



**NYLESA**

New York Local Expatriate Spouse Association

Supporting United Nations Spouses

**2022-2023 TERM**

**STEERING  
COMMITTEE**

**CANDIDATES**



# List of Candidates

**Chair** Soraya King

**Co-Chair** Susanne Schwarz

**Treasurer** Shyam Sharma

**Welcome Group Coordination** Jeannette Throp

**Career Group Coordination** 1. Ana Danchevska

2. Minh Tran

**Communication Group Coordination** Sandhya Subramanian

For Chair

## Soraya King



“ in essence to remain welcoming, listening to our membership and being creative in what we offer them whilst establishing NYLESA within the UN ”

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*I am a proudly Zimbabwean with substantial international experience of being an accompanying spouse. During our expat travels mainly through Africa, I have held several volunteer positions in different organizations at different levels.*

*I have been in New York since September 2019, accompanying my spouse, who is with UNICEF. The move to NYC felt right as our two young adults (26 and 24) are well on their way in establishing themselves. I joined NYLESA to join a community, make friends and help other UN spouses and families coming to NYC to settle.*

*I am extremely impressed with what NYLESA has achieved and the help they have provided (1200 families ) in career, settling in, friends, exploring the city, wellbeing during COVID lockdown. In short NYLESA means family away from home.*

*Going for Chair for the second term, I want to continue to build on the work plan we have started in 2021:*

- Re -establish our outreach program with our UN and other partnerships*
- Build on our volunteer teams*
- Continue with our welcoming theme to new and current membership*
- Reach out to the LESA's globally and find areas of common interest to establish a voice within the UN Secretariat.*
- Ensure our membership remain current with skills required to compete with the UN and corporate America.*

For Co-Chair

## Susanne Schwarz



“ I’d love to bring my organizational and planning skills for NYLESA. ”

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*I am from Germany; it's my second time in New York. I live in Scarsdale, Westchester County since September 2020 with my husband, a police officer, and my two teenage daughters. My son is at law school in Germany. I am an economist and worked as accountant in Germany; here I have the chance to do something entirely different: I work as a bookseller in a small, independent bookstore.*

*I joined NYLESA in December 2020 and participated in some of the various member activities since then. It was so wonderful to be able to attend coffee gatherings in person in spring 2021; at the same time, it was very convenient to join informative webinars without even leaving the house.*

*I would be thrilled to work as a Steering Committee member. I love to be part of organizing, planning, and creating – be it events or administrative tasks. I could help with the administrative part of NYLESA, e.g. managing statistic information on memberships and forward this information to the working group; helping with the organization of Steering Committee meetings, taking the minutes, filing them and passing them on to the committee members.*

For Treasurer

## Shyam Sharma



“ I want to offer my time and services as a treasurer in maintaining accounts and transparency in financial transactions, in a timely manner. ”

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*I am a physician and a public health specialist, and I come from India. I have worked at various levels, in clinical settings, from primary care centers to tertiary care hospitals. Currently, I provide consultancy to various international organizations and NGOs. I connect with people and enjoy it when people around me are happy (and healthy!).*

*I joined my wife in New York in 2018 and enrolled with NYLESA to learn, interact, and meet new friends. NYLESA gatherings helped me in navigating the first few months in the Big Apple, and the insights shared by the other members eased my settling down.*

*I have been volunteering for the NYLESA as a cocktail gathering coordinator, and also supporting members on health insurance, housing, and other matters.*

*I have enjoyed being a part of NYLESA and would like to continue to support this tremendous community.*

*I want to offer my time and services as a treasurer in maintaining accounts and transparency in financial transactions, in a timely manner. I will continue to sustain the good work done by the previous treasurers and hope that NYLESA's coffers have abundance.*



For Welcome Group Coordinator

## Jeannette Throp



“Being part of the Welcome group, I will put in my best effort to make sure that new-comers don't feel lost and can adjust to the change at a good pace.”

