Table of Contents:

- President's Letter ................................................................. 2
- Executive Director’s Letter .................................................... 4
- Volunteer Coordinator Update ................................................... 6
- Fundraising for Kumasi Children’s Home School ....................... 6
- Lana’s Blog Preview .............................................................. 7
- Letter on the 2015 Philadelphia Elections ................................. 8
- Regarding Islamophobic Ads on SEPTA ................................... 9
- UNA-GP Annual Membership Meeting .................................... 11
- UNA-USA Membership Meeting Flyer ..................................... 12
- Mayoral Candidate Forum Flyer .............................................. 13
- Upcoming Events .................................................................. 14

In this Issue:

- On Islamophobic Ads on SEPTA .............................................. 9
- Fundraising for the Kumasi Children’s Home School .................. 6
- Lana’s Blog: Los Angeles Moves Forward with New CEDAW Initiatives .......................................................... 7
Dear members and friends of the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia,

It is wonderful to time my return to Philadelphia from Colombia to be in sync with the daffodils and cherry blossoms, the bonanza of spring which is given even to those of us who avoided living through the coldest months of winter! I realize that spring is also a convergence of political concerns which this year link at all levels from the international to the local. The most immediate political impact comes for many of us with the April 15th tax deadline when we realize the personal consequences of our government's policies and programs: I like to think I am paying for our UN dues, but at the same time I am paying for modernized nuclear weapons and wars that I may not even know about yet.

At our local level, we have primary elections coming up for all our city government offices. One of our Board members, Carol Jenkins, is a candidate for one of the vital but often-ignored city offices, Commissioner of Elections, so we are more aware than usual of the impact that these obscure but influential positions can have on the working of democracy. The UNA-GP is a founding member of the Global Philadelphia Association and we have been participating in their project to link global issues and awareness to the City Council and Mayoral campaigns. The next public event in this effort will be on May 11th, a Mayoral candidates' forum at International House (37th and Chestnut, Philadelphia), at noon. It would be great to have a strong UNA-GP presence! Among the questions we hope to be able to ask about are the candidates' intentions about joining international commitments such as "Cities for CEDAW" (the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) or the association of Mayors for Peace, which Mayor Nutter joined and we hope that future Mayors will continue.

Carol Jenkins
I will be here in Philadelphia for the Mayoral Candidates' forum, the election, and (importantly!) our General Meeting of UNA-GP on June 25th with a speaker who will pursue the issues of democracy and a free press, Sherif Mansour of the Committee to Protect Journalists. However, I will be traveling again this week to the Hague in the Netherlands for a "Women to Stop War" international conference in honor of the centennial of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) which was founded there on April 28th, 1915. Women from 13 countries, including those already at war, crossed seas and borders to meet and present proposals for a negotiated settlement to the conflict, the war we now call World War One. The first two US women to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, Jane Addams (1931) and Emily Greene Balch (1946) were leaders of WILPF. WILPF also was an early creator of the concept of NGOs at the League of Nations and the United Nations, paving the path for organizations such as UNA and now thousands of others to link through the United Nations.

Viva primavera!

Mary Day

2015 Philadelphia Mayoral Democratic Primary Candidates clockwise from top left: Lynne Abraham, Nelson Diaz, Jim Kenney, Anthony Hardy Williams, T. Milton Street, Doug Oliver
A Few Words From Our Executive Director

From Christiaan’s Desk

On April 11 I attended the memorial service for Peg Lippincott, one of the founding members of the current UNA-GP and the first recipient of the UNA-GP Global Citizens Award. Among the others attending were David Eldridge, who was president of the UNA-GP when I got involved and Wayne Jacoby, who was a board member not too long ago. This was memorial service in the manner of Friends. I did not know Peg Lippincott that well, but we shared a few years on the board and I remember her strong interest in seeking peace and working on disarmament.

Seeing David and hearing the stories about Peg’s life made me reflect a bit on the history of the chapter and how times have changed. I became involved with the UNA-GP through the Adopt-A-Minefield campaign and the parallel policy work around banning landmines; that work has ground to a halt and the UNA-USA several years ago decided to drop this project.

I am also a young Philadelphian, having only been here 15 years; yet most of the folks who started the UNA-GP have lived in this region most of their lives. Their life stories are the life story of the city and the ups and downs of our community. Mine, and for that matter, those of many of our younger members, is one of wandering, of geographic mobility. And with these two different frames for our lives’ narratives, we focus on the global issues of our global humanity from different perspectives, informed by who we are and what we believe in. Our chapter’s current make-up and strategic alliances reflect some of those shifts. Also, other changes in our chapter’s twenty some years of history can be related to sheer technology dynamics as well as the deep fiscal crisis that the national UNAUSA had to endure. For example, I became involved during the days when Bill Double produced a monthly newsletter in black and white, printed on 11x17 paper and we had no internet presence. All that has changed and not always changed for the better.

