



**UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Westchester Chapter

**Bios for speakers and honorees, International Women's Day, 8 March 2020**

***Keynote Speakers***



**Ms. Gülden Türköz-Cosslett**, a national of Turkey, is the Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Prior to 2015, Gülden was the Director of Programs with UN Women. She has also served as Senior Adviser in the Office of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, where she led the Transition Team supporting the establishment of UN Women. Prior to that, Gülden served as the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Albania. She earlier was Team Leader for the Central Asia Cluster in UNDP's Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States and worked as Program Specialist at the UN Office of Project Services Regional Office in

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Gülden holds a Master's of International Affairs degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. She is married and has a daughter. They live in Hastings on Hudson.

**Ms. Shawyn Patterson Howard** was elected Mount Vernon's first female Mayor in November 2019, and she is the first woman of color elected mayor in Westchester County. Her focus has been on strengthening the local community and using her relationships at the city, county, state and federal levels to bolster Mount Vernon and restore trust in the city's leadership.

Prior to her election, Ms. Howard served as the President and CEO of the YMCA of Yonkers. She was the first woman and person of color to lead the YMCA. Her groundbreaking work in public health, criminal justice, education, housing and urban development has enabled her to develop strong ties to government and cross-sector leaders. As a "connector", Mayor Howard has developed solutions to address the complex social determinants that have plagued our communities for decades. Ms. Howard believes in the untapped leadership potential of young people, women and persons of color and has helped them find their voice, passion and purpose.

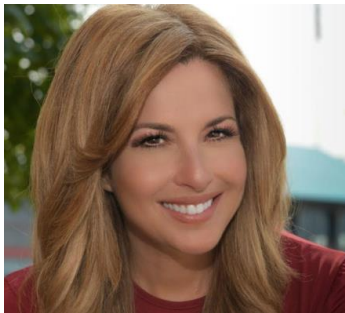


Ms. Howard graduated from Mount Vernon High School and the Howard University School of Social Work. She earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration and Urban Development from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. She is the wife of Marvin Howard and mother of Nia. She continues her family's 100-year plus legacy of service to the community of Mount Vernon.

## Honorees



**Shirley Vaughn Jackson** was born in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and was a neighbor of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, on Violet Avenue in Hyde Park. She attended Hyde Park public schools and graduated as Valedictorian of the F.D.R. High School in June 1951. She became the first Black office employee of Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corp. She married the late Rev. Belvie H. Jackson, Jr. in 1967, and they were sent to Mount Vernon, N.Y. where he became the pastor of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and she served as a musician. In June 2019 she completed 30 years employment with the Mount Vernon Youth Bureau as Director of the MVHS Career Center. As a member of the Women's Home & Overseas Missionary Society of the AME Zion Church, she currently serves as Mission Education Director of the New York Conference. Mrs. Jackson received her B.S. degree in Human Services to Children from Empire State College. She has two daughters, Christina Penrose and Belinda Jackson, and two grandsons, Tyson and Josiah Penrose. At the prompting of her oldest grandson, Shirley wrote about her experiences as a child with the Roosevelt family in her book "Hot Dogs for The Queen". Currently she is compiling more Roosevelt stories, memories and recipes for another book.



**Mary Calvi** is a television journalist and author of *Dear George, Dear Mary: A Novel of George Washington's First Love*. She is the co-anchor of CBS2 This Morning and CBS2 At Noon at WCBS-TV in New York City. Ms. Calvi is the recipient of nine Emmy Awards, including for her breaking-news reportage of the "Miracle on the Hudson", the 2009 emergency landing of US Airways Flight 1549. She has provided live breaking news reports on a wide range of stories across the tri-state area. She also traveled to Rome to cover Pope John Paul II. Ms. Calvi had also provided coverage on the attacks at the World Trade Center, in 1993 and 2001.

She received another Emmy award for an in-depth series on sexual pedophiles, "Predator Next Door". Other honors include: an award for writing at the New York Festival's World Media Awards; a National ACE Award for Excellence in Journalism; a Clarion Award for Excellence in Reporting; and the ACIM Award for Excellence in Community Service. Ms. Calvi graduated magna cum laude from the S.I. Newhouse School at Syracuse University with a degree in journalism. A native of Westchester County, she is married to Mike Spano, the current mayor of Yonkers; they have three children and reside in Yonkers.

**Danielle S. Kohn** has been appointed the inaugural Youth Poet Laureate for Westchester County. The Westchester County Youth Bureau appointed the Scarsdale High School student to this honor to promote literacy, poetry and the arts throughout Westchester County. She plans to graduate in 2021 and has been elected to the Signifer Honors Society. She has attended summer writing courses at the University of Virginia, Sarah Lawrence College, SUNY Stony Brook and the NYS Summer School for the Arts. She has won many Gold Key awards in Scholastic Art and Writing Competitions in Poetry and Mixed Media Arts over the last four years.



Her poem *"This is Bliss"* was selected to be choreographed by Dance NYAAD troop and performed at Katonah Village Library; her poem *"Chrysanthemum"* was selected to be accompanied by music and performed at University of Virginia Young Writers Workshop.

She has led poetry workshops for elementary school students and has volunteered as a counselor at a summer overnight camp for disabled children. She is the only teen volunteer for a group that brings poetry to audiences in hospitals, nursing homes and drug treatment centers throughout Westchester. She lives in Scarsdale, plays the guitar and writes her own songs.

### ***Moderator***

**Ms. Nicola (Niki) Armacost** is currently the Mayor of Hastings on Hudson. She is the managing director and founder of Arc Finance, formed in the spring of 2008 to link the fields of finance, energy, water, and sanitation. Ms. Armacost has over 20 years experience in microfinance and development in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. From 1993 to 2008, she worked at Women's World Banking, a global microfinance network where she held various leadership positions. Ms. Armacost has a Bachelor's degree in international relations from the University of Toronto, an LLB from Queen's University in Canada, and an LLM from Osgoode Hall Law School in Canada. She was a delegate to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 25 years ago. She lives in Hastings with her husband Tim; they have two children.

