2019
ANNUAL REPORT,
NYLESA

New York Local Expatriate Spouse Association
Supporting United Nations Spouses
# Table of Contents

Message from the Chairperson, 2019 - 2020 3  
Mission and Mandate of NYLESA (Bylaws, 2011) 5  
Structure of the NYLESA Steering Committee 6  
NYLESA Products, services and other offerings 8  
Outreach, Advocacy and Partnership Initiatives 9  
Achievements through the Career Support Working Group (CSWG) 13  
Achievements through the Communications Working Group (CWG) 24  
Achievements through the Welcome Working Group (WWG) 31  
CHALLENGES 36  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2020 STEERING COMMITTEE 37  
APPRECIATION 39  
  UN Organizations, Non UN Organizations and Partners 39  
  NYLESA Volunteers 2019 - 2020 40  
  Member Organized Social Gatherings and Events 41  
ANNEXURES 42
Message from the Chairperson, 2019 - 2020

The beautiful osmosis of giving and receiving is what resonated with me most, during my Chairpersonship at NYLESA 2019-20, articulated so eloquently by Henry Miller, one of my favourite writers.

He writes: “For me it is no problem to depend on others. I am always curious to see how far people will go, how big a test one can put them to. Certainly there are humiliations involved, but aren’t these humiliations due rather to our limitations? Isn’t it merely our pride which suffers? It’s only when we demand, that we are hurt. I, who have been helped so much by others, I ought to know something of the duties of the receiver. It’s so much easier to be on the giving side. To receive is much harder — one actually has to be more delicate, if I may say so. One has to help people to be more generous. By receiving from others, by letting them help you, you really aid them to become bigger, more generous, more magnanimous. You do them a service. And then finally, no one likes to do either one or the other alone. We all try to give and take, to the best of our powers.”

I could not have put it better. This, I would consider my mantra behind volunteerism, especially at NYLESA, where I have had the opportunity to engage with over thirty volunteers who have taken responsibility for the core functions of the Association, who have worked so generously to help expand career support for members, ensure timely communications and schedule social networking opportunities. I have had the unique chance to connect with many UN and non-UN partners who have championed the cause of the Association. I thank them all for their generous support to NYLESA.

I would also like to celebrate our eighth year in existence. It’s been a long haul from the incipient stages of the UNDG guidance note or even our own shaky origins in 2008. In 2020, our main focus should be to ensure continuity of function towards the sustainability of the Association to deliver on its mandate.

Today we have over 200 members from 77 countries and truly in the very spirit of the UN, we try through our various cultural and social exchanges, to maintain unity in diversity. This itself is remarkable and that we try our utmost to bring this global village to the attention of the UN. The wellbeing of the trailing spouse matters to the productivity and efficiency of the UN staff member and thus to the UN system. The UN would do well to support this global village.
This year would be deemed a success only if one were to consider the immense effort of the volunteers engaging on the platform. This report is a tribute to their spirit of volunteerism and NYLESA would not be pulsating with life without them.

My best to you all and I wish you much success this year. It has been an honour. I thank the membership for continuing to engage with and support the Association.

Sincerely,

Davina E. Solomon,
Chairperson, NYLESA
Mission and Mandate of NYLESA (Bylaws, 2011)

PART I – NATURE, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION
(see Annexure I)
Article 1 - Nature of the Association
1. The name of the association shall be “New York Local Expatriate Spouse Association (NYLESA)"
2. NYLESA shall be a not-for-profit association established under the laws of New York State.

Article 2 - Purpose of the Association
1. NYLESA addresses all issues affecting New York-based spouses/partners of geographically mobile international civil servants, particularly those related to integration and employability in New York and the United States of America.

Article 3 - Objectives of the Association
1. The Objectives of NYLESA are:
   a. promotion of spouse/partner employment within and outside the international civil service;
   b. enhancement of spouse/partner employability and maintenance of professional careers;
   c. assistance to spouses/partners to settle and enjoy life in New York City and its surrounding area;
   d. to become a strong and effective advocate and liaison between spouses/partners and organizations employing international civil servants in New York;
   e. to contribute to the development of a network of like-minded associations around the world, in alliance with such associations and with international organizations
Structure of the NYLESA Steering Committee

**Administrative Group**
Chairperson
Co-Chairperson
Treasurer

**Working Groups**
Career Support Working Group Coordinator
Communication Working Group Coordinator
Welcome Working Group Coordinator

