

# Amnesty International USA

## 2024 Board of Directors Candidate Biographies

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### Ranya Ahmed



Town, State: Washington, DC

Occupation or Job Title: Director of Affiliate & Advocacy Analytics at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

Email: ranyaradhi@yahoo.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** I first became involved with AIUSA as a student member in 2012. I've continued to be involved with Amnesty as a supporter & donor, and recently joined the NW DC Local Group.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I am a passionate social justice advocate with a decade of experience in the nonprofit & academic sectors. I am an expert in using data to craft compelling stories & advocacy campaigns, and to improve organizational processes & efficiencies. At the ACLU, I lead projects on multiple issues, including education equity, immigration, and racial justice. I have a rigorous academic background in human rights - holding a Master's in International Studies, specializing in international humanitarian law, an MPA focused on nonprofit management & a Doctorate in Political Science. I also completed a research fellowship at Harvard University's FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, examining access to medical care during conflicts.

**Candidate Statement:** At 17, I moved to the United States, where I built a life as an unwavering advocate for justice, equity, diversity, and belonging. My commitment to these principles is deeply rooted in both my personal & professional experiences. As an immigrant, and as someone who's experienced the pain of losing loved ones to lethal use of police force & unjust imprisonment, I know how integral the fight for human rights is to daily life.

My platform:

- Help AIUSA become a model for evidence-based practice, using testing & evaluation to guide internal and outward-facing initiatives.
- Help AIUSA build long-term power through targeted, catered engagement with both active and less active members.
- Lead with integrity & a mindset of curiosity to ensure the continued financial and brand health of AIUSA.
- Continue the cultivation of a healthy organizational culture that is committed to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility, including by offering trainings, e.g., Anti-Oppression training.

### Rasel Ahmed



Town, State: Columbus, Ohio

Occupation or Job Title: Assistant Professor, Nonfiction Filmmaking

Email: raselcahmed@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** I joined the Amnesty board of directors in December 2023 after a board member stepped down. This year, I have decided to rerun for the position as the previous board member's term is ending in 2024. As a board member, I have participated in two board meetings and the AGM 2024 so far. In addition, since 2016, I have collaborated with Amnesty UK and USA in organizing Write for Rights and helped launch a campaign seeking justice for them. I am also a political asylum seeker, and Amnesty supported me with the Global Relief Fund, providing me with an emergency grant.

**Other Relevant Experience:** I am an LGBTQ+ rights activist for more than 20 years.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Rasel Ahmed, Assistant Professor at The Ohio State University, specializes in teaching nonfiction cinema and queer feminist theory. He is also an executive director of an archive and a community-based filmmaker.

**Candidate Statement:** I'm a political asylum seeker and survivor of violence, targeted for co-founding and editing Bangladesh's first LGBTQ magazine. Al-Qaeda attacked our magazine and killed two members, forcing me to leave the country. Amnesty International played a vital role in making my journey as an asylum seeker in the US. I want to give back by serving the community of political prisoners, survivors of sexual and domestic violence, refugees, and asylum seekers. As a grassroots activist for over a decade, I co-founded two queer organizations, initiated and led projects, and organized events and campaigns. I currently serve as the Executive Director of Queer Archives of the Bengal Delta, a transnational archive focused on preserving and researching queer histories. As a board member of AIUSA, I hope to apply my experience in grassroots organizing, research, and creative practices to support the causes I'm passionate about.



## Ariela Blätter

Town, State: Chevy Chase, Maryland  
Occupation or Job Title: President & CEO, Women in International Security  
Email: ablatter@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** In addition to being a long-term member, I have served on AIUSA's staff, been a strategic consultant for Amnesty, and a funder; highlights include:

- Founding Director of Amnesty's Crisis Response Program (2002-2009),
- strategic consultant undertaking an AIUSA Board Governance and Fiduciary Responsibility Study (2014) and AIUSA's Strategic Plan (2016-2019); and
- initiating a multi-year grant to Amnesty as a Senior Program Officer at the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund (2020).

**Other Relevant Experience:** In addition to AIUSA, I have held senior positions at Refugees International, Citizens for Global Solutions, and the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund and worked on the United Nations negotiations for the Arms Trade Treaty and the International Criminal Court's Rome Treaty.

