

Program Committee, Chair
Barbara Nielsen

3 year term

Candidate Statement

I have been a member of the Program Committee since 2008, when I served on the Board as Treasurer and have learned a lot over the years, including through my service as co-chairs of two of the issues committees. The Program Chairs could help members at the national level who are most active in the areas around which our issues committees are organized recognize, define and achieve potential for achieving support for our members and our public voice through moral suasion. We can work to encourage regularization of administrative processes, to explore ways to demystify our administrative workings and ensure that our members actively use our inherent general membership stakeholder authority as the true source of authority and self-determination within the section. I am confident that we will be able to re-establish the highly-successful Rapid Response Team for moving the research, analyses and drafting speedily through the relevant issues committees and other relevant groups within the section when we need to have a public statement published on behalf of the Section and have other ideas for additional ways in which our members can become involved in ways that might be a little different than monthly phone calls on issues committee and Program Committee calls. Program involves outreach to our members, to potential new members, to our communities and to our world, and to do that will require interrelating and working effectively with many others on the Board and throughout the Section. I am passionate about WILPF and our program work and striving to improve the effectiveness of how we do what we do and working collaboratively with other members to make that happen and am excited and eager for the possibility to be able to do this from vantage point this committee service offers. I am hopeful that we can make service at the national level exciting to many members who might not have been sure that this kind of “stepping up” is for them – so that we can strengthen the ties and information between branches and the issues committees and general members active locally with the national overview provided through such involvement as the issues committees and other national Program work. I very much hope to be given this opportunity to serve our members and WILPF.

SUMMARY: California Life Member, joined 45+ years ago, San Francisco branch. National board service (treasurer/finance committee chair 2008-2009; nominating committee chair 2014-2015 terms; ad hoc bylaws committee. 2015 US Section voting delegate at Centennial International Congress. 2014 Detroit Congress Parliamentarian and member of its organizing committees and Resolutions committee. 2017 Chicago Congress member of Resolutions committee. 2008 Des Moines Congress workshop presenter; 2017 Chicago Congress workshops presenter. Co-chair Advancing Human Rights Issues Committee, Co-chair DISARM-End Wars Issues Committee and member of others, Program Committee member and founding Rapid Response Committee member for WILPF-US Public Statements on covering MEWMDfZ, Syria, Charleston, Ferguson, others. Member, Hamas booklet editing committee; local activism at branch, regional and state level.

Application

1. US WILPF is a mission-driven membership organization. What does that mean to you?

WILPF is comprised of members engaged in our mission in many ways – many of us are thriving at the “think globally – act locally” level and very involved in our communities through our branches or when at-large, engaging with like-minded individuals in work we feel passionate about in coalition with other organizations. The ideal of our member-driven membership organization is that we are democratically-run on a non-hierarchical basis. This sometimes takes more time than some of us might want, but it is a participatory way of being transparent and engaging multiple points of view. I have been part of this process for about 45 years now and while democracy is messy, it embodies what we preach that is necessary for good governance and social justice. One place that such involvement can be encouraged and nurtured is through the national board, and the presidency, or in our case, a co-presidency, and using this office’s mandate to encourage all of the good ideas I have seen members have, including communicating with one another, is something that can be accomplished that will help motivate existing members and grow new members.

2. Please describe your involvement in WILPF, including a brief summary of work at the level of branch, national, and/or international:

MEMBERSHIP: I joined WILPF in the early 1970s and was active in the then-Berkeley branch, doing much work on women and the federal budget, including collaborative community organizing, public hearings and educational empowerment. Pro-peace and diversion of military budget funds has always been of interest and part of my activism. I became an active and current member of the San Francisco branch, working with others collaboratively through a core member group and in 2007 began reviewing matters at the national level that were of concern to many in the general membership in my branch, regionally and nationally and am a Life Member.

SERVICE FOR NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT: I served as treasurer, 2008-2009, and through the 2014 and 2015 term boards in a two-year general member-elected role as chair of the national nominating committee. I currently seek member approval for my further national board service as one of the two Program Committee Chairs.