NYLESA Steering Committee, 2019-2020

*Davina E. Solomon – Chairperson*  
Alejandro Torrealba - Co-Chairperson (March 13 - January 30, 2020)  
Siham Bloch – Treasurer  
Hong Xiao – Career Support Working Group Coordinator  
Gabriel Amsellem – Communication Working Group Coordinator  
Francine Afane – Welcome Working Group Coordinator (March 13 - November 30, 2019)
Teams within the Working Groups

NYLESA TEAMS

Co-chairperson
Co-Chair
- Membership Team
- NYLESA connect

Core Functions:
Management of membership, Documentation, Scribing minutes, Membership Policy, Membership Certificates for Groundspass

Welcome Working Group
Welcome Group Coordinator
- Coffee Gathering Team
- Cocktail Gathering Team

Core Functions:
Organise coffee and cocktail gatherings

Career Support Working Group
Career Support Coordinator
- Career Seminars
- EAD Training
- Career Skills
- Job Posting
- Campaigns
- Roster
- LinkedIn
- Language Tables Coordination

Core Functions:
Organise career related skills training and activities, workshops

Chairperson
Outreach and Advocacy
- Policy and Partnerships
- Outreach activities to enhance recognition, collaboration & support, UN and Non UN external Partnerships, Policy

Communications Working Group
Communication Group Coordinator
- Website
- Newsletter
- Podcast
- Social Media
- Photographers
- Branding
- Brochure
- Welcome Pack
NYLESA Products, services and other offerings

Infographic ~ DES
Outreach, Advocacy and Partnership Initiatives

Steering Committee Meetings, Volunteer Engagement, Information sessions
The Steering Committee members held 10 SC Meetings (At location and online) this year and had many information sessions at the Coffee Gatherings. Volunteer meetings were held on a regular basis every Tuesday of the week at UNICEF, Project Room. Over 40 volunteers have handled the core functions of the Association and have moved things forward for NYLES A in 2019 - 2020.
Inter LESA Conferences
December 16th, 2019 Five LESA’s (Chairperson NYLESA, UNKLESA, LESA Montreal, LESA Jerusalem, Spouses Group Italy) joined in the first Inter-LESA held online and on location at UNICEF 633, along with Spouse Support and HR focal points from UNICEF.
January 27th, 2020 The second inter-LESA conference led by NYLESA, was held online. The six participants included chairperson NYLESA and office bearers of UNKLESA, UNBRALESA, UNLESA Jerusalem and the Spouses Group of Italy. Issues of sustainability, UN outreach and UN support to LESA, volunteerism, sharing of best practices and new ways of networking have been a recurrent theme. UNKLESA has provided assistance in creating a platform for relevant LESA documentation. It was agreed to have meetings on a regular basis. The attendant LESAs agreed to support new LESAs as well as share best practices, collaborate online and continue Inter-LESA conversations in a regular fashion.

Access to Iseek
NYLESA is now on the UN Intranet - ISeek, with a link to our website, under NY Community Events, along with other UN related Staff Groups and Organizations, we sincerely thank Maria Renee Luque, UN Intranet and Peter Dawkins, Chief of Web Services Section, Department of Global Communications, UNHQ for facilitating this for NYLESA.
Lyceum Kennedy French American School Liaison and reciprocal partnership
In a series of meetings, between school officials, Chairperson and Treasurer NYLESA, Julien Soufflet (Career Support Group), NYLESA launched a reciprocal partnership with the Lyceum Kennedy French American school. The school has pledged to provide NYLESA career related seminars, access to a room in its premises for NYLESA to use for workshops and seminars when available. The School also helps distribute NYLESA brochures and the Lyceum open house and website finds mention in our weekly newsletters

DOS-VC Liaison for regular EAD trainings and workshops
November 25th November, Chairperson and Career Support Group volunteer Lilian N. Sia had a very productive meeting with the extremely supportive Visa
Committee (VC). New ways of collaborating and partnering were discussed. In the pipeline for NYLESA members are ‘train the trainer’ sessions facilitated by the Visa Committee, to enable NYLESA regular members work more effectively on their EAD applications. NYLESA is also to work on a communication channel to ensure that FAQs regarding the work visa are kept updated on a regular basis. The VC will support NYLESA with informative sessions on other vital programs regarding green card for dependents, secondary dependents etc.

Use of the Project Room at UNICEF
UNICEF has been supportive in making available the use of the Project Room for volunteer meetups and career support activities every Tuesday and for including NYLESA in the Pilot Program for UNICEF Career Support for spouses.

Grounds Passes for NYLESA Members and Access to Language Programs of the UN
The UN Pass & ID office has been consistently processing grounds pass requests for our members and access to the language program at the UN Learning Centre continues. We met with our focal point at UN Languages presented the case for member access to the English Program, given the recent impetus on staff mobility.
Achievements through the Career Support Working Group (CSWG)

In the reporting period of 2019-2020, the CSWG continued to support the professional development of NYLESAs members through both regular career support events as well as liaison and partnership endeavors.