I am currently heading up an international NGO working to end the global gender equality gap.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I have over 20+ years of experience as an international human rights lawyer, grant maker, strategic consultant, and non-profit manager, leading the design, build, and launch of rights-based and inclusive programs.

I have relevant financial experience. As a consultant, I guided the AIUSA Board on how to fulfill its fiduciary responsibility to the International Secretariat. I have also helped manage the financial reporting for an INGO and an S Corporation.

**Candidate Statement:** Over the last 20 years, I have had the opportunity to contribute to Amnesty as an activist, staffer, and funder. Now, I am honored to be considered for Board Service at such a critical time in our organizational and global affairs. I am deeply committed to helping build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable AIUSA that actively addresses and enhances the lives of marginalized and oppressed people everywhere.

## Ann Burroughs

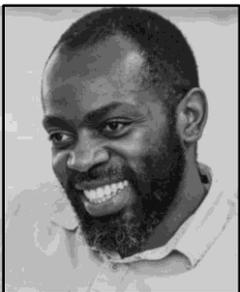


Town, State: Los Angeles, California  
Occupation or Job Title: President & CEO, Japanese American National Museum and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy  
Email: annamnesty24@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** My relationship with Amnesty International is profound, and my debt inestimable. When I was jailed without trial in the fight against apartheid in my native South Africa, Amnesty helped to secure my release after nearly five months in prison. I went on to spend nine years on AIUSA's staff, and six years on AIUSA's Board of Directors, including four as Chair and one as Treasurer. Thereafter I was elected Chair of the Global Assembly, Amnesty's highest decision-making body, for four years, a position elected by Amnesty representatives in 75+ countries. I contributed significantly to major human rights policy development, and spearheaded transformative global governance and funding reforms that prioritized diversity and equity, as well as the largest financial investment in DEIA in AIUSA's history. It has been a privilege to serve Amnesty and the broader human rights movement. I would be proud to do so again.

**Other Relevant Experience:** As CEO of the Japanese American National Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy, I oversee a diverse team of 94 individuals, with 93% identifying as BIPOC, and manage assets totaling \$73 million. With 25 years of experience in international and domestic human rights, social justice and civil rights, I bring extensive leadership, financial management and governance expertise to the AIUSA board.

**Candidate Statement:** The US plays a central role in almost every important human rights debate but never more so than today as we face the damage wrought on international human rights protections and standards, the global roll-back of rights, the unparalleled destruction of the war in Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan and elsewhere, and the racial hatred and divisiveness at home. A re-centering of human rights in domestic and international policy is imperative, making the work of AIUSA supremely important and consequential.



## Leonce Byimana

Town, State: Atlanta, Georgia  
Occupation or Job Title: Director of Clinical Programs  
Email: leonceby@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** I have worked with Amnesty International as a partner when I worked with torture survivors. We have organized and collaborated on advocacy subjects related to the end of torture in the world. I am also a member of AIUSA.

**Other Relevant Experience:** For nine years, I have worked in advocacy against torture and access to justice for the survivors.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Today, I am the clinical director for the Center for Victims of Torture, and for five years, I have been the executive director of the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International.

**Candidate Statement:** I was born in Rwanda and experienced the horrible Genocide against Tutsis in 1994 and other acts of violence and war perpetrated in that country. Since then, I have decided to advocate for democracy and, above all, respect for human rights. As a therapist for torture survivors and a leader in the anti-torture organizations and movement, I am looking forward to advising AIUSA on how they can efficiently continue to fight torture and significantly strengthen their alert systems so that the practice of torture can be detected before many people are affected.

**Board, human rights experience, nonprofit leadership, and governance:** Since 2017, I have been the executive director of a nonprofit supporting torture survivors in their healing process and helping them access justice. In 2022, I became the clinical director of a similar international organization. I am a council member of many human rights organizations, including the International Rehabilitation and Council of Torture Survivors. During my work, I focused on the diversity of staff and beneficiaries, which has always made the work more equitable and represented the population served.