More importantly the United Nations has changed. When Peg and David and Bill got our chapter going, the focus was on the peace dividend after the cold war ended, as well as “helping” the former Soviet republics get rid of their nuclear weapons and develop “democratic constitutions”. The European Union expanded rapidly and then...
the Euro was launched. Nelson Mandela became a world level politician. Since then, however, starting under the leadership of Kofi Annan, the United Nations launched the Millennium Development Goals, which brought about a strong new direction for the UN and a large expansion of its reach and impact. The impact of that program has been felt in almost all nations. Higher education leaders in the donor countries started to implement studying abroad programs that fitted in these MDGs. Numerous NGOs became deeply involved in working abroad within the parameters of the goals, created assessment protocols, and took part in in the implementation programs financed by public entities and large foundations. And our chapter has taken note. We get young members when we emphasize the development practices of our collaborating partners; we get young members when we build our capacity to work directly on human rights, and we get young members when we engage in educating about the global market, focusing on the work of the UN and the UN system on topics like climate change, energy policies, fair labor practices, fair trade agreements and equity in health. And of course we still get young people involved in disarmament, in promoting peace and peaceful handling of conflict; of course we still get young people interested in human rights and human rights abuses; but our agenda has expanded, and there is much to build on in positive concrete steps. This need for positive focus is very much necessary to offset the frustrations among the young concerning the work of the Security Council. The young citizens, when interested, consider the Security Council as antiquated in structure, deeply inadequate and flawed, and hopelessly biased depending on who holds power and how they manipulate that power. (In truth, many of us "oldsters" would not disagree with this viewpoint!) And with that, they may like the charter of the UN, but are not at all impressed with the bureaucratic grind around much that the UN is doing in the field. Indeed, interested and skeptical youngsters constitute the main audience for our outreach work.

Peg Lippincott was a strong advocate for the United Nations. She helped create and build a strong chapter of the UNA during the years of the peace dividend and the end of the cold war era. And while the emphasis has changed and tactics have correspondingly adapted, we stand on her shoulders in our efforts to make humanity more peaceful, more equitable and more wholesome.

Peg Lippincott
UNA-GP's newly formed Membership Committee has been meeting regularly with a mission of mobilizing the community in becoming more involved in the local chapter. Membership support helps in bringing programming for the local community, its schools and university students. Some of the other objectives of the committee are to keep its members more connected to world issues through participation in Chapter events as well as get them involved in UNA-USA/UN programs and grow local support for the ideals and work of the UN in Philadelphia's community.

Manisha Patel
mpatel@una-gp.org

Last summer, two members of the UNAGP team, Arame Niang and Sabine Cardio went to Kumasi, Ghana, for an international development program at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. They were able to attend lectures given by Ghanaian professors and professionals and volunteer at the Kumasi Children's Home. There, they spent time with teachers and students at the primary school that was located in the home. After returning to the United States, Arame and Sabine decided to join the fundraising efforts for the school, as it was achieving monumental successes in caring for its students.

The primary school located in the Kumasi Children's Home has the first and only inclusive special needs education program in Kumasi, Ghana. The school is only five years old and has already achieved great advancements, including the addition of a school van to transport special needs kids from their homes to the school. Madame Shirley, who is the current headmistress of the school, and other teachers at KCH are worthy of praise for all they have done and all they continue to do for their students.

For more information about the campaign and to donate please visit: http://www.gofundme.com/iit0mk

Students at the Kumasi Children’s Home School (KCH)
During a press conference on March 31, 2015, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti announced the enactment of a major Gender Study and Plan for implementation of the L.A. CEDAW ordinance. The five-part study will be developed via partnership with the Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women and researched by Mount St. Mary’s University, Los Angeles. As the Women’s Intercultural Network (WIN) noted in reporting on this new study, the purpose of this research is to assess and to benchmark goals toward gender equality on two levels: for women who work in the City government and for women and girls who reside in Los Angeles.