Significantly, the CSWG, tried to minimize leadership transition and capacity gaps, as well as managed to institutionalize a clearly defined team structure and established five work streams: Career Seminars, Career Management Skills Team, EAD Workshops, Language Tables, Job & Language Information Postings. The NYLESAs Career survey was also conducted in March-April.

The EAD documents were translated into the following UN languages from the English Version provided by the DOS-VC - Chinese, Russian, French and Spanish during 2019.

NYLESAs Career Seminars, Workshops and the Liaison with Lyceum Kennedy French American School

Team Lead ~ Julien Soufflet

Seminars and Workshops
April 24th, Career seminar on ‘How to Start Your Business’ with Ms. Man-Li Kuo Lin, Economic Development Specialist at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) New York District Office.

September 30th, Whole day Unicef Career Management Workshop, by Unicef for 8 NYLESAs non-Unicef members
Career Management Pilot by UNICEF

October 24th and December 6th, Career seminar on ‘New York and Hidden Job Opportunities for G4 visa holders. There is hope...’, by Paul of the Lyceum Kennedy French American school (About getting a work permit and other advice for G4 visa holders) attended by 24 and 11 members respectively.

Seminar at the Lyceum Kennedy School

November 7th, Workshop on writing a cover letter, by NYLES A member Javier Delgado attended by 9 members.
January 23, 2020, ‘How to start one's own business in NYC? How to find a job in NYC?’ by the SBDC (Small Business Development Center) of New York attended by 18 members

Career Support from UNFPA
We are also grateful to UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) and to Holly White, for their very generous contribution in online materials towards our spouse career support information resources, which include Career Guides and multimedia materials on Career Development. These are available on our website.

Liaison with the Lyceum Kennedy French American School
NYLESA launched a reciprocal partnership with the Lyceum Kennedy French American school. The school has pledged to provide NYLESA career related seminars, access to a room in its premises for NYLESA to use for workshops and seminars when available. The School also helps distribute NYLESA brochures and the Lyceum open house and website finds mention in our weekly newsletters

With Dr. Claude Bryant of Lyceum Kennedy French American School, Steve Megal and Paul
Photo Credit ~ School Personnel
Employment Authorization Document (EAD) workshops, Liaison with DOS-VC

Team Lead ~ Lilian Sia Kunyo

EAD Workshop
January 13th, 2020, The first, NYLES A EAD Information and training session, including extensive information for Green Card for dependents and a Q&A session, by Rula Eid Greco, Monica Landganan and Sarah Tekle, attended by 21 members.

First EAD Session
The feedback from the attendees was very positive
“First and foremost the event was well organized, thumbs up! The meeting was very informative, educative and empowering. I look forward to more similar meetings/events on different subjects.”
Gift Lwamba ( NYLES A member)

DOS-VC and NYLES A Liaison
In line with NYLES A’s key mandate to assist spouses settle in NYC and continue with their career, the UN Visa Committee DOS-VC) will facilitate members with regular training on the work permit application process. The training sessions are to be held bimonthly (depending on request from members)
With the DOS-VC, Partnership Meeting
Photo credit ~ Kurt Schober
Career Management Skills Meetup Group

Team Lead ~ Laurene Graziani
(Assisted by Eric Forzy and Lei Feng)

Non-Verbal Communication skills session by Eric Forzy with participants

Laurene with Lei, Candice and Julien before one of the weekly sessions

The Team was initiated on the 9th of October, 2019, with weekly meetings held at UNICEF Project Room except during the winter break. One part of the two hour long session is a round table, a time to share information, personal experience and
get advice from others, followed by the latter half which involves an exercise - interviews or any other subject that can be helpful

**Phase 1** explored the following topics on interview skills and presentation, which included how to prepare for an interview and be confident, present oneself, be positive about highlighting one's skills and how to be specific and succinct. The competencies based framework developed by UNICEF was used as a guide: [https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/files/UNICEF_Competencies.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/files/UNICEF_Competencies.pdf) with the focus being on working with people, initiating and deciding, a drive for results and communication.

**Phase 2** has focused mainly on "Communication during a job interview", with sessions organized on specific topics (e.g. non-verbal communication), and role play exercises (e.g video of participants), exploration of mind mapping to help participants better organize their ideas and be more effective before and during the interview. Participants also worked on their CV, cover letters, defined powerful keywords, shared information and shared important information about the work permit process. Participants who were about to get an interview were also trained. Two of them were successful in securing employment and pro bono consultancies. The participants were very pleased and thankful for the Team’s help and support.