## Miriam Cherbib

Town, State: Sequim, Washington

Occupation or Job Title: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Practitioner, Principal at Ethos and Consultant at Speaking Justice

Email: mcherbib@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** Member since January 2023

**Other Relevant Experience:** Active Member of a local Racial Justice Collective  
Co-creator and facilitator of a city-wide dialogue on race, equity, and inclusion

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I identify as an Arab cisgender woman, a first and second-generation immigrant, and the mother of a bi-racial child.

I grew up in France in a community of international human rights activists, many of whom were active members of Amnesty International. My father and his friends were dissidents of the dictatorship in Tunisia and were constantly under threat of being sent to jail and tortured.

Those childhood experiences gave me:

- A desire to understand how powerful international organizations impact the lives of billions of people.
- A deep appreciation of the role civil society has in preventing and correcting injustices.

After getting a Master's in International Economics, I worked in research and designed and facilitated dialogues on climate change and energy policy among 10 European countries.

After moving to the USA in 2014, I dedicated myself to teaching children cultural competency and social-emotional learning.

Then, I created my DEIB consulting business, supporting most of our local nonprofit and government organizations.

I now also work for an international DEIB company and support dozens of nonprofit organizations of all sizes in aligning their internal and external practices with their values.

**Candidate Statement:** Amnesty International has always been part of my life, and I would be honored to serve on the Board of Directors.

As a board member, I would bring experience in:

- Conflict resolution and cross-cultural dialogue
- Implementing DEIB in nonprofit and humanitarian organizations
- Supporting boards and leadership in creating meaningful strategic plans
- Navigating multi-faceted challenges in a strategic and holistic way



## Adrian DeDomenico

Town, State: Newton, Massachusetts

Occupation or Job Title: Senior Director, Finance for Tides Center (tides.org)

Email: adedomenico@gmail.com (personal); adedomenico@tides.org (work)

**Amnesty International Experience:** I am honored to serve as an Amnesty donor and member of local group AI15.

**Other Relevant Experience:** As a finance and program management professional, I have devoted my skills to advancing social justice and human rights. I worked on campaigns opposing the global arms trade and promoting relief for those affected by the conflict in Syria. As a documentary producer, I make films with partners, like Intersex Nigeria, that uphold the dignity of people facing human rights abuses due to armed conflict and discrimination.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Raised in Oakland, CA, and now living in Newton, MA, I am committed to Amnesty's mission to protect people wherever justice, freedom, and dignity are threatened. I have 20+ years of nonprofit experience—including at Oxfam, World Education, and Tides Center. I believe that committed finance professionals are critical to achieving measurable impact. My role has been to ensure organizational health and thereby enable entities like Amnesty to pursue their mission.

**Candidate Statement:** As a Board candidate, I believe—now more than ever—that it is crucial to strengthen our voice and deliver impact. I think I am uniquely qualified to help Amnesty elevate its work, bringing hands-on experience and what my colleagues describe as “deep listening, genuine curiosity, a collaborative nature, and innate kindness.” I will ensure that AIUSA continues to advance with a justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion lens. As an expert in financial and fiduciary responsibility, I am well-equipped to support the AIUSA board in its governance obligations.

I'm deeply committed to the principles of human rights and justice for which AIUSA stands, and to ensuring that members' concerns are addressed. I ask for your vote so that I can work as part of the Board of Directors to serve AIUSA's mission and values. Together, we can ensure a more equitable and inclusive society.



## Aymen Dewji

Town, State: Hyattsville, Maryland & Toronto, Canada

Occupation or Job Title: Managing Partner

Email: Aymen.dewji@shiftright.ca

**Other Relevant Experience: United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Change Advisor**

Led the analysis of the operating model, governance structure, & culture and provided recommendations for improvement.

**United Way, Community Engagement Advisor**

Led a number of **'Community Speaks'** workshops to ascertain gaps between critical constituent needs and existing programs.

**World Vision, Outreach Ambassador**

Evaluated multilateral partnerships in order to develop more effective mechanisms for support, visibility and engagement.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I am the CEO & Managing Partner at ShiftRight Consulting, a Human Capital firm. I bring 16 years of experience managing enterprise change. I have partnered with organizations such as the United Nations, World Vision, and United Way to improve existing governance mechanisms, internal processes and culture. As a female entrepreneur, I have focused on elevating the voice of minority and women-owned businesses particularly in traditionally male dominated industries such as energy and mining.