According to the Report’s introduction, “[t]his Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Los Angeles is a compilation of current research focusing on the issues and trends affecting the women and girls who call Los Angeles home. Its aim is to provide information and to serve as a touchstone for more in-depth evaluations of gender equality throughout Los Angeles that can lead to committed action by the City and its officials, as well as by those working in the nonprofit sector. … It will examine gender equity in these key areas: Demographics; Leadership; Education and Workforce Development; Public Safety; and L.A.’s Veterans.”

Parts 1 and 2 of the Report are already available online.

Part 1 of the Report, Demographics, outlines the general demographics of Los Angeles in order to emphasize the diversity of the city and to provide context for the issues affecting the quality of life for women and girls residing there. As the introduction notes, Los Angeles is the second-largest city by population in the United States, and it accounts for 10 percent of all residents in California. Part 1 includes: a population overview; race and ethnicity summaries; levels of educational attainment; economic wellbeing and poverty levels; homelessness; and families.

To read the rest of this piece or other editions of Lana’s blog, please visit the UNA-GP website.
To: Candidates for City Council  
From: UNA-GP Board of Directors  
Re: 2015 Philadelphia Elections, Women’s Rights Issues, and CEDAW  
Date: April 27, 2015

This coming November, Philadelphians will head to the polls to elect the 99th mayor of the city and numerous city council members. Even sooner, on May 19th, the primary elections to select the major party candidates will be held. Education—specifically, the question of how to fund the city’s schools—has become a priority issue of concern, followed by others such as crime, tax rates and spending. However, the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia (UNA-GP) would like to emphasize another issue: the worldwide struggle for the rights of women and girls has a counterpart right here in Philadelphia. Our city—like so many others across the country and around the world—faces problems such as domestic violence, discrimination, access to education, workplace equality and the wage gap, which are all issues encompassed by the larger, ongoing struggle of ensuring women’s rights universally.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, or CEDAW is part of a global movement to protect the rights of women and girls. Many cities have adopted local versions of this treaty! The UNA-GP would like to see the rights of women and girls addressed by the mayoral and city council candidates in the upcoming election. Our Board of Directors and membership would like to hear each candidate’s position on potential approaches to supporting women's right, such as ratification of a city ordinance mirroring CEDAW. Philadelphia has the opportunity to join other U.S. cities such as Los Angeles, CA and Louisville, KY in passing a CEDAW ordinance and in demonstrating that Philadelphia prioritizes the rights of women and girls. According to the movement’s sponsoring group, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women/New York, adopting CEDAW as local law has been proven to effectively address significant issues that reduce the quality of life and equity of opportunity for women and girls. The Philadelphia Bar Association, in passing its own resolution in support of CEDAW ratification, has agreed that “ratification has already proven effective in helping achieve greater equality for women in countries that have ratified the treaty and American localities that have adopted the treaty.”

The UNA-GP supports the work of the Cities for CEDAW movement and encourages the candidates to support the rights of Philadelphia women by adding Philadelphia to the list of Cities for CEDAW in 2016.
Regarding Islamophobic Ads on SEPTA

The Islamaphobic ads on SEPTA buses are disgusting; we experience a national moral crisis when money can distort the right of free speech into a slug fest of hate.

The UNA-GP condemns the SEPTA advertisements of the American Freedom Defense Initiative as Islamophobic, hateful, despicable in the vilest way, and historically false. We concur with the statement of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia that this abuse of our freedom of speech creates prejudices and stigma; we in Philadelphia don’t need any of that. The advertisements fly in the face of the United Nations’ Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief; and the 1993 Resolution on ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE. It is with those texts in mind that we underscore the statement of the Jewish Voice for Peace.

It reads:

Philadelphia, PA (March 31, 2015) – This week, following a long court battle, SEPTA will begin running the latest in a nation-wide series of shockingly bigoted anti-Islam ad campaigns paid for by the far-right American Freedom Defense Initiative (AFDI). The ads, which SEPTA initially rejected as defamatory, suggest that Muslims are Nazis and that anti-Semitism is inherent to Islamic theology. The Southern Poverty Law Center has labeled the sponsoring organization a "hate group" and its founder, Pamela Geller, was identified by the Center for American Progress as among the ringleaders of an "Islamophobia network" of right-wing funders and activists working to foment irrational hatred of Muslims across the country.

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) - Philadelphia stands in steadfast opposition to this dangerous wave of hate speech, as have JVP chapters across the country when AFDI ads have appeared in cities like New York, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and Seattle.