**Challenges**
Regularity in attendance, homogeneity of the specific career skill requirement on the part of the participants would facilitate the progress of the sessions. 3 to 6 participants attend on a regular basis.
NYLESA Job Postings, Pro-Bono and UN Language Registration Campaigns

In 2019, the CSWG continued to strengthen and expand its career support contact network. It secured and advertised, through email campaigns for members, a total of 17 vacancies (see Annexure 2) exclusively or preferably targeted at NYLESA members, which consisted of positions that were both long term and short term, paid and pro-bono, from within and beyond the UN. The hiring organizations include the UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Water, IFRC, NYC Criminal Justice Agency and the Spanish Mission to the UN. Incomplete statistics show that at least two members were successful in their applications for positions advertised by NYLESA.

Three Campaigns were also posted for the UN Language Program (qualifying exam) registration as well as for the English Language Program offered to members by the HCUND. Efforts were also made to share the Language Course offerings, of the Language Clubs of the UNSRC for Portuguese and Amharic as well as free language courses at select venues of the New York Public Library, on the NYLESA newsletter and on NYLESA Facebook.
NYLESA Career Survey, policy and partnerships

Andre Oliveira

The NYLESA Career Survey was conducted in March and April 2019. The purpose of the survey was to map NYLESA members’ educational background and identify perceptions about how NYLESA can help members strengthen their own careers. All members received the questionnaire, 48 responses were recorded between March and April 2019. As per the survey results (see Annexure 3), the majority of respondents were bilingual, the UN Languages being the most common among respondents. Majority of respondents held a masters or Ph.D degree and possessed varied fields of expertise. 80% of respondents were unemployed and seeking a job, with a significant interest in volunteering and self-employment. Most of participants (80%) expected to be part of the Roster and showed a great interest in Career Seminars and Language Tables

Began drafting Civility Rules/Code of Conduct for NYLESA with the Chairperson, is in the process of developing a Global Mobility Survey for Spouses (to be shared with LESA network).

Strategized on NYLESA Partnership initiatives with the Chairperson, advocated for the Association with the partners/contact persons at UN Languages, (Hospitality Committee of the UN Delegations) HCUND and the UNDP. The UNDP provided Pro-bono and remunerated assignment opportunities in 2019. NYLESA raised the issue of making the UN language program more affordable to expatriate spouses and affording them access to the English Program as the official language of the US. The HCUND has provided all members of NYLESA, access to their English Language Program and NYLESA will share with the HCUND, information on its open events, in an effort to facilitate and increase networking.
Left: With ex Co-chair NYLESA Teresa Lago, UNDP, Photo credit ~ Marta
Centre: with Catherine Sweeney, HCUND Photo credit~ HCUND Volunteer
Right: With Felipe Sarachaga, UN Languages, UN Secretariat
NYLESA Language Tables

Language Table Coordinator ~ Mariia Gonchar

Language tables help members to access and understand both native and foreign cultures, and practice and improve language and communications skills. They also act as a networking platform. In the reporting period, the CSWG continued to support the operation of existing language tables and welcomed the addition of a few new language tables (i.e., Urdu/Hindi and Kiswahili).

There are now ten Language Tables (Spanish, Italian, Russian, English, French, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Kiswahili and Urdu/Hindi) under the NYLESA banner, some of them organised on a monthly basis. In 2019, 57 language tables were organized. (see Annexure 4)
CSWG Challenges

Revitalization of the NYLESA Linkedin Groups
The CSWG did solid preparatory work in 2018-19 to revitalize NYLESA presence on Linkedin, an effective online networking and job seeking platform. The aim was brand NYLESA as a group of skilled and competent international professionals on Linkedin, to promote NYLESA and NYLESA members on professional and career-related terms, enhance employment opportunities of NYLESA members, and create professional linkages between former and current NYLESA members. More work is scheduled to be done in 2020 as a CSWG priority and new volunteers are to be recruited to this team for the purpose.

Completion and promotion of a Roster for NYLESA
The NYLESA Roster that was co-launched by NYLESA and UNOSSC earlier, within and beyond the UN, was disbanded due to intra departmental changes at the UNOSSC. The CSWG has met a number of times to discuss the possibility of creating a Roster for NYLESA members by NYLESA.
Achievements through the Communications Working Group (CWG)

A new brochure revision was initiated between Career Support, Communications and the Membership teams in 2019. The Welcome Pack was updated and all the links were checked for currency. Volunteers were mobilized and recruited for all teams in the CWG. The NYLESA Annual Feedback Survey has been conducted to assess the uptake and effectiveness of NYLESA products and services.