**Candidate Statement:** Central to my personal mission is a desire to amplify the voices and strengthen the power of traditionally marginalized communities. This mission stems from my own lived experiences as a member of a minority group. Fundamental to Amnesty's mission is a world equilibrium rebalance, one that acknowledges the deficiency, and challenges the existing systems of selectively applicable 'rules-based governance'. I deeply recognize that effective change requires collective action.

I have partnered with mission-driven organizations including: the United Nations & United Way, to amplify the voices of the most marginalized. I would bring the following as a board member:

- Strategies to align on the strategic and operational objectives of Amnesty
- Insights to ensure inclusive advocacy, representation, & power of the BIPOC community
- Skills in governance, change management, operational and multilateral partnership development.



## Johnathan Gooch

Town, State: San Antonio, Texas

Occupation or Job Title: Communications Director, Equality Texas

Email: johnathangooch@icloud.com

**Other Relevant Experience:**

- Spearheaded coalition project to petition UN about LGBTQ crisis in Texas
- Provided legal and strategic support to Chagossians after UN Court of Justice ruling
- Taught international humanitarian law for the American Red Cross
- Supported project to hold Russia accountable for enforced disappearances in Chechnya
- Communications Director at Equality Texas, the largest LGBTQ advocacy group in Texas
- Editor in Chief of Texas International Law Journal, ranked #4 in world at the time
- Volunteered with Trevor Project crisis hotline for LGBTQ youth

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Over the past decade, I have cultivated the skillset to successfully navigate between the Texas Supreme Court and a refugee shelter in Dallas. The broad range of roles I have filled over the years has challenged me to sharpen my leadership skills, to communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders, and to foster strategic growth.

**Candidate Statement:** As a queer man living in Texas, I bring a unique perspective on the human rights crisis we are facing in the US today. Leadership on human rights must start at home, and we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. The dramatic increase in engagement and media coverage that I have helped to facilitate at Equality Texas demonstrates my ability to strike a chord with the populace in a state dominated by far-right lawmakers. In the 2023 legislative session Texas lawmakers filed more anti-LGBTQ bills than any other state, and yet we had more activists show up to the capitol than ever before. I hope that my experience mobilizing activists in an infamously anti-humanitarian state with history of low voter turnout can help AIUSA engage and activate communities that may have historically been apathetic or disengaged.



## Njambi Good (she, her)

Town, State: Berkeley, California (Ohlone land)

Occupation or Job Title: Rainforest Action Network's Deputy Executive Director

Email: njambigood@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** Currently a Business and Human Rights Thematic Specialist, previously Deputy Executive Director, Campaigns and Membership, Campaign Director, National Student and Youth Program Manager, and student group member.

**Other Relevant Experience:** I have 20+ years of non-profit management experience including expertise around the formation and implementation of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion programs. Currently, I work for an environmental justice organization focused on preventing climate change and deforestation.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I grew up in southwest Virginia in a family very committed to education, social justice, and community improvement. It seemed only natural to commit my professional life to work in social and environmental justice.

**Candidate Statement:** I am running for the AIUSA board because I want to deeply support the grassroots human rights organization that has been so instrumental in my own education and growth as a social justice advocate. I have been involved with AIUSA for 20+ years in a variety of ways, from being in a student group to being on staff to recently joining AIUSA's volunteer Business and Human Rights group. My experience in nonprofit work, spanning more than two decades in critical areas including organizational development, budgeting, campaign strategy, governance,

grassroots mobilization, and most importantly, volunteer leadership, would be beneficial to AIUSA's work.

I have experience and deep commitment to supporting grassroots leaders, youth, and having incredibly impactful campaigns that are so critically important at this moment in time. Amnesty's broader work on individuals at risk is also essential to the broader human rights movement, and is a great entree to connecting with new communities.

I have always viewed myself as a servant leader, and very much want to ensure that AIUSA has the financial foundation and infrastructure necessary for the long-term success of its work. I am excited about the opportunity to support AIUSA's human rights work and grassroots leadership.

