



UNA ★ USA

NEWSLETTER

EVENTS

JOHNSON COUNTY CHAPTER
SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday, September 17, 1:00 p.m.

Live stream Concert for Peace "From Harm to Harmony" In observance of the International Day of Peace

Sponsored by UNA-USA Southern California Division and Rotary Action Group for Peace. This event will benefit earthquake victims in Turkey, provide assistance to refugees, support human rights in Iran, and more. To register and view the concert, please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/concert-for-peace-from-harm-to-harmony-tickets-708555948917?aff=oddtcreator>.

Saturday, September 23, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Kirkwood Hotel on the Kirkwood Community Campus, 7725 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids

All Iowa Annual Assembly

Speakers: Rob Hogg, former Iowa Senator from Linn County, and Andrew Dunn, Iowa City Council Member, speaking on the local relevance of the UN and the role of our Iowa chapters in working with city and state governments, Presentation of the Iowa UNA Garst Awards and special awards

Thursday, September 28, 7:00 p.m

North Liberty Public Library, 520 West Cherry St.

"Talking Trash: An Indian City's Remarkable Solid Waste Management Story"

Jerry Anthony, Associate Professor in the UI School of Planning and Public Affairs and JCUNA Board Member, will speak on sustainable waste management practices based on his 2023 Fulbright Fellowship in India. In person and on Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82799047644?pwd=b253cGQwM0xua1d0L2xyMStwNUVEdz09>.

UNA-USA Advocates Gather in Washington

BY MERCEDES BERN-KLUG

The United Nations was established over 75 years ago with a commitment to productively engaging countries to work together to promote world peace, uphold human rights, provide humanitarian aid in areas of conflict and natural disaster, and promote global health. For two days in June, volunteers from UNA-USA's 120 chapters gathered in Washington DC (some people joined online) to learn how the United Nations is using its influence to advance these broad goals and others, including the 17 *(cont. on page 3)*



Bijou Maliabo, Neema Maliabo and Mercedes Bern-Klug meet with James Rice, aide to Sen. Charles Grassley.

EVENTS (cont.)

Friday, October 6, 5:45 p.m.

Downtown Iowa City.

University of Iowa Homecoming Parade

March with the JCUNA contingent to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. See page 4 of this newsletter.

Tuesday, October 24, Noon.

Room A, Iowa City Public Library, 123 So. Linn Street

United Nations Day Event

Theme: Human Rights and Youth.

Co-sponsored with the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council

Sunday, November 12, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Room A, Iowa City Public Library, 123 So. Linn Street

JCUNA Annual Meeting

Annual membership business meeting plus a program with Steve Dodge, recently retired Model UN advisor at City High School.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



BARBARA ECKSTEIN

This issue is the last paper printing of the JCUNA newsletter. Subsequently, JCUNA news will come to you through our semi-monthly emails sent the first and fifteenth of every month under my name as current president. More than just announcements, the emails will include longer pieces, as in the traditional newsletter. To see an article, you need only click the button on the email that invites you to “read more.” We who create the articles and announcements for JCUNA communications hope you will not only open the emails but also read the articles-- “read more.”

This transitional moment is an opportunity to look back and thank those who have worked on the newsletter. Barbara Badovinac has been doing the layout recently; and Katy Hansen, before her. Jim Olson has served as editor and will continue to edit the electronic communication. This is also an opportunity to look forward, planning for more timely articles and announcements while saving trees and money.

When the JCUNA board discussed and endorsed this transition to electronic communication, I was most struck by the observation that our articles contained more and more electronic references (urls) to other sources. But on paper, these urls were not quick references. In an electronic medium, our readers can easily click on these links and see the sources the writers are suggesting.

Here's just one example of the kind of reference worth seeing for itself: <https://betterworldcampaign.org/blog/fy24-house-senate-budget-comparison>.

UNA USA's advocacy partner, The Better World Campaign, offered this explanation, on July 31, of the differing US House and US Senate bills that control US financial support for the UN. For the first time, the US House bill contains a proposal to defund the UN. The humanitarian, peace-keeping, and diplomatic consequences of such a move should propel all UNA members to call their members of Congress with an emphatic message in support of funding the UN. During the August recess, UNA members in Iowa have reached out to Representative Miller-Meeks at her townhall, and a cross-chapter delegation together with the Iowa UNA College Ambassadors have talked with Senator Grassley's long-time aide, James Rice. But it is by no means too late for all of us to call in support of UN funding.