NYLESA Website and Template Design

Webmaster ~ Yen Nguyen

The podcast page was updated with new episodes. A new housing insights page was created sharing 9 articles contributed by members. A new career support page was created to share resources from UNICEF, UNFPA & the Small Business Development Centre. Several technical issues were also sorted.
Website user report from 1 April 2019 - 15 Jan 2020

Branding guidelines (see Annexure 5) were completed (including refreshed logos and colors) and implementation began with briefing for several new volunteers working on communication products. MailChimp was redesigned with new branding for campaigns including weekly Newsletters, Coffee and Cocktail gathering, Membership renewals, Career support etc. A NYLESA introduction presentation was created and tested at one coffee gathering. The 2020 Calendar design process was conducted including collecting photos taken by members but needs to be pursued further with UNFCU for sponsorship in 2020

NYLESA Icons and Headers created by Yen Nguyen
As of 2018, 63 newsletters have been delivered to NYLESA members on a weekly basis. There has been a regular onboarding of members and reshuffle of teams. The Newsletter header, iconography and other aspects were redesigned by Yen Nguyen. The team welcomed on board two new editors as they bid goodbye to key members Tess and Jenny last year. A new work process has been created for the Newsletter Team as well as a new email handle. The email handle helps preserve institutional memory and facilitates collaboration between the team members on all aspects of the Newsletter. The day for dissemination has been changed from Sunday morning to Friday morning, 10:15 am so as to enable volunteers to conserve their time on the weekend, many having other priorities. A sign up form was created for the language table coordinator. The Team makes a concerted effort to share information from various sources including NYLESA Facebook, information flyers from NYPL, UNSRC, UNAI, HCUND, UN languages in addition to core events and members organized events of NYLESA. New sections have been introduced ~ Language Course Portal, Career Management Peer Meetup section, NYLESA exclusive etc. The newsletter is also shared on Facebook every Sunday morning. Currently there are 273 subscribers (as of the 9th of Feb, 2020) that receive the NYLESA newsletter. The subscribers include all members, UN and non UN partners, the LESA network and some agency contact persons as well. (see Annexure 6)
NYLESA Social Media - Facebook business page, Private Group and Marketplace

NYLESA Social Media Manager ~ Jooyoung Kim

1) NYLESA Business page (https://www.facebook.com/nylesa.org/, 230 followers)  
NYLESA Business page helps provide information to NYLESA members and potential members who are UN spouses, related to upcoming open NYLESA activities, including monthly coffee gatherings or Cocktail gatherings and past activities such as language tables, career seminars, etc. The page aims to build more interest and raise NYLESA's visibility within the UN community and the public, in order to help spouses for the successful settlement in New York.

2) Facebook Private group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/nylesa/, 253 members)  
Facebook Private group page is one of the major communications platforms for NYLESA members, along with NYLESA webpage and campaigns (email notifications). This page is open to and interactive among members, by providing information on all the ongoing events, or sharing any sort of useful life information, or even posting questions. Although it is closed to NYLESA registered members, we also retain alumni members.

3) Marketplace (https://www.facebook.com/groups/nylesa.marketplace/, 151 members)  
Marketplace is offered to NYLESA members and other UN associated families for buying and selling items under the individuals' responsibilities. NYLESA members who join our Facebook Private group will be automatically eligible to join the Marketplace. Non-members are to contact membership@nylesa.org to begin the membership process.

4) Admins - Currently, there are five (5) admins who are authorized to manage the Facebook page.

5) A comprehensive operating strategy was developed and a workflow was put in place
2019-2020 Major Activities (Business Page) (see Annexure 7)

1) Invitation to open NYLESA events

2) Sharing other UN events
   - Associated partner agencies : UNSRC, UNWG etc

3) Information on learning tools

https://agora.unicef.org
https://hr.un.org/page/language-programmes-unhq-0
NYLESA Podcasts

Team Leads ~ Martin Haro and Zein Dudha

During 2019, 5 episodes of the NYLESA podcast were published which achieved 450 plays.