## Penelope Halkiadakis



Town, State: Cleveland, Ohio

Occupation or Job Title: Doctor of Medicine (MD) and Master of Public Health (MPH) Candidate at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Email: phalkiadakis@aiusaboard.org

### Amnesty International Experience:

*AIUSA Board (2021-present)*

- Vice Chair (2022-present)
- Governance Committee Chair (2022-present)
- Member-at-Large (2022)

*Member Leader (2012-2021)*

- Student Group Founder and Activist
- National Youth Collective, Founder and Youth Strategy Co-author
- Strategic Planning Committee
- International Engagement Committee
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Council
- NJ Student Activist Coordinator
- AGM Programming Committee
- AI Morocco Youth Summit Delegate
- Technology Consultant, Youth and Student Program

### Other Relevant Experience:

- City Violence Prevention Index Intern at Community Justice Action Fund
- Hospital for Special Surgery Orthopedic & Global Health Summer Research Fellow
- Political Action Liaison, Latino Medical Student Association
- Diversity Affairs Officer, Case Western Committee of Student Representatives

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I was born to parents who emigrated from Costa Rica and Greece to overcome intergenerational trauma and human rights abuse. Amnesty found me at 15, providing me with a transformative organizing framework to confront an increasingly hostile environment against the Latinx community and gender-based violence. I found a community, sense of agency, and a way to stake claim to my Latinx heritage. The power of grassroots action opened my eyes to the universality of human solidarity and inspired me to work at the intersection of healthcare and human rights.

**Candidate Statement:** I have been an active member of AIUSA for nearly twelve years. Thank you for allowing me to serve on the AIUSA Board of Directors as a twice-elected Vice Chair, Chair of the Governance Committee, and member of the Executive Committee where I have spearheaded transformative initiatives to enhance our governance, culture, and people power.

We need to draw on our strengths in evidence-based research and people-powered advocacy to intensify our resistance to injustice. As a Board member, I will continue to focus on: shaping accessible governance processes; building diverse, activated, and intergenerational membership; and leveraging new technologies to innovate, eliminate silos, and increase our human rights impact.

## Callandra (Callie) Moore



Town, State: Tempe, Arizona & Toronto, Ontario

Occupation or Job Title: Research Software Engineer, the Hospital for Sick Children

Email: callandra.youngmore@gmail.com

### Amnesty International Experience:

- Deputy Secretary, Board of Directors
- Delegate to the Amnesty International Global Assembly
- Governance Consultant for the AIUSA Board of Directors
- National Resolutions Committee Chair and Rapporteur (2016-2024)
- Local Group 18 (2019-present)
- National Youth Collective Member, Youth Strategy Co-Author (2020-2022)
- Founder and President of McClintock High School Student Group (2014-2018)

**Brief Biographical Statement:** As a young Asian-American woman born and raised in Arizona, Amnesty International provided me with a global community, power, and a conduit for my anger in the face of rising anti-immigrant, anti-woman, and anti-rights rhetoric. In the ten years since joining AIUSA, I have channeled my passion as an activist, governance expert, and leader for our organization locally and nationally.

My activism has inspired me to work at the intersection of data, technology, and human rights. As a software engineer for the Hospital for Sick Children and previously an analyst for the Investigative Journalism Foundation, I used this lens to speak truth to power in political finance, protect patient privacy, and uncover demographic bias in artificial intelligence tools.

**Candidate Statement:** In my decade of AIUSA leadership, I have gained strategic insight into all facets of our organization -- from our grassroots human rights advocacy to the unsexy governance minutia. Furthermore, I possess strong analytical skills, understanding of experimentation, and drive to ask new and interesting questions.

As a Board member, I will prioritize:

- Improving the efficacy, accessibility, transparency, and accountability of AIUSA's decision-making processes;
- Building diverse, sustainable, and activated membership; and
- Leveraging data-driven experimentation to explore evidence-based approaches and strategies across our organization.

AIUSA must continue to innovate to ensure our movement is agile, effective, sustainable, and remains at the forefront of grassroots human rights activism. I believe my contributions and experience will be invaluable as we learn, adapt, and experiment to strengthen our fight for justice.