The ugly message of Geller’s advertisement is factually inaccurate and offensive in its misuse and trivialization of Holocaust memory. Alongside a banner reading “Islamic Jew-Hatred: It’s in the Quran” is a photograph of Adolph Hitler meeting with Haj Amin Al-Husseini, a Nazi collaborator and one-time Mufti of Jerusalem, with a caption labeling Husseini “the leader of the Muslim world.” In reality, Husseini was a British-appointed functionary with a limited following in Jerusalem, much less the entire Muslim world. But for Geller, historical accuracy is less important than exploiting the Jewish people’s ultimate tragedy to defame Muslims and sow prejudice.

While American norms of religious tolerance have so far checked the rise of European-style anti-Muslim mass movements, Geller's Islamophobia network has nonetheless helped create an environment conducive to "lone wolf" attacks on Muslim individuals and institutions. Last month, three visibly Muslim college students were executed in their Chapel Hill, North Carolina apartment by a neighbor with documented animus towards religion and an obsession with firearms. Several days later, an arson attack destroyed an Islamic center in Houston, Texas. According to the Washington
Regarding Islamophobic Ads on SEPTA

Post, the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes has increased five-fold since 9/11, and 6% of Muslim Americans polled in 2011—more than 150,000 people total—report having been victimized.

It is therefore encouraging that a consortium of Philadelphia’s mainstream religious leaders—Jews, Christians, and Muslims—has come together to unequivocally denounce the AFDI campaign. In a statement issued by the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia last October, clergymen and women “condemn[ed] inflammatory messages that serve to divide, stigmatize, and incite prejudice.” Today, that consortium, including the Jewish Federation, will gather at 1pm in Love Park to reaffirm its repudiation of Pamela Geller’s hateful agenda. We at Jewish Voice for Peace – Philadelphia proudly and loudly join the chorus of condemnation. On this important issue, we stand with the mainstream Jewish community in rejecting Islamophobia.

Still, we would be remiss in our responsibility as progressive Jews if we did not highlight the role Islamophobia plays in much right-wing “pro-Israel” discourse. Indeed, Pamela Geller is best known for her New York subway advertisements calling Muslims “savages” and encouraging readers to “Support Israel, Defeat Jihad.” The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), whose influence in the Philadelphia area is outsized, is the only major Jewish organization willing to host Geller and other nationally prominent Islamophobes. And the Center for American Progress has documented numerous linkages between “pro-Israel” foundations and anti-Muslim hate groups.

At Jewish Voice for Peace - Philadelphia, we believe it is both possible and necessary to affirm the right of Israelis and Palestinians to security and freedom without resorting to racism, and we express deep concern that Islamophobic groups like the ZOA continue to be embraced by the mainstream Jewish community.

More resources from Jewish Voice for Peace:

http://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/campaigns/standing-against-islamophobia

http://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/blog/challenging-the-pamela-geller-american-freedom-defense-initiative-afdi-

Three Faiths; a sculpture by Alex Bard, art student in Philadelphia
“Terrorism and a Free Press: Can Democracy Survive?” will highlight June 25
Annual Members Meeting

On Thursday, June 25, UNA-GP will hold its annual membership meeting from 5:30 to 8PM. Featured will be a presentation and dialogue on the vital role of a free press—including all forms of social media. Our guest speaker will be Sherif Mansour from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Mr. Mansour is CPJ’s Project Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa. He is an Egyptian-American democracy and human rights activist. Before joining CPJ, he worked with Freedom House where he managed advocacy training for activists from the Middle East and North Africa. In 2010, Mansour co-founded the Egyptian Association for Change, a nonprofit group that mobilizes Egyptians in the U.S. to support democracy and human rights in Egypt. He has monitored the Egyptian elections for the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies and has worked as a freelance journalist.

In 2004, Mr. Mansour was honored by the Al-Kalema Center for Human Rights for his work in defending freedom of expression in Egypt. He has authored several articles and conducted research studies on civil society and the role of the new media and civil society in achieving democracy. He was named one of the top 99 young foreign policy professionals in 2013 by the Diplomatic Courier. He received his master's in international relations from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and his bachelor's in education from Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

The meeting will be held at The Carriage House, located at 3907 Spruce Street on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. It is free of charge. Members of UNA-GP as well as the general public are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Please consider joining CPJ in Press Uncuffed: Free the Press and support journalists facing reprisal for their work.
Register to Attend and Take Action at
This Year’s Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 7 – Tuesday, June 9
National Education Association (NEA Building)
1201 16th St NW
Washington, DC 20036

Friend,

If you have ever considered coming to Washington to have your say on American foreign policy, this is the year to do it.