Episode 1 starts with an introduction to the series and about what NYLESA means to members.
Episode 2 starts with some of NYLESA members explaining about why they decided to join the UNFCU and also about their experiences with this financial institution.
Episode 3 is all about getting your work permit or an Employment Authorisation Document (EAD).
Episode 4 this episode is about how to start your own business in New York.
Episode 5 is about finding out immigration options beyond the current G4 visa status.
The Language Tables Calendar and the Events Calendar are integrated into the Master Calendar on a weekly basis. Email reminders are dispatched to all event and activity coordinators on a monthly basis. Calendar sharing settings are now being updated as a matter of course as well as access provided to new event organisers. The Master Calendar is reflected both on the website and the weekly newsletter.
Achievements through the Welcome Working Group (WWG)

Coffee Gathering Team

Katherine Arana (Early 2019), Concha Iborra (Sep, 2019), Kausar Owais, Swati Vatsa Gaur, Fidel Mendy, Samwel Kinoti, Sapna Sethi

A total of 11 Coffee Gatherings were organized 2019- January 2020. The complimentary Coffee/Brunch events included the AGM 2019 Welcome Desk coffee at Danny Kaye UNICEF (53 attendees) and the Candidate Brunch on 21st Jan, 2019 (approx 30 people), the December Festive Coffee Gathering (2019) and the Candidate coffee on the 29th of Jan, 2020, both organized at Tuttles. The Team sought out new deals with venue providers, at rates that are attractive as well as keep the cover charge limited to $10 for all attendees.(see Annexure 8)

December Festive Coffee Gathering at Tuttles  

Photo Credit ~ Lin Qi
Cocktail Gathering Team

Michael Fleuter, Maija Tipanna

There were altogether 9 cocktail gatherings in 2019. All gatherings were arranged on Thursday, usually the third Thursday of the week. The average amount of participants was 17. Attendees paid at the bar. (see Annexure 9)

Cocktail gathering at Zum Schneider

Photo Credit ~ NYLESA Facebook

Special Events

June 4th Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony (organized by Francine Afane, Lora Wiley and Shiho Mashiko)
Membership Team

Natalia Chernysh, Tanya Marinova (Dec 2019), kausar Ovais, Candice Yu (Policy work)

230 Members from across 77 countries represented at NYLESA (as of 9th December, 2019)
Membership Registration:
Team members attended and supported the registration and membership payment process of new members or of renewing members at the coffee gatherings of NYLESA, registered 230 new and renewing members during January 2019 - December 9th, 2019.

Mailchimp for Membership Processes:
Team modified and updated the membership sign up form on Mailchimp to match current requirements for member profile, updated the mailchimp templates for membership renewal with information that was current, cleaned the Mailchimp database, members subscriptions were kept up to date and new mailing list segments were created as per requirements. Renewal and reminder campaigns have been sent on a consistent basis. Email templates for generic correspondence have been kept updated to reflect any changes regularly. A Mailchimp Tutorial was organized by the Newsletter Team to help understand campaigns and the Mailchimp platform.

Facebook
The Membership Team also admitted new members on NYLESA Facebook. Admittance into NYLESA Facebook Marketplace has been automated. Alumni members are retained in the group so as to enhance and widen the network of spouses leaving NY.

Membership Certificates for UN Grounds Pass
A number of Membership Certificates were provided for Grounds Pass Applications along with the relevant SS143a Form and instructions. The certification process was automated by the Chairperson to facilitate membership certificates during the period of registration for UN language courses in 2019; the process is now automated through a system created by the Communications Coordinator, membership certificates have since been created for all Regular members.

Membership Policy
Significant inputs to Membership Policy discussions were made by Candice Yu, the policy is to be finalized by the 2020 SC

NYLESA connect

Davina E. Solomon and Tanya Marinova, supported by Natalia Chernysh

1)October 19, 2019 Digester Egg Tour at Newtown Creek, 10 tickets were provided for the sold out OHNY tour, kind courtesy of Eileen P. Alter, Deputy Director - Special Projects & Initiatives, NYC Environmental Protection

2)October 11, 2019 NYLESA Connect visited Richard DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst New Jersey, the Meadowlands of the Hackensack River. Members explored the Saw Mill and Tranco Trails, Kingsland Overlook, and enjoyed a picnic.

NYLESA Exclusives

Free Yoga is being offered every Thursday by member Laurene Graziani, a Baby Group was initiated by Tinatin Janjghava. A NYLESA sports group has been put in place by Lin Qi. He also offers Photography seminars and activities via the UNSRC
CHALLENGES

During 2019-20, the Steering Committee faced some challenges, which are enumerated below:

A. Retention of Steering Committee (SC) members:
This has been an ongoing challenge for NYLESA. The 2019 SC faced the resignations of 2 members at different times of the year, due to personal reasons. It is difficult to get members to commit to the SC for a year due to various factors, which may include finding full time employment, relocation, bereavement, personal crises, undue expectations of what an SC position entails at NYLESA and the lack of prior volunteer experience at the Association.

B. No set mechanism to reach the expatriate UN spouse:
There is no proper mechanism in place by the UN, given the lack of visibility of the Association at the UN as well as changing HR Focal Points or other UN partners that champion the Association. Maintaining contact to facilitate access to incoming spouses into NY and the TriState area becomes a major challenge.