## Kindred Motes

Town, State: New York City, New York

Occupation or Job Title: Founder and Managing Director, KM Strategies Group (KMSG)

Email: km@kmstrategiesgroup.com

### Amnesty International Experience:

- Collaborator, member, or donor (2013-24)
- Student Member, Amnesty Essex [University] (2013-14)
- Worked for the Amnesty campaign, Control Arms, at the UN (2015-16)

**Other Relevant Experience:** Collaborated with Amnesty while working for UK charity REDRESS (2014) and on media/digital strategy with AIUSA while at SPLC (2014-15) and Vera Institute (2016-19)

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Since 2012, I've led campaigns with organizations like AIUSA, the ACLU, SPLC, HRW, HRC, and Vera Institute of Justice that have reached 400M+ people and secured 1.1M+ followers. In 2021, I took my background in communications, advocacy, philanthropy, and social justice and founded a firm, KMSG, to leverage those skills for many nonprofit organizations and movements.

**Candidate Statement:** I'm a gay, first-generation college graduate from a working-class Alabama family. From my rural farm childhood to advocacy work at the US Congress, UN General Assembly, UK Parliament, and beyond, I've worked to spotlight movements, draw attention to new leaders, amplify underrepresented communities, and advance social change. My firm, KMSG, is an NGLCC-certified minority-owned company. We donate 10% of revenue to social justice; we've given \$100,000+ since 2021. 87% of our client work has been for projects managed by women, people of color, and/or LGBTQ+ people.

I hope to leverage my expertise on the AIUSA board. My work, including raising nearly \$2M for nonprofits in 2023-24, could help expand and diversify AIUSA's support.

I bring 6 years of existing board service. I serve as Vice Chair of the ACLU of Alabama's Board and as Development Committee Chair. In 2020, I served on its Executive Director Search Committee. I serve on Fountain House's advisory board and formerly served as Senior Advisor to Global Citizen and New America. From 2022 to 2024, I served as Interim Chief of Staff for The Tow Foundation, where I oversaw a grant-making portfolio of \$25M+.

## Kendrick Perkins

Town, State: Boston, Massachusetts

Occupation or Job Title: Learning Experience Design at Amazon Web Services

Email: perkinkendrick@live.com

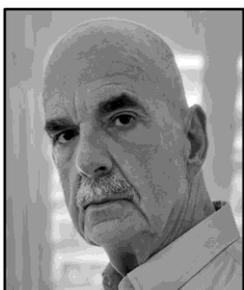
### Amnesty International Experience:

- Ethics Committee, April 2020 – Present
- Interim Vice Chair, AIUSA Board of Directors, March 2022 – October 2022
- Co-Chair, Nominating Committee, 2016 – 2021
- Southern Representative, AGM Program Committee, 2014 – 2016
- Southern Representative, National Youth Action Committee, 2013 – 2015

**Brief Biographical Statement:** Kendrick is a Learning Experience Designer focused on industry enablement at AWS. His career spans learning and design across corporate, non-profit, and K-12 sectors. He earned an Ed.M. from the Harvard University where he was an Urban Scholar, as well as B.A. from Stephen F. Austin State University.

**Candidate Statement:** As a gay Black man raised in the rural south, I know what it means to be marginalized, ostracized, and silenced. I have also experienced the impact we can make through collective action, fighting to uphold the principles of human rights at home and abroad. Over the past decade through AIUSA, I have fought the good fight alongside activists from across the country from campuses to courthouses ensuring human rights and human dignity are not only respected, but upheld through our institutions. The people of this organization, many whom I personally call good friends, inspire me to use my voice and be the change I want to see. And it is because of this I am privileged to be running for the AIUSA board of directors.

As a member of the AIUSA board of directors, I hope to use my voice to be an advocate for our diverse activists and a steward for our organization, ensuring our policies, procedures, and programs all work together to propel our movement forward. As a long time member of this organization, I know we have room to grow, equally I also know when we work together toward a common cause we can accomplish wondrous things.



## John M. (Jack) Rendler

Town, State: Calistoga, California

Occupation or Job Title: Retired Executive Director

Email: rendlerj@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** An active member since 1978, joining, forming, and chairing local groups; I served as the volunteer membership coordinator for California. I have been on site trying to prevent executions. As a member of the AIUSA staff, I was responsible for organizing the thirteen western states, and served as Director of Campaigns. For the past twelve years, I have been the country specialist on North Korea. I have organized and trained Amnesty's presence in Nepal and the Caribbean, and have been a delegate to the International Council Meeting.