SERVICE FOR NATIONAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT: I became active member of the national standing Program Committee in 2008, and have been serving as co-chair of the Advancing Human Rights issues committee for several years and after several years on the leadership team, also serve as co-chair of the DISARM-End Wars issues committee. I continue to maintain active roles in the Middle East issues committee and participate as I am able in the Corporations v. Democracy and Earth Democracy (also leadership team) issues committees.

I presented workshops at the 2008 Des Moines Triennial Congress on what our governing structure entails (bylaws), with Libby Frank, and served on the 2014 Detroit Congress and Congress Program committees and also served as the Parliamentarian of that Congress; and convened a workshop on human trafficking with my then co-chair of the AHR committee. I was selected as one of the five US Section official voting delegates to the Centennial International Congress in The Hague, Netherlands, and also participated in the subsequent public conference sponsored by WILPF, both memorable experiences.

The Program Committee members appointed me as their representative on an ad hoc evaluation committee of the Practica Programs at the UN Commission on the Status of Women annual meetings and I worked with the evaluation committee on review and analysis of the student practica and general member Local 2 Global practica programs; I continue to speak up for better integration of the general

membership and practica participants, particularly the student participants, and a more established synergy for the betterment of our program work and understanding of our oversight responsibilities of the UN to make sure that it acts in keeping its primary mission of working to ensure world peace. I am a member of the Practica Programs oversight committee.

SERVICE FOR MEMBER GOVERNANCE AND EMPOWERMENT: Member of board ad hoc bylaws committee that successfully recommended changes in bylaws that were approved by general member ballot voting for more direct member input in electing the entire board, as well as having staggered election cycles and board terms (2012) and I worked closely and amicably with our operations director to prepare the numerous pieces of the bylaws balloting material to be sent to members of record for their vote and later again to publicize the results of the vote to our general membership and also worked with the counting branch on the logistics of the balloting and tallying and related matters.

SERVICE FOR OUR PUBLIC VOICE: I have served on the initial Rapid Response Team (RRT) of the national Program Committee, (as well as doing drafting work as a member of the various issues committees) and participated in drafting many of our WILPF-US public statements in the last several years, including Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (MEWMDZF), Syria, Charleston, Ferguson and others. I served as a member of the editing committee for the WILPF-US booklet on Hamas, a project of the Middle East issues committee, and continue collaborative work on this effort to have Hamas removed from the USDOS terrorist list. In California, I have worked with a small group to publicize the positions of WILPF-US as WILPF CALIFORNIA ACTION on several statewide ballot propositions, as well as participating in program activities undertaken by my branch, regional branches, and statewide branches coming together as California Cluster meetings. I have served as a member of the US Delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women meetings at the United Nations in 2016 (CSW60) and 2017 (CSW61) and interacted extensively with the students in the process and am very supportive of the reality and potential of this program for bringing younger people into WILPF as well as educating our membership on the interrelationships between WILPF and the United Nations and our offices at the UN and the effectiveness of the consultative work that is being done there. We need to better educate our members on how this all works and how knowing about this can benefit our section and our members.

3. Why are you interested in filling this position?

Please see my answer to the first question. I think it is important that members who understand that we are owned by ourselves, i.e., that we, the members, are the stakeholders of our organization, step up to offer service in roles such as national board service.

The Program Chairs are responsible for direct oversight of our program as the members have defined it within our overarching 1985 Principles and Policies and the international statements including the 2015 Manifesto, and finding ways to ensure that our members are able to engage in activism and education around our mission through our actions and campaigns that effect social change and work for world peace and, now, in addition to our environmental and immigration and racial justice work and work on peace in the Middle East, our umbrella action to "End the Whole Nuclear Era," of both nuclear weapons and nuclear power, at an exciting time when the United Nations General Assembly has just voted, 122 Member States strong, to move forward a Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty!

