

# Serving the London & SE Region UNA:

## Gonzalo Alvarez



A Marine Biologist and Oceanographer, I have been part of Scientific research teams in the South Pacific (UNDP Programme) (early 1990s). I led international teams regarding coastal Community Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (1992 - 2001). I have also been a member of eight International Human Development Forums across the world. I have numerous academic qualifications from Chile, Cambridge and London. Between 2005 and 2007 I was a Lecturer in Bioethics at Universidad del Mar, Chile. A member of Bexhill & Hastings UNA, I am currently chair of UNA Climate and Oceans, bringing together many regional NGOs, universities and government agencies to do research and raise awareness. I have been a speaker at numerous UNA branches in England – a – and Sweden. I am also a Committee member of UNA London and South East Region.

## Hagir Ahmed

Hagir Ahmed is leading programmes in North and West London to improve the conditions of refugees and asylum seekers now staying in small hotels. This involves trying to ensure the adequate and appropriate provision of food, clothing, medical treatment, education and recreational facilities for families and especially their children. The work involves liaison with NGOs, local authorities and other informal and institutional support groups.

## Jane Beeley



I have chaired Tunbridge Wells (latterly Tunbridge Wells & Wealden) UNA branch for over thirty years. A Chartered Librarian. I have always worked full-time, firstly as a children's librarian, then as a student administrator for the SE Region of the Open University, where I gained my degree. I was a governor of a designated primary school for fifteen years. I became site librarian at an H & FE college, and in my last job I ran two hospital libraries and a patients' library service for Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. After retiring I joined the LaSER-UNA Committee in 2014, and since February 2020 have edited the LaSER Newsletter.

## Neville Grant



I was for years Chair or Secretary of the Region, and also chair of Blackheath UNA. I edited the Laser Newsletter in the days when it was printed. I did my National Service as a soldier in Ghana, and subsequently became a teacher/trainer in Tanzania, and a lecturer the University of Lagos. A sometime British Council officer, I became a professional writer of English textbooks in and for many countries, including Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, Hong Kong, and the Caribbean English textbook region. For six years I worked as a writer in China on a UNDP English textbook project, for high schools, followed by a series for Chinese University students. I have also worked as an educational consultant in East Asia, Anglophone and Francophone Africa, and the Arab world.

## Salem Mexhoud



Salem Mezhoud has experience working with the UN in Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs and Post Conflict Reconstruction, especially in North Africa and the Mediterranean. He has worked for the EU in counter-terrorism and counter-Organised Crime in the Sahel, covering Trafficking and Slavery. Salem is an Executive Committee member of the Westminster United Nations Association

## Catherine Pluygers



I am a musician and have always had an interest in development issues. I studied for a degree in development at Birkbeck University. I am vice-chair of UNA Wandsworth and a long standing committee member of UNA Westminster. Currently I am chair of UNA LASER Trust and was chair of LASER from 2015-19. I have been on the executive committee of WILPF and have a particular interest in the welfare of women. Over the years I have helped deliver some very large projects for UNA, WILPF and Voices of African Women.



### **Patricia Rogers**

Trisha is an educator and internationalist, who has taught – and written – in the UK, Nigeria, Pakistan and South Korea. She has been Chief Executive of the Council for Education in World Citizenship, the Pestalozzi International Village and Jubilee Debt Campaign. She has been a trustee of Chatham House (the Royal Institute of International Affairs), the UNA-UK and the British Humanist Association (of which she was Vice Chair for 7 years). She has worked in mathematics education, including with the Open University and for the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics.



### **Rob Storey**

I am chair of Wandsworth UNA and a contributing member of LASER. I taught Maths in the FE and HE sectors where I was also an active trade-unionist. I taught Maths at an inner city Senior High School in Washington DC. As a County Councillor, I chaired a political group and was chair/vice chair of a number of committees Although my teaching career revolved around Maths, a lifelong interest in Politics led me to complete a PhD on a period of Political History. I support the work of the UN, and enjoy visiting places so travel is a passion.



### **René Smit**

I am from the Netherlands, and I came over from Amsterdam to London in 2012 to start my job as a Child Protection Social Worker in Richmond upon Thames. I am currently working as a Team Leader in the Permanency Team, which has a focus on Looked after Children. I have dealt with mental health, substance misuse and children throughout the past 13 years of my career. I have been involved in both national and EU politics. I strongly believe that the UN should play an ongoing and important role in providing mechanisms to seek to improve the life of every man, woman and child on earth.



### **Antony Vallyon**

A member of Westminster branch, I have been representing the LASER committee on a working group on an International Court for the Environment for the last few years, I am also a member of the Academic Council for the UN system (ACUNS). After an inspirational experience working for UN University in Tokyo and at the UN Secretariat in New York in 1997 on peace, development and UN reform, I became active in UNA-USA, New Zealand and Australia. From 2007-2010 I was President of UNA-NZ and attended the triannual WFUNA Plenary, and the UN DPI/NGO conference in Paris on 60th anniversary of UDHR. For UNA-NZ I worked with UN and Government Agencies and NGOs on a number of issues, including International Development, and Disaster Relief.



### **David Wardrop**

I am Chair of the Westminster United Nations Association and a member of the L&SER committee. and have organised conferences and led initiatives on many UN linked issues. Among other initiatives, my branch launched an annual film festival, an annual international Peace Keepers' Conference at RUSI, an annual international law lecture, with the associated commemorative event at the Cenotaph in memory of those who died in the service of the UN.



### **Peter Webster:**

I am present treasurer of the Region, chair of the Region's Policy Committee, and of Streatham & Clapham Branch. Outside UNA I work in the field of Responsible/Ethical Investment. I have a University degree in Mathematics and an MBA. I believe UNA is an important means for people to show their support for the UN's principles, as well as educating people about the UN's work and campaigning to strengthen it and to ensure that our own government acts in line with international law, advances shared global goals and plays a constructive role as a UN member state.