**Other Relevant Experience:** In Goma, Congo, with Unicef, I resettled children orphaned by the genocide in Rwanda. For ten years, I spent four months each year living in a Burmese monastery teaching monks English and human rights. I have taught ESL to Minnesota immigrants from Somalia, and have been executive director of The Advocates for Human Rights in Minneapolis.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** I grew up and was educated in Boston. I earned a B.A. in international relations from Boston University, and an M.A. in human rights from San Francisco State. I lived in New England for 25 years, the Midwest for 25 years, and currently reside in California.

**Candidate Statement:** I believe with all my heart in the mission, mandate, and purpose of Amnesty International. I have observed the direct effects of our work in eastern Europe, north Africa, and southeast Asia. My governance experience includes being executive director of two nonprofit organizations, and chairing the boards of World Without Genocide, and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. My commitment to diversity stems largely from growing up in Boston at a time of stark racial divide and my parents' expectation that we would always see, say, and do the next right thing.

## Karen Robinson



Town, State: Holicong, Pennsylvania

Occupation or Job Title: Program Director, Human Rights Education, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights

Email: krobison@aiusaboard.org

### Amnesty International Experience:

- Current Board member serving as Chair of Audit Committee, on Governance Committee and Membership Board Consultation Protocols working group
- Human Rights Education Director, Co-Chair, International HRE Coordinating Committee
- Mid-Atlantic Deputy Regional Director and Acting Director

### Other Relevant Experience:

- American University – Office of Student Activities
- RFK Human Rights Education Director
- Brooklyn Friends School Board: co-chair and strategic planning
- Newtown Friends School Board: strategic planning and DEI committees

**Brief Biographical Statement:** My career has focused on advancing human rights and social justice issues through community and youth engagement and human rights education, covering a range of issues across many educational levels both in the U.S. and internationally. I also have extensive experience in program development, strategic planning, training, and public speaking.

**Candidate Statement:** I am running for AIUSA Board of Directors to give back to the organization that launched my human rights journey. When I started at AIUSA, my knowledge of human rights was limited. Like so many in the U.S I had not been taught about human rights and what little was made available focused on violations outside the US. It did not take long to recognize that human rights work would be my life's work, I just needed the language and framework and AIUSA provided that for me.

If we are to realize long-term sustained change in the human rights landscape, we need:

- to increase the human rights literacy rate,
- human rights to be understood with clear avenues for creating change,
- young people to realize the relevance of human rights in their lives,
- to work **with** communities and schools to bring human rights learning into every educational ecosystem.

I believe this is the key challenge facing AIUSA. I want AIUSA to be bolder, inclusive and the leader in human rights education and youth engagement. I will bring my 30+ years of experience to help realize this vision.

## Damir S. Utrzan, Ph.D., LMFT, DAAETS

Town, State: Maple Grove, Minnesota

Occupation or Job Title: Chief Compliance and Strategic Development Officer, Horowitz Health

Email: Damir@horowitzhealth.com

### Amnesty International Experience: Member

### Other Relevant Experience:

- Council Member, State Advisory Council on Mental Health
- Member, Department of Human Services Performance Management Council
- Unaffiliated Research Scientist, Institutional Review Board
- Research and Innovation Office, University of Minnesota
- Grant Reviewer, Administration for Children and Families
- Office of Refugee Resettlement, United States Department of Health and Human Services
- Advisory Board Member, Minority Fellowship Program
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Volunteer Mental Health Professional, Advocates for Human Rights
- Doctoral Internship in Trauma Psychology, Center for Victims of Torture
- Consultant, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

**Brief Biographical Statement:** As the Chief Compliance and Strategic Development Officer at Horowitz Health, Dr. Utrzan champions regulatory adherence and corporate growth. With expertise in market analysis and resource management, he excels in enhancing treatments for co-occurring disorders. His global perspective, shaped by his journey from Yugoslavia to the United States as an asylum seeker, enriches his approach. Dr. Utrzan holds a Doctorate in Family Social Science with a specialization in Couple and Family Therapy and a minor in Human Rights from the University of Minnesota Medical School. His work promotes mental health and human rights, especially for underrepresented populations.

