out and support the UN. 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. Senator Gillibrand may be contacted at [202-224-4451](tel:202-224-4451) or at www.gillibrand.senate.gov/contact/email-me; and Senator Schumer at [202-224-6542](tel:202-224-6542) or www.schumer.senate.gov/contact/email-chuck.

ADOPT-A-FUTURE - Report and Appeal

As all members should be aware, the UNA-USA's Southern New York Coalition, of which Westchester Chapter is a part, made a commitment in 2017 to support Gambela Primary School in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. We then pledged to raise \$30,000 to be used for constructing a sustainable classroom to accommodate forty school children for ten years, purchase school uniforms and books for the children, and train special teachers. Ambassador Bob F. Jalang'o has successfully led this effort for the chapter.

We wish to thank all Chapter members who have made contributions since the appeal was launched in 2017. We are happy to report that to date, the Chapter has received generous donations totaling \$9,334.00. Other Chapters in the Division have raised another \$10,388.

The good news, according to Kenya's Ministry of Education report is this. "At the end of October 2017, thousands of refugee students in Kenya took part in the country's national primary school exams (end of Middle school), known as the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE)."

We appeal to all members of the Chapter to help us finalize the fundraising campaign by end of June 2019. One simple concept of fundraising is of "Nights of a Thousand dinners". For example, you can host a dinner in your home for friends and family and collect contributions from the guests. The host will forward all the collected funds to the Association through the President of the Southern New York State Division.

Donations can be made at <https://unausa.org/adopt-a-future/> or checks can be made out to "UNA-USA Southern New York Division" (please put "A-A-F Westchester" on the memo line). Mail to 49 Stone Avenue, Ossining, NY 10562. Donations to the Adopt-A-Future Campaign are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Program Committee

The Program Committee, ably led by Marcia Brewster, organized, sponsored, and participated in many activities. The main events organized by our chapter over the May 2018 to May 2019 period are listed below:

UNA-Westchester Annual meeting, April 29th, 2018: The annual Meeting, with the theme “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) at 70: Its Place in Westchester History”, was held at the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation in White Plains. We paid tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt and UNA-Westchester’s long-term member Molly Bruce, who drafted the UDHR. Students from Somers School Systems made presentations from their “Rock Your World” program on the UDHR. We had a good turn-out of members and the local community, who elected board members for the coming year.

United Nations Day, October 21st, 2018, with the theme “Human Rights Close to Home” was celebrated at the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation in White Plains. Wainwright House in Rye, NY, highlighting a keynote address by human rights activist Kathy Eldon and a county-wide launch of the Rock Your World Program in Westchester County. Kathy is the founder of Creative Visions Foundation, the parent organization of Rock Your World. Students presented their projects and campaigns related to the UDHR. All the participants enjoyed the reception and the opportunity to network with others who are dedicated to the work of the United Nations, especially in the area of Human Rights.

Human Rights Day, December 9th, 2018: The celebration of Human Rights Day was done with the Greenburgh Human Rights Advisory Committee and the Greenburgh Public Library to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The following persons were honored: Colby Jenkins; Vic Leviatin; Cleo Oliver; and the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel for their important contributions to human rights in the Town of Greenburgh. There was great collaboration with our partners, the reception was very exciting and we had a full house of enthusiastic participants.

Global Engagement Summit, February 22nd, 2019: UNA-USA’s Global Summit attracted over 1500 UNA-USA members and students from around the country at the General Assembly Hall, United Nations. The event included addresses by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés of Ecuador. Some outstanding panels on the situation in Yemen, empowerment of the girl child, nuclear proliferation, human rights, Cities for Sustainable Development, climate action and others. The interaction with the participants was very lively. This conference, which used to be UNA-USA’s Members Day, has become one of the main vehicles for raising awareness of the work of the UN among U.S. citizens.

International Women's Day, March 3rd, 2019: The event, with the theme “Women, Power and Justice: The Road Ahead”, was held at Ossining Public Library and featured keynote speaker and author Consolée Nishimwe of Rwanda. Celebrating and recognizing Westchester’s Women Leaders, the well-attended event honored: Shawyn Patterson-Howard, CEO of Yonkers YMCA; Hon. Kathie Davidson, Administrative Judge of NY State’s 9th District; Director Masha Turchinsky, Director of the Hudson River Museum; and Marcia Wallace, long-term leader of UNA-Westchester. A Q and A discussion was moderated by Nicole Butterfield of Girls, Inc and an exciting traditional Indian dance was performed by 9th grader Hershita Shet. Co-sponsors included the Ossining Public Library, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the Links, Inc. and the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

Education Committee

The Education Committee, chaired by Karen Rockwell El-Badry and assisted by Tricia Baldes and Patrick Sciarratta, launched the Rock Your World curriculum in Westchester County, a free on-line curriculum anchored in the study of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The program provides an effective bridge between discovery and action; when youth can identify where human rights are lacking or being abused in their own communities, their desire to do something needs channeling.

At the UN Day 2018 event, our partnership with Rock Your world was furthered as we launched an activation for *UDHR Now*, a challenge to engage the youth and educators of Westchester to read and respond to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Following the program, which included a panel discussion about human rights education, attendees networked and made connections to respond to the challenge.

Human Rights Day 2018 provided us with an opportunity to celebrate a select group of students and their teachers who have been participating in the UDHR Now Challenge in partnership with Rock Your World. Students spoke about the human rights issues that they are responding to and shared the work they had completed to date.

For the 13th 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, including college students, participated. The project provides an introduction to the United Nations and to the concept of peace-making and includes a section for the children to make individual drawings related to peace. With a view to making this successful project available to other chapters or groups, a detailed description is available on the chapter’s website, with links to some materials for anyone wishing to create a power-point presentation.

