



# UNA ★ USA

## NEWSLETTER

### EVENTS

JOHNSON COUNTY CHAPTER  
DECEMBER 2022

#### Human Rights Day Event

An Iowa Perspective on the Refugee Crisis and the United Nations Response.

Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

Iowa City Public Library, Room A and live-streamed at

<https://www.youtube.com/@thelibrarychannel>

Refugees and other forcibly displaced people now number nearly 100 million worldwide, mostly women and children. The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, works every day to aid these victims of war, famine, and oppression. As we observe Human Rights Day on December 10, a panel of refugees and migrants from Bosnia, Burma, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mexico will discuss refugee rights and how UNHCR helps to protect those rights.

*Sponsors: JCUNA, Iowa City Office of Equity and Human Rights, Iowa City Public Library and Refugee and Immigrant Association*

#### Night of 1000 Dinners

Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m.

Mercer Park Aquatic Center, in person and live-streamed

Our traditional international buffet honoring organizations advancing the UN Sustainable Developmental Goals.



#### Focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The events listed at the left focus on the SDGs, including Goal #1 (No Poverty), Goal #2 (Zero Hunger), Goal #16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Our annual Night of 1000 Dinners on March 8<sup>th</sup> will recognize those groups that advance the SDGs in our community and raise funds for their important work.





BARBARA ECKSTEIN

I am honored to begin a term as president of JCUNA's board. If you read carefully the short biographies of continuing and new board members on the recent JCUNA ballot, you can understand what an honor it is to work with colleagues of such considerable training, experience, and commitment to the common good. Those continuing board members not up for reelection this term only amplify these traits. Though much is gained with new board members, we are losing long-time board member Katy Hansen whose service to UNA in the county and state, as well as nationally, has been long and deep. I know all JCUNA members join me in thanking Katy who, on her retirement from the board, deserves much though never wants any thanks.

I am humbled to begin a term as board president, following, as I do, Jim Olson. Jim's broad compassion, consistent forward momentum, knowledge of UNA, and prodigious managerial skills are just some of the features of his leadership I have prized. It is the good fortune of all of

us that Jim will remain on the board and continue to be a driving force in communications, membership, fundraising, the writers group, and whatever else I can talk him into.

I first ran for the JCUNA board at the behest of Jean Lloyd-Jones. Over lunch, Jean laid before me the stories of many skillful and passionate women who had led and continue to lead the organization. Association with those women over a half century ago, Jean explained, had been the source of her alternate PhD. No right-thinking woman could have turned down Jean's invitation to join the ranks of this distinguished company. (Jean should have been governor!)

With the wind of this history at our backs, JCUNA has now pledged to devote itself to the promotion of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a measure of local and global progress in, among others, the causes of food security, water quality, employment equity, peace and security, productive partnerships, refugee rights, and, most emphatically, climate change. See <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>. We have programs in the works for this winter and into the spring addressing the SDGs. **Mark your calendars for December 6, 7 pm, at the Iowa City Public Library, Room A. We will be commemorating Human Rights Day with a panel featuring local resident refugees as well as, via video, a representative of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees.**

Look for our handsome email messages. Answer our calls for your attention and assistance. We need all minds and hands.

I look forward to working with you.

## Commemorating the International Day of Older Persons with a Workshop on Dementia

by Barbara Eckstein

On September 30 experts in elder care from Oaknoll retirement community conducted a workshop at ICSC (Iowa City Senior Center) on how to be a dementia friend. In commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons, October 1, JCUNA board member Merce Bern-Klug and her colleagues in the UI Aging Studies Program organized the event. Following a training workbook from Dementia Friends Iowa, an affiliate of a national organization, those of us in attendance received clear definitions of what dementia is (caused by one of several diseases of the brain, most notably but not only Alzheimer's) and what it is not (a normal part of aging).

Listening to the trainers and moving through the

worksheet brought into sharper focus interactions I have had, or have, with others experiencing early and advanced dementia. Questions of other participants suggested they were having similar experiences. If we at least begin by speaking of “living with dementia” rather than “suffering from dementia,” we will have learned one key lesson from the workshop to pass on. Participants walked away from the event with the session workbook and a list of Iowa Dementia Resources and received later a certificate as a Dementia Friend, a designation I aspire to live up to. See <https://dementiafriendlyiowa.org> to learn more.

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## International Day of Peace

*Bijou Maliabo, a member of the Iowa City Human Rights Commission and the JCUNA Board, delivered the following remarks at our celebration of the International Day of Peace, September 20, at Mercer Park.*

International Day of Peace is important to recognize each year and the ongoing issues we face throughout the world. Violence, Racism, injustice & Inequality to mention a few.

I believe it’s important to understand that these issues are only temporary if we choose to take action and pursue both Social Justice & Racial Equity in communities and throughout the globe.

I first came to the United States in [1998] from The Democratic Republic of Congo with a goal to seek peace. As an Immigrant/Refugee from a country where war ravaged and has been a war zone since 1996, nicknamed “Africa’s First World War,” I have witnessed how the influence of racism and the pursuit of violence and injustice willfully leads towards the denial of basic human rights.

I know that I speak for everyone at this peaceful event when I say that everyone in this world deserves the right to live their life with a sense of freedom, security, and safety. I know this to be true because building and maintaining a culture of peace is both a shared goal and challenge for mankind.

Peace can only be fully realized when there is justice. Injustice breeds ignorance, hatred, sorrow, and misery. There will be no end to violence and racism until there is justice. Justice is peace, justice is fairness, justice is equality, justice is human rights, justice is freedom.

With everyone working collectively, our mission is to eliminate racism and injustice and bring about a peaceful world for everyone because there cannot be peace without justice.

In closing, I wanted to leave you with one last thought. As a citizen of this world, understanding global problem and living in peace is all about accepting differences, having the ability to know, to listen, to recognize, to respect, to appreciate and to educate others. We all have a role to play in fostering peace because peace is a DUTY. The United Nations General Assembly has declared this as a day one devoted to that duty.

In honor of that declaration, I ask that you join me in making a commitment to help end racism and building a better future full of countries and communities that belongs to all people without distinction of race, gender, ethnicity, language, or religion. Remember, that this commitment takes more than listening; it requires action. We need to take COURAGE to denounce wrong by building PEACE.



Bijou Maliabo and family members

## JC UNA News and Events

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

December 2022

### GO GREEN

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email [unajohnsoncounty@gmail.com](mailto:unajohnsoncounty@gmail.com)  
We will continue to send you a paper version unless we hear from you.

### We Can Help the UN Help the World

UN agencies are aiding the 100 million forcibly displaced people in Ukraine and worldwide and assisting the victims of natural and man-made disasters in Afghanistan, Pakistan, African countries, and elsewhere. These essential efforts are underfunded. Thank you for your support.

US Fund for UNICEF. <https://www.unicefusa.org>

USA for UNHCR. <https://www.unrefugees.org>

World Food Program USA. <https://www.wfpusa.org>



UNA ★ USA

## Thank You for Your Membership Renewal!

We are most grateful to you for your ongoing support for our chapter. Thanks to you we are working to build support for constructive U.S. leadership in the United Nations. As a UNA-USA member, you are part of the constituency for international cooperation.

If you receive this newsletter by mail, your mailing label indicates when your membership renewal is due. We ask you to make your membership payment directly to UNA-USA Headquarters, either online at <https://unausa.org/join/renew/> or mail a check for \$50 payable to UNA-USA to BWF/UNA-USA, United Nations Foundation, P.O. Box 96397, Washington DC 20090-6397.

Remitting your membership payment directly to UNA-USA is faster, cheaper, and less error-prone. Many thanks!