C. Regular change in Focal Points:
Focal points in the various agencies relocate, retire or leave the organization. This does not contribute to building strong relationships with UN parties.

E. Member participation:
Even though members participate actively in the different working groups, NYLESA has to be continuously creative to keep their members interested in volunteering and actively contributing to NYLESA.

F. Maintaining NYLESA Platforms:
It has been an ongoing and painstaking effort for the Association to regain ownership of its various platforms on behalf of the Membership. The difficulty in maintaining centralized control of systems, constant volunteer and SC turnover, lack of awareness of this change, makes it imperative that every SC and successive SC ensures that user permissions of volunteers engaged on NYLESA platforms are updated on a consistent and regular basis.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2020 STEERING COMMITTEE

Based on the challenges faced by NYLESA in the year 2019, it would be helpful to put in place a few measures to effectively steer the LESA to fulfil on its mandate in the year 2020. Some of the measures include:

1. Working on a *Statement of Mutual Expectations* based on the values that guide their work. This should be based on how well the SC values participation, preparation, transparency, teamwork and accountability, also based on the unstated values that should shape its governance work and how closely they match reality. If the SC says it values participation, then it should make quorum at the meetings that are scheduled. If the SC says it values transparency, then it should communicate and share developments with each other on an ongoing basis consistently.

2. A solid commitment on the part of the SC to enable the constant evolving of the LESA, by asking the necessary questions, adapting to the changing circumstances in relation to the LESA foundations and continually make an attempt to improve service and product delivery.

3. Continual engagement with volunteers or members on a regular basis; this contact should also include a continual member mobilization, volunteer recruitment and developing newer strategies for volunteer engagement in an effort to sustain and drive the LESA to fulfil its mandate.

4. Ongoing Outreach and advocacy initiatives, as focal points of the various UN agencies change; maintaining a database of the UN and non-UN connections and regularize contact and communication.

5. Renewed focus on External Partnerships - which may serve to enhance the products and services that could be afforded to members making membership to the Association more desirable. This may also help sustain member interest.

6. Engagement on a continual basis with the other LESA’s and various UN related spouses groups the world over, so as to share common experiences, increase connectivity and network, to promote the cause of the globally mobile UN spouse to the UN as a collective force.

7. Affording flexibility to the larger membership to engage on the platform to organize and share their events, experiences and activities with all members, across the Tri-State Area given the diversity in member interest.

8. Renewed focus on Career related activities and events; budget for such activities that are in fulfilment of the mandate of the LESA.

9. Recruitment of volunteers on a task based approach, which may increase efficiency and ensure continuity of service delivery.
10. Effective documentation and records of all undertakings, to share with successive SC’s. Ensuring that records are updated regularly, system ownership and access revised on a regular basis and records of this be maintained.
11. Design and implementation of clear policies and procedures for record management, ICT, bereavement, divorce, separation, disaster preparedness, like untimely natural events, emergency procedures.
APPRECIATION

UN Organizations, Non UN Organizations and Partners
We thank our UN and Non UN partners for their support and collaboration.

UN Secretariat:
● UN Language and Communications Programme: Felipe Martin Sarachaga, David Hattem (English Language Coordinator)
● Visa Committee: Kurt Schober (Head of Department), Rula Eid Greco, Sarah Tekle, Monica Lydia Danganan, Pearlene Fields
● ID and Ground Pass Office: Lt. Leroy Johnson, Henry Meza

UNDP: Teresa Maria Lago, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, Erik Kinnhammar, Diversity and Inclusion Analyst, (Office of Human Resources, Bureau for Management Services)

UNFPA: Holly White, UNFPA, Performance Management /Career Development

UNICEF: John Lackey (Chief, Talent Acquisition), Elaine Lowe (DHR), Bandana Yonzon Lepcha (HR Business Partner, Division of Human Resources (DHR), Chianghua Hereward, Cynthia Zrake, Ximena Herrera, Lisa Abate, Rokhaya Ndaye, Joanna Garcia, Debbie Prashad, Cecilia Fantoni, Gerard Succes

UN STAFF RECREATION COUNCIL (UNSRC): Taína Claude (deceased), Ramu Damodaran(Chairperson), Peter Dawkins (Vice-Chair), Elizabeth Shirokowa (Secretary)

Hospitality Committee of the UN delegations (HCUND): Valerie Kennedy (President), Catherine Sweeney (Volunteer), Penelope Goodfriend (English Language Coordinator)

UNWG (UN women’s Guild): Genoveva Wallach (Director, Secretariat Branch), Zoe Chang