The Education Committee also had a display table at the Westchester–Lower Hudson Council for the Social Studies Annual December Conference. We offered a variety of materials provided by the UN Office of Public Information to assist teachers in incorporating the United Nations into their social studies curriculum. Two staff members from UN/DPI were also present to discuss areas of interest to middle and high school teachers.

Communications Committee

The Chair of the Communications Committee, Patrick Sciarratta, has greatly expanded outreach during the last year, with a spike in communications throughout the entire range of UNA-Westchester constituents. Without concern for membership, the Communications Committee opened up the Newsletter and other communications to all interested parties. We have been able to save on previous years’ budgets on the newsletter and promotion by moving everything online and by utilizing a gift from the Communications Chair of a free year of Constant Contact email marketing. The newsletter is becoming a magazine in its own right, but all Board members are still urged with each issue to add information on their current projects. We expanded outreach to attendees with increased releases, fliers, and a better use of Constant Contact and our lists. Attendees at our events have been growing in number all year and we are receiving more interest in our social media platform. Our website and social media presence need massive improvements in 2019. We have begun reaching out to sponsors as well as donors and members in order to broaden our visible footprint in the County. Embracing *Rock Your World* both increased our attendees and brought in more youth to our events, as integral parts of programming.

Broadly speaking, communicating UNA-USA's Mission and Goals should be why the Chapter exists. Communicating related programming should be among the main work of our Committee. To that end, the Communications Committee should cooperate with the Program Committee in planning events: use communications to reinforce programming that garners larger audience participation and sponsorship; and work with interns to improve and develop social media, i.e., Face Book, Twitter, and the website.

Nominations Committee

The task of the Nominations Committee 2018-19, Chaired by Joan Katen, was to manage the replacement of the President who resigned during the course of the year and develop a slate of five capable officers to lead the chapter. Members of the Committee included: Lilli Schindler and Myrna Anover, representing the board; and Doris Benson and Dan Bena, representing the membership.

The Ballot which needs to be voted on:

Class of 2020:

Officers:

President: J. Yuhanna Edwards
First Vice President: Marcia Brewster
Second Vice President: Lilli Schindler
Treasurer: Jan Fischer

Director, Class of 2020:

Tricia Baldes

Directors, Class of 2021

Daniel Bena
Ambassador Bob Jalang'o
Patrick Sciarratta
Demetrios Mihailidis

No votes are necessary for the following directors, who will continue in their terms. They are not on the ballot:

Class of 2020

Aicha Bargo
Oneida Cabaleiro
Mary Seward Downes
Karen Rockwell El-Badry
Joan Katen
Brenda L.G. Smith
Christopher Swain

Young Professionals Program

The Young Professionals Program (YPP), chaired by Aicha Bargo, remains very involved at the heart of UNA-Westchester's events. The group will organize a Networking Happy Hour in collaboration with New York City and New Jersey UNA Young Professionals programs. The Young Professionals will also collaborate with Alpha New York to create awareness about the UNA work and more specifically about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and gender equality goals.

The YPP is planning to host career and networking events in the future, as well as more educational events to inspire the community to become more involved in promoting the goals of the United Nations, both locally and globally. We also plan to hold more events this year, particularly on women's empowerment, peacekeeping, climate change and the strengthening of global citizenship among 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 a member.

Finance

Oneida Cabaleiro undertook the job of treasurer for the period under review. These were the finances for calendar year 2018.

Balance: January 1, 2018:	• \$11,118
2018 Income:	• 3,248
2018 Expenditures:	• 4,310
Balance: December 31, 2018:	• \$ 10,056

UNA-Westchester received a human-rights Stand-Up Grant from UNA-USA National for \$380. Outside of the chapter's budget, UNA-Westchester raised \$4,752 for the Adopt-A-Future campaign for the Gambela Primary School in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya during 2018. These funds go to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, for classrooms and teachers.

UNA-USA Partnerships

UNA-USA and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA), Inc. have continued their partnership at the local level, even though the national-level partnership expired in October 2018. The aim is to create global citizens and foster new audiences to better support the United Nations. The partnership with AKA has thrived in our chapter, led by Partnerships Chair Dr. Brenda L.G. Smith, a member of Zeta Nu Omega Chapter. Zeta Nu Omega has cosponsored UN Day 2018, International Women's Day in March 2019 and several other events. Another partner that has been very supportive of our work is the Links, Inc., Westchester County Chapter. They have brought students to our programs and have encouraged their students to participate in the Rock Your World program and campaign. We have also partnered with a number of libraries and civil society organizations. We are grateful to the YMCA of White Plains, which has been providing space for our Board meetings for many years. We are sorry that their facility on Mamaroneck Ave. will soon be closing down, and we are hoping that our relationship with the YMCA will continue.

Interns

We have benefitted greatly from a series of student interns and volunteers over the past year. They include Luis Perez, Tatiana Coronel and Vivian Rodriguez (Mercy College); Maya Berrol-Young (heading for Shanghai on a Fulbright Scholarship), Amandine Tronche (EF language school). We also had the continued assistance of Katarina Hoeger, 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 program chair 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.

UNA-USA, Westchester Chapter: Board of Directors

Officers

Jan Fischer, Acting President
Karen Rockwell El-Badry, Secretary
Oneida Cabaleiro, Treasurer
Joan Katen, Nominations

Directors

Myrna Anover
Tricia Baldes
Aicha Bargo
Marcia Brewster
Mary Seward Downes
J. Yuhanna Edwards
H.E. Ambassador Bob Jalang'o
Lilli Schindler
Patrick Sciarratta
Brenda L. G. Smith
Christopher Swain

Become a member of UNA-USA, Westchester Chapter: Sign up at <https://unausa.org/join/> and indicate Westchester (NY) chapter in the drop-down menu.