



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION *of the United States of America*

A PROGRAM OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION

United Nations Association of Greater Kansas City

2017 Year in Review

As we reflect on the challenging year of 2017, the UNA GKC board of directors shares this recap of the year's activities as a reminder of how much impact our members continue to have in our community. We are looking forward to another banner year in 2018, with even bigger and better events and programming.

Advocacy

The chapter continued its longstanding tradition of pro-UN advocacy with the region's Congressional delegation. Representatives met with staff members for U.S. Rep. Kevin Yoder and U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran. We followed that up in June with visits to several delegation members' Washington offices by the six members of our chapter who traveled to D.C. for the annual UNA-USA Leadership Summit.

Community Impact

In February, our chapter was honored to be recognized by the Beta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. for being their Community Partner for Global Impact. Our chapter was also represented at the Mid-American Asian Cultural Festival April 29 at Olathe East High School. August found us once again operating a booth at Kansas City's annual Ethnic Enrichment Festival, always a great opportunity to show our support for, and network with, the international community.

Refugees

In February, UNA representatives joined with people from like-minded groups for a summit meeting with Kansas City Mayor Sly James to discuss refugee issues in our community. We observed World Refugee Day July 8 with multiple community partners at an event held at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. Our chapter brought in one of the featured speakers, Anne-Marie McGranaghan, Associate Resettlement Officer at UNHCR.

Programs about the UN

In March, we partnered with Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral for a special luncheon event in recognition of World Water Day, "Empowering Women with Water," featuring a speaker from Water.org.

In April, the chapter conducted a special program at the Harry S Truman Library & Museum on the theme of "Americans Standing Up for the United Nations." Our featured speakers included James Wurst, author of *The UN Association-USA: A Little Known History of Advocacy and Action*; and Ed Elmendorf, former president and CEO of the United Nations Association of the USA and currently director of the UNA-USA history project.

Another longstanding tradition for our chapter is our annual Peacekeepers Roundtable. This year's event in September was at the Kansas City Public Library, Plaza Branch, and was our best-attended Peacekeepers event ever, with 150 guests. Once again, we heard from a panel of international military officers with experience in UN Peacekeeping missions.



UNA Women

Our chapter's UNA Women group has been very active all year long. Highlights include screenings of the film *Equal Means Equal* in April and August, and a July networking event at Bier Station, focused on the work of the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund).

Two book discussion groups were held during the year: one in January to discuss the essay *We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and one in June to discuss *Invisible Hands: Voices from the Global Economy*.

During the annual Women's Equality Week observance in August, the group co-sponsored multiple activities, including a happy hour forum that explored creative, cross-disciplinary collaborations that address gender inequity and empowerment of women and girls. This event was co-sponsored by Women in the Arts Networking KC, Women in Design/AIA Kansas City, and KC Women in Film & TV, and was held at the Kansas City Artists Coalition. In September, UNA members were given a private tour at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art with museum curators, organized for the UNA Women committee. Focusing on the works of European and Asian art, participants were able to explore how women shaped the art of different cultures and times as both subjects and as artists, themselves.

UNA Women organized a reception and screening of the movie *Wind River* to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in early December. The event was sponsored by the Law Offices of Donovan Bradley Dodrill. *Wind River* deals with themes of violence against women in the American Indian community, where women and girls face the highest rates of rape, sexual assault, and violence, and go missing more often than women in any other racial or ethnic group. The movie screening was followed by a discussion led by Aspen Bell, a nursing student who grew up on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

Cities for CEDAW is an initiative that UNA Women will continue to focus on during 2018. This is a grassroots campaign to "make the global local" by

harnessing the power of cities and promoting the adoption of CEDAW (The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) as a municipal ordinance in cities large and small in order to create a framework for improving the status of women and girls.



UN Day Dinner

Once again, Mayor James served as a most gracious host at our annual Mayor's UN Day Dinner in October, and we were proud to have board member Dr. Sofia Khan honored as the World Citizen of the Year. Our guest speaker was Kevin M. Kennedy, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syrian Crisis. We welcomed about 400 guests and raised \$1,430 for Nothing But Nets, or enough to purchase 143 life-saving bed nets to protect families from malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

UNA Women and the Starr Center for Peace and Justice at the University of St. Mary sponsored a reception honoring Kevin M. Kennedy the evening before the dinner.

Also in conjunction with this year's Mayor's Dinner, we instituted a new honor: a Lifetime Service Award for longtime chapter members. Honored with the inaugural designation were Lillian Pardo, Manuel Pardo, Sara Pedram, Manny Pedram, and Jim Everett.