Our national issues committees are working on a wide range of matters, and a group of activists within the issues committees and national Program Committee met in retreat in the Winter of 2015 to review the range of our activism between peace and disarmament and clean and safe energy and environmental concerns and immigration and racial and social justice and human rights and the rights of women to be at all tables of authority under the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women Peace & Security) and its progeny and came up with ideas for strategic action in moving our activism forward throughout our membership. At the recent 33rd Triennial Congress in Chicago we distributed the summary document outlining the first highlights in this strategic planning process that, it turned out, loosely paralleled points that were made by the program of the

Congress itself, so that we have had two positive steps toward helping us focus on some ideas and tools to be brought to the membership as a whole as well as back to the issues committees themselves – opportunities for us to – from our members at large working in coalition with kindred organizations in their communities and our members in branches who have the benefit of collective WILPF activism on a local level for their community-based activism and education through our public statements made on our website and other social media outlets as well as good old-fashioned leafleting with paper handouts and demonstrating and showing up in silent or not-so-silent marching, rallying and witnessing and being seen. These are exciting times and while there is a lot to do, there is a lot of opportunity for learning and teaching and moving forward the agenda of peace and social justice we have pledged to undertake since 1915. We are planning on better outreach to kindred organizations and figuring out ways to find commonalities of interest to work in coalition and increase communications, knowledge and understanding so that we can build effective movements in peace, environment and human rights.

The Program Chairs could help members at the national level who are most active in the areas around which our issues committees are organized recognize, define and achieve potential for achieving support for our members and our public voice through moral suasion. We can work to encourage regularization of administrative processes, to explore ways to demystify our administrative workings and ensure that our members actively use our inherent general membership stakeholder authority as the true source of authority and self-determination within the section. I am confident that we will be able to re-establish the highly-successful Rapid Response Team for moving the research, analyses and drafting speedily through the relevant issues committees and other relevant groups within the section when we need to have a public statement published on behalf of the Section and have other ideas for additional ways in which our members can become involved in ways that might be a little different than monthly phone calls on issues committee and Program Committee calls. Program involves outreach to our members, to potential new members, to our communities and to our world, and to do that will require interrelating and working effectively with many others on the Board and throughout the Section.

Within the Program Committee's purview are several existing actions, ideas and campaigns and some discussions about possible new undertakings that can be developed and/or strengthened for the benefit of our overall program work I look forward to working, together with the other Program Chair, with members throughout the Section – the issues committees, the Program Committee, branches and at large, the national board, the directors of our annual Practica in Advocacy student and Local to Global Programs at the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women meetings. These positions also interact with others involved in our international programs, including but not limited to our Peace Women and Reaching Critical Will offices at the United Nations to move us forward in clarifying our program and political focus as well as re-achieving effectiveness in our public voice as we apply the values in our 1985 Principles & Policies to the issues we face as the US Section, locally in our communities and nationally and globally. The small group of members able to be at the Chicago Congress showed great enthusiasm for working together to work efficiently and effectively in setting goals and effecting peace and positive social change. The more we have more members participate, the more we can expand the number of our general members who embrace activism on these important and vital issues through WILPF.

4. Please describe your other non-WILPF work or involvement that you believe helps qualify you for this position:

I have strong research and analytic skills and have worked with people in collegial roles and in managerial roles for a long time. My background ranges from higher education administration in academic affairs (program and faculty areas) to working for a professional association (American Association of University Professors) as a professional staff member dealing with issues of academic freedom and tenure. In the legal world, I worked in support positions for many years that often required my listening to differing points of views and offering solutions to bring issues to resolutions that were

satisfactory to a variety of people simultaneously. I enjoy learning and helping others learn; I enjoy work well done and making that happen.

5. What skills can you offer in this position?

I have been a member of the Program Committee since 2008 and have learned a lot about what things work and what things work not-so-well and have shared in the ebb and flow of how we have come to where we are and share visions with many of our members, new and seasoned, about things to do to move our program and effectiveness in our activism around it forward. I have proven skills in encouraging others to take the chance at increasing their levels of involvement in WILPF and then feeling good about the stretches that they have made to do so. I believe in WILPF and in the good that comes from the work that we do and know that for us to continue in our mission towards peace and social justice we need to encourage and nurture more members to become involved, and then to help them in that involvement. I bring good and proven skills sets to these efforts. I firmly believe that collaborative decision-making and effective communications and information exchanges can be tremendously effective in encouraging joint ownership of ideas, goals, objectives and outcomes. And, in a membership-owned organization such as WILPF-US, this is all essential. And an exhilarating, if perhaps sometimes a little scary, way to build infrastructure, membership, and leadership skills for new leaders. We have begun a cycle of working to clarify our program and activities and areas affected, and the work to meld all of our interests into an overarching coherent whole. Many of our members are seeking to help find again our public voice and how we want to structure it, then make it heard more effectively and I believe that, working with others, I can help make this happen.