You can find contact information for your US Representative at <https://www.house.gov/representatives> and for our Senators at <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

I look forward to this new era of JCUNA communications. We have a lot going on and are eager to share the news and invitations with all members.

UNA-USA Advocates Gather in Washington (cont.)

BY MERCEDES BERN-KLUG

Sustainable Development Goals. Two board members from the Johnson County UNA attended this inter-generational summit in person: Bijou Maliabo and Mercedes Bern-Klug. Also attending were Cora Bern-Klug and Neema Maliabo.

UNA-USA executive director, Rachel Pittman Bowen, kicked off the summit by introducing and thanking her staff. Speakers from many UN divisions provided up-dates, including: UNAIDS, UNOPS, UNEP, FAO, WFP, OCHA, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNRWA, UNHRC, IOM, and UNDP. If you are not familiar with all these acronyms (and most people aren't), consider looking them up and learning more about your UN.

There was emphasis at the Summit about the need to develop youth leaders and ensure a place at the table for youth representing youth. Discussions included efforts to shape the Youth Declaration of Human Rights. In fact, Iowa's former congresswoman, Abby Finkenauer, now Special Envoy for Global Youth Issues with the US Department of State, spoke about the important and unique role the UN performs in support youth worldwide.

After two days of informational sessions, UNA chapter members headed to Capitol Hill to provide information about the UN to members of Congress. When visiting with Senator Grassley's staff, Bijou mentioned that it was Senator Grassley who more than twenty years ago signed the papers allowing her to immigrate to Iowa from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Bijou is serving her 5th term as a member of the Iowa City Human Rights Council/Commission and spoke about the important human rights work organized by the UN. Bijou also spoke about the need for more support for youth and immigrants.

Mercedes reviewed with congressional office staff, some the ways the UN has promoted societal inclusion and better health among older adults worldwide, and had it not been for the UN role in public health efforts—including vaccines—many of today's older adults would have died decades ago, some as infants. The UN immunization efforts over the last 50 years have been credited with saving the lives of over 2 million children each year!

In addition, the JCUNA members met with aides to Senator Joni Ernst and Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks.

Resources: For video recordings of some of the sessions, including the presentation by Abby Finkenauer, please search "2023 Leadership Summit" on YouTube.

The Better World Campaign, UNA-USA's sister organization, was established in 1999 to strengthen the partnership between the US and the UN. The Better World Campaign's 2023 Briefing Book "Meeting the Moment: the U.S. and the UN in 2023" provides an excellent survey of the UN's current agenda and the role of the U.S. See <https://betterworldcampaign.org/briefingbook>

Congratulations, Bijou!

JCUNA Board Member Bijou Maliabo has been elected to serve on the UNA-USA National Council, a body of 30 chapter leaders from across the country. The Council meets twice a year to address such issues as membership, education, programs, and advocacy. Bijou is one of three representatives from UNA-USA's North Central Region.

JC UNA News and Events

Johnson County United Nations Association
308 E. Burlington St. #245
Iowa City, IA 52240

September 2023



Walk or Ride in the UI Homecoming Parade to Celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the great achievements of the UN, guided by former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, chair of the UN Human Rights Commission during the drafting of the declaration.

We have an opportunity to introduce thousands of people to the declaration while participating in the UI Homecoming Parade on Friday, October 6. Our JCUNA contingent will have a banner and we will carry signs, each with a word or brief phrase describing one of the articles in the declaration. We will provide a vehicle for those who prefer to ride. All are welcome. Share this opportunity with family, friends, and other organizations.

To receive full information, please register by using the QR code in the poster.

Thanks to our Interns!

We thank **Raajvi Singh**, a student at Baruch College in New York City who served as our Summer Intern, designing new promotional cards for the chapter, and **Jasmine Grafton**, our 23-24 Communications Intern who does the layout for our emails and is helping to publicize JCUNA events. Jasmine is a senior at UI.

Thank You for Your Membership Renewal!

We are most grateful to you for your ongoing support for our chapter. If you receive this newsletter by mail, your mailing label indicates when your membership renewal is due. Renew online at <https://unausa.org/join/renew> or mail your \$50 renewal check payable to UNA-USA to BWF/UNA-USA, United Nations Foundation, P.O. Box 96397, Washington DC 20090-6397. Many thanks.

You may update your contact information at any time by going to act@unausa.org.