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*I was born and raised in El Salvador. My family and I moved to New York city in November 2020 for my husband work with UNOCHA. We are planning to stay in New York City until 2025.*

*My main work experience has been in Early Years' Childhood Development including working with children with special needs. I am also a life coach and have started founded businesses in El Salvador, Ethiopia and am hoping that one day I can start my own business in the USA.*

*I have been involved in social projects including charities that support with women and children, the homeless and people with addiction. As well as running my own business and helping charity organizations in Ethiopia, I helped friends and people who were new to the country find resources and connect with social groups as they began their new lives in Ethiopia. I would do so in ways such as organizing events to help bring people together, as well as showing them around the city and giving them useful information to help them adjust.*

*I am very aware of the difficulties presented when it comes to moving to a new town, city or country, and I understand the importance of feeling welcomed and settling in well. Being part of the Welcome group, I will put in my best effort to make sure that new-comers don't feel lost and can adjust to the change at a good pace. I am also very grateful that NYLESA exists, as I very much support the mission and want to be involved in achieving it.*

For Career Support Group Coordinator - Candidate 1

## Ana Danchevska



“ My goal is to empower members with the best available knowledge and networking opportunities to help advance their career during their time in New York. ”

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*I come from the beautiful town of Skopje in North Macedonia and have lived in New York for almost 2 and a half years with my partner who works for UNICEF. Prior to coming here, I worked in arts, education and the commercial sector in a wide range of roles. Now I work as a marketing consultant in the real estate.*

*NYLESA has been my support network in settling into New York. This has included navigating the complex aspects of life here from getting a driving license, work permit or understanding tax systems to collaborating on special events and the Newsletter. NYLESA is about being together in both empathy and diversity and uplifting each other so we, and our families, get the best out of our time here.*

*As Career Group Coordinator, I would like to help members find pathways to work by understanding the range of opportunities and the modalities. I would strive to contribute to events, sessions and workshops for our membership to share information, learning and networking for employment. This would also support efforts to understand obtaining a work permit, the different types of work available and the tax implications. The ultimate goal would be to help some of our members secure rewarding and gainful employment.*

## For Career Support Group Coordinator - Candidate 2

### Minh Tran



“ I will facilitate a professional network that provides opportunities for NYLESA members to continue and further their career. ”

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*I am from Vietnam. I have worked in banking and finance industry before redirected my career to childhood education. I taught for five years in Vietnam before moving to Laos to teach in a multicultural, multilingual environment for three years.*

*I arrived in New York in July 2020 to be with my husband, who is an UNDP staff member. I left behind my career, and I was overwhelmed by the new life in New York. NYLESA came to be a vibrant community that helped me balance my life. To me, NYLESA is a wealth of knowledge to help me settle my life in New York.*

*I want to contribute to NYLESA as the Career support group Coordinator. NYLESA members are UN spouses. But first, we are also a community of talented, able professionals who love our jobs. When we leave our jobs to follow our spouses, we don't necessarily have to put a pause on our career. My plan is to create more opportunities for NYLESA members to continue their career in New York through:*

- 1. Creating networking events for members of NYLESA. Members of NYLESA are talented, therefore we can teach, share, learn new professional skills.*
- 2. Preparing for opportunities for members to fill the gap in their career (volunteering, consulting, entrepreneurship, etc.). By connecting with different agencies, NYLESA members can continue their careers through different pathways.*
- 3. Preparing outlets to help members cope with not being able to work.*

*I believe career is an important aspect of our lives. By contributing the outlet for this aspect, I believe NYLESA will further support its members.*



For Communication Group Coordinator

## Sandhya Subramanian



“My goal is to capitalize on the power of our people to inspire the NYLESA community to grow.”

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*I moved to New York from Oman in September 2021 as my husband was offered a job at UNICEF. I'm originally from India, where I spent the better part of three decades. Professionally, I am a Communications Manager and was working with one of India's leading conglomerates, The Murugappa Group until 2019. I was responsible for internal and external communications, public and media relations and social media campaigns. From 2019 to 2021 I was a freelance content writer working primarily with OHI Leo Burnett, a Full-service communications agency in Oman.*

*To me NYLESA offers a much-needed support system for spouses who are far away from home. A new city and country can be intimidating at times and NYLESA provides us with the opportunity to make friends and develop lasting relationships which help us navigate through this sea of change.*

*If I am voted to be a Steering Committee Member, I would be very keen to start working directly with the members of NYLESA. We have a great platform to meet people from various backgrounds and cultures. This along with our inspiring weekly newsletter is a perfect way to get to know more about our people. A few ideas I have in mind are*

- To start a column on our newsletter where we interview members and get to know them. With the pandemic, it has become more difficult to meet in person and this would be a great way to know one and other.*
- To start developing our social media handles including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to get more people to interact and be part of the NYLESA community.*
- Apart from regular thematic content, topical news and events happening in and around New York, we can also look at inspiring stories from our members about their lives in New York.*