



UNA ★ USA

NEWSLETTER

JOHNSON COUNTY CHAPTER
MAY 2022

EVENTS

World Refugee Day Event

Saturday, June 25, 5:00 p.m.
Dinner and Program Honoring
Eastern Iowa Refugees
Jefferson High School,
1243 20th Street SW, Cedar
Rapids

Hosted by the Refugee and
Immigrant Association
Co-sponsored by the Johnson
County and Linn County UN
Associations

Iowa United Nations Association Annual Assembly

Saturday, June 25, 1:30-3 p.m.
Drake University, Des Moines
Keynote Speaker: Daniel Van
Sant, Director of Disability
Policy at the Harkin Institute
for Public Policy and Citizen
Engagement, Drake University

NEW JCUNA READING GROUP BEGINNING May 24, 2022

Tom Farer's book *Migration and Integration* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) proposes a U.S. immigration policy that addresses both the unmet needs of new or aspiring immigrants and the unmet needs of US citizens. On five consecutive Tuesdays at 6 p.m. on zoom, starting May 24, a new JCUNA reading group, facilitated by Barbara Eckstein, will discuss Farer's book.

Tuesday, May 24: Introduction, pp. 1-14

Tuesday, May 31: Part I, chapters 1 and 2, pp. 15-48

Tuesday, June 7: Part I, chapter 3, pp. 49-78

Tuesday, June 14: Part II, chapters 4, 5, and 6, pp. 79-152

Tuesday June 21: Part III, chapters 7 and 8, pp. 153-208

Individual copies of the book are available through the Iowa City and Coralville Public libraries. It is also available through the University of Iowa Libraries, if you have UI library access. It is available for purchase through Cambridge University Press for \$28.99 at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/migration-and-integration/0D3920EAA2AA15CDDDB14BBBBF6CD3A7DE> or through Prairie Lights Books at info@prairielights.com; 319-337-2681.

To register for the JCUNA Reading Group, please email unajohnsoncounty@gmail.com and the zoom link will be emailed to you.



JIM OLSON

Thank you to all who contributed to the success of Night of 1000 Dinners 2022!

The March 8 virtual celebration of International Women's Day honored three local women-led groups advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals and aiding people in transition. The honorees were Inside Out Reentry Program, Iowa City Compassion, and Open Heartland. We raised over \$10,000, all of which was donated to these groups plus UNHCR, the UN refugee agency.

We enjoyed musical and spoken-word performances by the Oakdale Community Choir, the student group Iowa Angi, and the Burmese poet Mae Yway, a former participant in the UI International Writing Program.

Twenty-five community groups businesses, and UI entities co-sponsored the event.

To view the recording of the event, please visit our website, johnsoncountyuna.org.

Perhaps next year we can return to our traditional international buffet.

Thanks again to all who participated and provided financial support!

The UN's Presence in the Midst of Trouble

BY BARBARA ECKSTEIN
AND JIM OLSON

When a delegation from Iowa United Nations Association visited last year with a new foreign affairs advisor in the office of Senator Ernst, he told us that, as a member of the military in Iraq, he had especially admired the presence of the UN workers in Baghdad. While he and his cohort would conduct a mission and return to the Green Zone, he said, the UN was present amidst Iraqis all the time. This presence of representatives from different UN agencies is why the press routinely cites the UN when providing the number of refugees in a crisis, such as that in Ukraine, or when providing an assessment of the severity of hunger or thirst or displacement.

At the request of the Ukrainian government, the WFP (the UN's World Food Program) is aiming to provide direct cash transfers and food aid to 3.15 million Ukrainian refugees now in multiple countries as well as displaced people within the country. A month ago, UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency), in conjunction with the WHO (UN's World Health Organization), PiN (People in Need, a European NGO), and the WFP delivered medical supplies and food to

The UN's Presence in the Midst of Trouble cont.

Sumy, a site within Ukraine hard hit by violence and cut off for weeks from food and security. Recently, in Ukraine the UNHCR partnered with Ukrposhta to distribute significant cash assistance to 360,000 internally displaced Ukrainians for up to three months. Another UN agency, the International Atomic Energy Agency, is monitoring nuclear power plants in Ukraine to help prevent nuclear disasters. These and many other activities are recorded on the websites of these UN agencies. They are not the only aid agencies, but they provide core, large-scale relief in the midst of trouble, a reality recognized by the Ukrainian government.

Ukraine is not the only country whose citizens are in dire need of UN support. UNHCR is providing relief and resettlement assistance for many of the world's 84 million forcibly displaced persons. Yemen is now in a "chronic state of emergency" with over 23 million people – 75% of the population – needing food assistance. Despite a humanitarian ceasefire declared in late March by the government of Ethiopia and forces in the Tigray province, 5 million people need aid in that country.

The interruption in grain exports from Ukraine and Russia intensifies these crises. Tuesday,

March 29, the head of the WFP told the UN Security Council that the war was creating not only a local agricultural crisis in Ukraine but also a global food catastrophe. The *New York Times* reported the details he cited: for example, WFP buys 50 percent of its grain from Ukraine, grain it needs to feed 125 million people around the world.

Because the UN is present in the midst of trouble, providing assistance in crucial ways, the United Nations Association chapters in Johnson and Linn Counties urge our Congressional delegation to support U.S. full payment of its dues to the UN and its agencies. We commend President Biden and Congress for providing significant aid to Ukraine. Because the UN system of agencies has a worldwide presence and can help suffering people everywhere, we encourage the U.S. to sustain – and increase – its financial support to the UN system. It's the right thing to do – and the smart thing.

This article was also published as a guest editorial in the April 20th issue of the Iowa City Press Citizen.

Jim Olson and Barbara Eckstein are the president and vice president of the Johnson County United Nations Association.



JC UNA News and Events

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May 2022

GO GREEN

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



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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!