

UNA-USA MAINE HISTORY

Formation and Early Years 1987-2000

The Midcoast Chapter of the United Nations Association (UNA) began in 1987 and in 1991 was renamed the UNA Maine Chapter to reflect the entire State of Maine.

A founder and the first President of UNA Maine, Thomas H.E. Quimby, had retired to Maine in 1985 after having served in the Peace Corps, and deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs at the State Department. In his work to create the chapter, Quimby assembled an impressive and dedicated first board of directors for the UNA-USA Maine Chapter.

In 1998, the Chapter initiated a Maine Model UN Conference in Augusta. By 2000, after months of preparatory work with UNA-USA staff in NYC, Maine's Model UN took root on the University of Southern Maine (USM) campus under faculty member Dr. Lynn Kuzma. Nicknamed 'MeMUNC' by the students, it grew steadily from a handful of high school student delegates to well over five hundred in less than two decades. Board member Dr. Timothy Ruback, a professor of international relations at USM, is MeMUNC's current director. The Chapter continues to support MeMUNC programming and students.

The UNA Maine Chapter has, from its inception, promoted education to build public support for constructive US policies on matters of global concern and for the vital work of the UN. Early Chapter programming included eminent speakers (congressmen, governors, ambassadors, academics, retired US Foreign Service officers, current and retired UN and UNA officers), and included collaboration with groups such as the World Affairs Council, the League of Women Voters, the World Federalist Association, Peace Action Maine, and more.

Educational activities by members included distributing UN informational materials at libraries, fairs, churches, and schools, speaking at Rotary meetings, American Association of University Women (AAUW), Elder Hostel (now known as Road Scholars) and more. Chapter members offered essay contests for youth and produced regular newsletters. Members also wrote letters to the editors of local newspapers, and especially of note was R. Bruce Stedman, a retired Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and 10-year board member, who was a prolific writer of bold newspaper letters and op-eds about international events and policies.

2001 to present

With the start of the 21st Century, the Chapter has continued to promote education about the UN through UN Day (October 24) and Human Rights Day (December 10), annual meetings, conversations with our Congressional delegation, “tabling” at the Brunswick Peaceworks Fair and the Common Ground Fair in Unity, letters to newspaper editors, collaboration with other organizations, and regular quarterly newsletters with “news bites” from the UNA wire. From 2000 to 2015, the Chapter worked to promote achievement of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s). Many of the goals were achieved. In 2015 the more ambitious 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) campaign was adopted by world leaders at the UN. Our Chapter, through the UNA took part in identifying the seventeen new goals and we continue to encourage local, state, and national efforts to achieve the goals by 2030.

In 2007, the Chapter experimented with an Executive Committee led by a “Moderator.” After seven years, the leadership structure returned to the more familiar board of directors with officers and committee chairs.

Since 2015, the Chapter has expanded its outreach through technology. Gradually, with the assistance of UNA-USA friends and staff, the Chapter has worked to include more use of social media, e-newsletters, Zoom meetings, and an interactive website with PayPal. Zoom has enabled Board members to participate in monthly UNA-USA National Leadership calls and all members to access nation-wide programming.

MeMUNC has continued to grow and become stronger. The COVID years have created many challenges, but MeMUNC has shown resilience and adaptability.

The Chapter operates on a tight budget with all volunteers, and our membership remains steady. Our e-newsletter membership has increased to almost 350 recipients spread throughout Maine. In 2018, a campus UNA chapter at Bates College was formed, and we as the Maine Chapter have collaborated on programming.

Despite pandemic limitations, the Chapter continues to be guided by its own five-year strategic plan to increase visibility, membership, social media postings,

number of partner organizations, advocacy for the UN, and our relationship with MeMUNC.

Presidential Honor Roll

Thomas H.E. Quimby	1987-1993
Walter Van Hoek	1993-1994
James Storer	1994-1995
Gene McClure	1995-1996
Barbara Rossow	1996-1997
Edwin Hoyt	1997-1998
Robert S. Howe	1998-2002
Thurston Holt	2002-2003
Wendy Hazard	2003-2007
Thesil Morlan (Moderator)*	2007-2010
Sarah Walton (Moderator)*	2010-2011
Julia Edwards (Moderator)*	2011-2014
Timothy Stretton ((Moderator)*	2014-2015
Lucinda E. White	2015-2022
Andrea Keushguerian	2022—

*During the years 2007 to 2015, by consensus, the board operated under a different model. They called themselves an Executive Committee with one person serving as “moderator.”

January 18, 2022