**Candidate Statement:** Running for the Amnesty International of the United States Board, I draw from my personal history of seeking asylum to my professional advocacy for human rights. My nonprofit governance experience at the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation has equipped me with vital leadership skills, emphasizing hope and humanity. My dedication to diversity and equality has guided my career, advocating for marginalized communities. I aim to contribute my passionate advocacy, leadership expertise, and strong belief in diversity to the Board, ensuring our mission embodies the global human experience and remains a symbol of hope for human rights.



## Eli Vargas (he/him/his)

Town, State: Morro Bay, California (Chumash Land)  
Occupation or Job Title: Advocacy Director - Climate Mobility Community Action Network  
Email: elijonathanvargas@gmail.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** I've advocated for Indigenous rights, refugees, and free speech alongside AIUSA staff while serving as an AIUSA member and volunteer.

**Other Relevant Experience:** I have over a decade of human rights leadership at organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, Greenpeace, Mi Familia Vota, and the International Mayan League. I managed multi-million dollar budgets, led the hiring of over 20 staff, and created professional development programming for Indigenous staff members. I led organizational governance as a member of the Racial Justice Accountability Committee at Greenpeace USA and the Executive Committee of the Progressive Workers Union.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** My mother and sister were undocumented for most of my childhood. We experienced homelessness. These experiences have inspired me to fight for my community. My journey includes organizing to defeat Sheriff Joe Arpaio in the 2016 elections, taking direct actions to protect our democracy, helping pass Indigenous rights legislation, and working in a coalition to defeat the construction of a racist pipeline in Tennessee. I'm currently earning an MA in Refugee Protection & Forced Migration Studies while working to fight for human rights in situations of climate-induced migration.

**Candidate Statement:** As someone who represents the next generation of activists, I have grown up with the specter of the climate crisis looming and I have only known a political landscape with authoritarianism on the rise. I bring a strategic vision shaped by personal and professional advocacy in democracy, environmental justice, and domestic and international human rights. All of these issues are related and will continue to grow in importance. With climate change exacerbating inequities, I aim to position AIUSA to address these challenges effectively. I am a consensus builder, strong project manager, and creative collaborator. I'll ensure effective governance, creating a more impactful AIUSA.



## Hazar Yueksel

Town, State: San Francisco, California  
Occupation or Job Title: Research Scientist, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Semiconductors  
Email: aiusa@hazaryueksel.com

**Amnesty International Experience:** I joined AIUSA to strengthen its position because of the recent significant advancements in AI and semiconductors. I became an active member, particularly with Group 30, and engaged with Amnesty Tech as my research directly ties to human rights issues, e.g. mass surveillance, uniquely enhancing AIUSA's capabilities.

**Other Relevant Experience:** My experience spans from improving AI's fairness, safety, security, and privacy to contributing to UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, and SPCA and advocating for the European Convention on Human Rights.

**Brief Biographical Statement:** With roles at Intel, IBM Research, and Columbia University and with a PhD in Electrical Engineering from EPFL, Switzerland, I have a diverse technical and international background. My work treats algorithmic fairness as a figure of merit, challenging prevailing norms within the field.

**Candidate Statement:** I grew up in Türkiye with half-Turkish, half-Kurdish heritage, two groups with historical and contemporary tensions. My firsthand discrimination experiences have fueled my resolve for human rights.

Advocating for inclusive technology, I'm running for AIUSA's Board to safeguard against discrimination and other harms caused by algorithms, emphasizing the interconnectedness of technology with all human rights issues, particularly racial justice, individuals-at-risk, and national security.

Urging AIUSA to protect individuals targeted not only by governments but also by private entities, such as corporations, my vision includes supporting those further marginalized by technological advancements.

My international perspective and professional expertise, underpinned by a personal dedication to justice and equity, uniquely positions me to help guide AIUSA through the challenges of the digital era.

I seek to energize AIUSA's mission through collaborative strategy development, particularly on social media, search engines, and large language models (e.g. ChatGPT). Visit [www.hazaryueksel.com](http://www.hazaryueksel.com) to co-craft responsive measures against unethical technology uses and learn more about my proposed solutions to discrimination and other harms caused by algorithms.