UNA’s Annual Meeting and Advocacy Day comes at a pivotal moment for the world. This year the UN will adopt a new set of global development goals designed to lift a billion people out of extreme poverty, convene world leaders to take urgent action on climate change, and deploy over 100,000 peacekeepers in 17 missions designed to safeguard civilians in the most dangerous corners of the world. UNA-USA members across the country stand beside the Secretary-General every day in advancing these initiatives by casting tens of thousands of votes for the new development goals on the MyWorld website, making the case for action on climate change in classrooms and communities across the country, and leading the charge in the Thank-a-Peacekeeper campaign. But the most important support that any American can offer to these vital causes is to stand up for U.S. leadership at the UN in the halls of Congress.

UNA-USA’s Annual Meeting and Advocacy Day will take place from June 7-9, at the offices of the National Education Association in Washington, DC. The meeting will celebrate the UN’s 70th anniversary and feature skills trainings, issue briefings, networking opportunities, and capacity-building, before culminating in Advocacy Day when UNA-USA members converge on Capitol Hill to make the case for the cause we exist to support.

Registration is now open, and we are offering a discounted rate for those who sign up in the first two weeks (deadline April 22, 2015). College students and campus leaders can also apply for a $500 travel scholarship to attend this year’s meeting by completing the application by April 21, 2015 to be considered. And for more information on travel, lodging and accommodations, visit the UNA-USA Annual Meeting Website.

Thank you for your support of the UN! We look forward to seeing you in June.
Mayoral Candidates Forum
May 11th, 12 noon - 2 p.m.
Ibrahim Theater- International House Philadelphia
3701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

You are cordially invited to the Global Philadelphia Association's Mayoral Forum

May 2015
11

Moderated by Steve Highsmith of PHL17

The forum will be open to the public and covered by the media, giving the candidates an opportunity to gain visibility and recognition for their campaigns and the public an opportunity to hear their views.

Lunch at 11:30am, available by pre-order.

RSVP here
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<tr>
<th>Activity/Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location/info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q&amp;A with Philadelphia Mayoral Candidates on “Global Philly”</td>
<td>May 11th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>5:30 PM - 8:00 PM</td>
<td>International House 3701 Chestnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19104</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th Annual Membership Meeting</td>
<td>June 25th</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3907 Spruce Street Carriage House at the University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA 19104</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garden Party</td>
<td>July 19th</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>TBA, Usually at a member's house in northwest Philadelphia</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNA-GP Board Meeting</td>
<td>August 20th</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>5:30PM - 7:00PM</td>
<td>TBA All members are welcome to attend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Day of Peace</td>
<td>September 21st</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Many events. Stay tuned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Habitat Day</td>
<td>October 6th</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Workshop: The New SDGs: preparing for Habitat III Time and Location TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Food Day</td>
<td>October 16th</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Forum on Food Production and the new SDGs. Location and Time TBD.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Day</td>
<td>October 24th</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Celebrating 70 years of global political dialogue.</td>
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<td>International Toilet Day</td>
<td>November 19th</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>In the planning stages: a toilet run, flying toilets and latrines in the SDGs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Thinking Philadelphia</td>
<td>November 21st</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>An educational fair for teachers, parents, and teachers who teach teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Human Rights Day: A Forum</td>
<td>December 10th</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6:00 PM - 8:30 PM</td>
<td>A Toast to Eleanor, topic TBD Ethical Society 1906 Rittenhouse Sq Philadelphia, PA 19103</td>
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You can help the United Nations Association!

Have any ideas for fundraising events? We’re all ears! With the volume of projects the UNAGP is constantly immersed in, we are always in need of more volunteers, no matter how much or how (seemingly!) little time you have to devote. Email Manisha Patel, (Volunteer Coordinator and Board Member) with your suggestions or any questions at mpatel@una-gp.org.

The UNA-GP is in need of funds for upcoming projects. In order to continue with extremely beneficial and enriching events, such as the Model UN, we need your help! Please donate whatever you can to the UNA-GP, and in turn, Philadelphians and beyond!

The UNA-GP April 2015 newsletter is a collaborative effort:

- Layout and design editor: Carolyn Curry
- Board liaison: Ed Gracely
- President: Mary Day Kent
- Executive Director: Christiaan Morssink

The UNA-GP is a chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA). Our website offers information about our mission and upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including joining and volunteering. In addition, we are on social media sites and send out our monthly newsletters. Take a look around!

Volunteers with all types of skill sets are welcome to work with the UNA-GP, in the short or long term. If interested, please contact:

**Manisha Patel**
Volunteer Coordinator
Board Member
mpatel@una-gp.org