Lyceum Kennedy French American School: Steve Megal(Admissions Director), Paul, Dr.Claude Bryant (Head of School)

Iseek: Maria Renee Luque, UN Intranet, Dept of Global Communications and Peter Dawkins, Chief of Web Services Section, Department of Global Communications, UNHQ and Vice Chair of the UNSRC
UNFCU: Elisabeth Philippe, Diane DePass

NYLESA Volunteers 2019 - 2020
NYLESA is grateful to the following volunteers and members for their commitment to the work of fulfilling the mandate of NYLESA and organizing events and sharing it with the membership at large. (see Annexure 10)

NYLESA Core Functions

Career Support Working Group
Julien Soufflet (Career Seminars, Lyceum Kennedy School Liaison), Lilian Nthoki Sia (DOS-VC Visa Committee Liaison), Laurene Graziani (Career Management Skills Workshops), Yun Li (Career postings and campaigns), Andre oliveira (Policy and Partnerships), Mariia Gonchar (Language Tables Coordinator), Eric Forzy, Timo der Weduwen, Usua Laresgoiti, Tope Sanni, Kennedy Kibisu

EAD (Employment Authorization Document) Translations:
French by Julien Soufflet, Chinese by Yun Li, Haiman Yi, Lei Feng, Spanish by Jorge Solorzano, Diana Camacho, Banu Chediek, Liliana Rodriguez, Martin Haro, Carmen Rodriguez, Carlos Martinez, Concha Iborra, Ximena Herrera, Russian by Mariia Gonchar and Natalia Chernysh, Member Seminar, Javier Delgado

Communications Working Group
Lei Feng, Saliha Atif and Tess Newnes (Create the NYLESA Newsletter), Zein Dudha (~ March 2019) Yen Nguyen (Template design, Webmaster), Alok Dwivedi and Vesna Golic (Editors), Jenny Nasser (Editor early 2019) Jooyoung Kim (Social Media Manager for Facebook NYLESA), Mukhayo Burkhanova (NYLESA calendars), Charlotte Priesel, Evelyn Waluse Arunga, Martin Haro and Zein Dudha (Podcasts), Eric Solheim-Nesdal (Edited the Welcome Pack), Qi Lin and Eric Pasqualli (Photographers)

Welcome Working Group
Kausar Ovais, Sapna Sethi, Swati Vatsa Gaur, Fidel Mendy, Samwel Kinoti, Renu Ghakkar, Concha Iborra, Katherine Arana (Coffee Gathering Team), Maija Tippana and Michael Fleuter (Cocktail Gathering Team)

Membership Team
Tanya Marinova, Kausar Ovais, Natalia Chernysh and Candice Yu

Electoral Officer
Tanya Marinova (Until January 2020), Maija Tippana (January 2020 - )
Member Organized Social Gatherings and Events

Language Tables, NYLESA Connect and other Social Gatherings
Jenny Nasser (English Table), Maria Gonzalez (German Table), Lilian Sia Nthoki (Kiswahili Table), Salihah Kiyani, Kausar Ovais and Sapna Sethi (Hindi-Urdu Table), Mariia Gonchar (RUssian Table), Liliana Baillet (Spanish Table), Natalia Chernysh (French Table), Sailifa Nzwalo (Portuguese Table), Banu Chediek and Gulen Unalan (Turkish Table), Davina E. Solomon and Tanya Marinova (NYLESA connect), Tinatin Janjghava (NYLESA Baby Group), Lin Qi (NYLESA Sports Group), Laurene Graziani (Free Yoga), Lora Wiley (Special Events)

We also thank…
Mayank Jain (Bank and Website matters), Frederic Hantrais (Website), Yamrote Alemu (Offer for brochure redesign), Morgan Banea (UNKLESA0, Milena Padula (UN Spouses Group), Verena Heingaertner, Rodica Stroe (Advice on LESA)
ANNEXURES

1. **Annexure 1** NYLESAA Bylaws 2011
2. **Annexure 2** NYLESAA Job Posting Information 2019-2020
3. **Annexure 3** Results of 2019 Survey NYLESAA Career Support
4. **Annexure 4** NYLESAA Language Tables 2019 Report
5. **Annexure 5** NYLESAA Branding Guidelines September 2019
6. **Annexure 6** NYLESAA Newsletter Report
7. **Annexure 7** NYLESAA Social Media Report 2019-20
8. **Annexure 8** NYLESAA Coffee Gathering Report
9. **Annexure 9** NYLESAA Cocktail Gathering Report 2019
10. **Annexure 10** NYLESAA Volunteer Database 2019-20