Activist Biography

- ✚ WILPF MEMBER since the 1970s ✚ LIFE MEMBER since 2008
- ✚ BERKELEY BRANCH: Originally active in the Berkeley branch (now East Bay); served for WILPF on task force that produced public hearings in Alameda County at the County Administration Building on the negative effects on women and families of federal spending and the military budget
- ✚ SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH: Active in leadership of the San Francisco branch and at the regional and national level of the Section since 2005; coordinated many activities and participated in many activities including representing the branch at local events
- ✚ CALIFORNIA BRANCHES: Co-coordinator for several years of California Branches Coordinating Group monthly informational telephone conferences
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: Elected by the membership to the national board of directors in 2008 as the section treasurer and served from 2008 through 2009
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: Served as member of the “1213 Race” committee for the determination to sell the property by JAPA with portion of proceeds to WILPF US
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: Served as member of the “Site” committee for determination of a “new home for WILPF” whether bricks-and-mortar or virtual NATIONAL BOARD: Elected by the membership to the national board of directors as chair of the nominating committee (2014 for initial two-year term under the new “staggered” board elections structure)
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: Serve on national ad hoc Bylaws committee reviewing and recommending changes in the bylaws for vote of the general membership by paper ballot on changes such as direct election of the president, changes in dues structure, changes in board terms to “staggered” office terms and annual elections
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: 32nd TRIENNIAL CONGRESS (DETROIT): Served on Congress Committee and Congress Program Committee; served on Congress Resolutions Committee; served as Congress Parliamentarian (2014) (also conducted several workshops)
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS: Selected as voting member of US Section Delegation to Centennial International WILPF Congress in The Hague and voted on several matters including election of board (2015)
- ✚ NATIONAL BOARD: 33rd TRIENNIAL CONGRESS (CHICAGO): Served on Congress Resolutions Committee (2017) (also conducted several workshops)
- ✚ NATIONAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Participating member since 2008; served as member of Rapid Response Team (RRT) for coordinating, editing, standardizing style on public statements of the US Section on matters of concern in the US and world affecting our principles and policies and mission to assure accurate and cogent policy statements that are publicized throughout our membership database and the WILPF US website and other social media and continue to serve in the RRT capacity on an informal basis

- ✧ NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEES: ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS: Elected by the committee membership to current service as co-chair of the Advancing Human Rights national issues committee
- ✧ NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEES: DISARM-END WARS: Serve on the leadership team; current service as one of three co-chairs of committee; member of the End the Whole Nuclear Era campaign committee and the EWNE UN Nuclear Ban Petition treaty
- ✧ NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEES: MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE: Served on editorial board of *Hamas at the Middle East Peace Table: Why?* Booklet
- ✧ NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEES: EARTH DEMOCRACY, CORPORATIONS VERSUS DEMOCRACY: Participate as capacity permits in these committees and remain on their listservs
- ✧ UN CSW WILPF-US PRACTICA IN ADVOCACY: Served as national Program Committee representative on *ad hoc* evaluation committee of WILPF US's annual student Practicum in Advocacy and the WILPF members' Local to Global programs at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), chaired by Abigail Ruane (now on staff of WILPF's Peace Women program at the UN, and contributed substantively to the final report on the programs
- ✧ UN CSW WILPF-US PRACTICA IN ADVOCACY: Selected as a member of US Section delegation to CSW60 in New York, attending numerous presentations and participated actively in interactions and mentoring with the students in the Practicum in Advocacy (2016) and reported back on same within the section
- ✧ UN CSW WILPF-US PRACTICA IN ADVOCACY: Chosen to serve on the Practica in Advocacy (student and Local to Global) oversight panel by the program leaders and participated as a member of the US Section delegation to CSW61 in New York, attending numerous presentations and participated actively in interactions and mentoring with the students in the Practicum in Advocacy (2017) and reporting back on same within the section