

## **Julie Kabukanyi**

**Position:** Nominating Committee Chair - full term, ends January 2028

Brockton, MA

Line of work/profession: Registered Nurse/President CAWEL in Boston/LAFCO in Kinshasa, DRC (community-based organizations)

How long have you been a member of WILPF US: 9 years: from 2015-2024

For each of these application questions, please use 1-2 paragraphs to answer. The content of this page will be posted on the WILPF US website.

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

To me, a mission-driven membership organization like WILPF means that every action and initiative is centered around the organization's core values of peace, justice, and freedom. This mission shapes both its strategic direction and daily operations, ensuring that members are united by a common goal. The active commitment of members to this mission is what drives WILPF's effectiveness and impact.

Being part of such an organization means that members are not just participants but active contributors who share responsibility for advancing the mission. It fosters collaboration and innovation as each member plays a role in driving the change WILPF seeks to achieve globally. As someone deeply committed to social justice and equality, I value this approach and, as a leader, would work to empower members to further WILPF's mission and expand its global influence.

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

My involvement with WILPF spans over a decade, with active contributions at the branch, national, and international levels. I began my journey in 2014 with Congo Action Now, a project of the Boston WILPF aiming to end sexual violence against women in the DRC. We played a key role in lobbying for the passage of H.2898, 'An Act Relative to Congo Conflict Minerals.' After persistent advocacy at the Massachusetts State House, Governor Charles Baker signed a resolve to ensure that minerals exporters from the DRC do not finance armed conflict, which had led to widespread human rights violations. Currently, I am involved with the Boston Branch's DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) efforts, developing strategies to engage BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members in WILPF's activities.

At the national level, I have contributed to several issue committees within WILPF, particularly the Human Rights Committee, where we address critical human rights issues. At the international level, I serve as the U.S. Representative to the WILPF International Advisory Board, advising the International Board on key areas such as the implementation of the International Programme and fostering political discussion. This role allows me to

ensure constant communication and collaboration between WILPF US and WILPF International, reinforcing my dedication to WILPF's global mission of promoting peace, justice, and gender equality.

### 3. Why are you interested in filling this position?

I am interested in the position of Nominating Committee Chair of WILPF US because it perfectly aligns with my lifelong commitment to peace, justice, and gender equality. WILPF's mission as the oldest women's peace organization resonates strongly with my values and experiences as a social justice advocate. Throughout my career, I have focused on empowering marginalized communities, particularly women, and I believe that WILPF offers a powerful platform to expand this work on a larger scale. The organization's dedication to peace and human rights is a mission I have long championed, and I am excited about the opportunity to further contribute to this cause.

My extensive involvement with WILPF at both the local, national and international levels has given me a deep understanding of the organization's goals, challenges, and potential. From lobbying for the Congo Conflict Minerals Act to serving as the U.S. Representative on the WILPF International Advisory Board, I have seen firsthand the impact WILPF can have on global peace efforts and women's empowerment. As Nominating Committee Chair, I would bring my leadership skills, ability to build consensus, and passion for advocacy to help the organization grow and address critical issues such as conflict resolution and climate justice. I am committed to ensuring that WILPF remains a dynamic force for positive change, empowering women and communities worldwide.

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

In addition to my long-standing involvement with WILPF, my professional background and leadership roles in other mission-driven organizations have further prepared me for the Nominating Committee Chair position at WILPF US. As a Registered Nurse with 24 years of experience, I have developed a deep understanding of public health, particularly in advocating for health equity and addressing disparities among marginalized populations. My career has equipped me with the ability to navigate complex systems, manage crises, and advocate for vulnerable communities—skills that are critical to leading a mission-focused organization like WILPF. My experience in handling high-stakes situations with empathy and efficiency will be invaluable in addressing global challenges and guiding WILPF through its peace-building initiatives.

As President and CEO of the Congolese American Women Empowerment and Leadership (CAWEL) in Boston and Leadership et Autonomisation de la Femme Congolaise (LAFCO) in Kinshasa, DRC, I have gained extensive experience in empowering marginalized women. Both organizations are dedicated to advancing women's lives through education, leadership development, and community outreach. My work at CAWEL has involved supporting African refugee and immigrant women, fostering leadership, and building partnerships, while at LAFCO, I have focused on empowering Congolese women through health education and economic development projects. Successfully securing grants for initiatives such as malaria and sanitation programs has strengthened my ability to manage

resources and deliver impactful results. These leadership experiences will serve WILPF's mission by helping grow the organization, strengthen membership, and advance global peace, equality, and justice.

5. What skills can you offer in this position?

As a candidate for the Nominating Committee Chair position at WILPF US, I bring a unique blend of leadership and advocacy experience that directly aligns with the organization's mission. With 24 years as a Registered Nurse, I have honed my leadership skills, managing teams in high-pressure settings and overseeing complex, mission-driven projects. In addition, as the founder and president of two women's organizations, I have led nonprofit initiatives aimed at empowering marginalized women. These roles have given me a deep understanding of organizational management, strategic planning, and program development, all of which are essential for effectively guiding WILPF's national and international efforts.

My work in advocacy and policy, including my role in Congo Action Now and the successful lobbying for the Congo Conflict Minerals Act, has provided me with invaluable experience in legislative change and advancing social justice. Through my work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, I have also developed the ability to navigate complex policy landscapes and advocate for marginalized communities. Moreover, my skills in conflict resolution and collaboration, particularly in mediating dialogue across diverse teams in both the U.S. and the DRC, will enhance WILPF's efforts. With a proven track record in budget management, grant acquisition, and cross-cultural communication, I am committed to advancing WILPF's mission of peace, justice, and gender equality, ensuring that it continues to empower women and communities globally.

### **Candidate Statement**

My name is Julie Kabukanyi, and I am running for the position of Nominating Committee Chair of WILPF US. Having been a dedicated member of WILPF for over a decade, I am committed to advancing WILPF's mission of promoting peace, justice, and gender equality. Throughout my years of involvement, I have served at various levels, from the branch to the international stage, gaining firsthand experience in leading initiatives that align with WILPF's core values.

As Nominating Committee Chair, my primary goal will be to strengthen WILPF's role in addressing the critical global challenges of our time—particularly those affecting women and marginalized communities. I aim to foster a collaborative and inclusive environment where all voices are heard and respected, empowering our members to take bold action on issues such as conflict resolution, climate justice, and human rights advocacy. I envision a WILPF that continues to build its membership while expanding its global influence by forging strategic partnerships and advocating for impactful policies. I bring with me over 24 years of leadership experience in public health, advocacy, and nonprofit management. As the founder and president of two mission-driven women's organizations—Congolesse American Women Empowerment and Leadership (CAWEL) in Boston and Leadership et Autonomisation de la Femme Congolaise (LAFCO) in Kinshasa—I have led efforts to empower marginalized women through leadership

development, education, and community outreach. My experience in these roles has equipped me with the skills necessary to guide WILPF in implementing effective programs, ensuring financial sustainability, and promoting global collaboration.

If elected as Nominating Committee Chair, I am committed to ensuring that WILPF US continues to thrive as a dynamic force for peace and justice. I will work to inspire and mobilize our members, strengthen communication between WILPF US and WILPF International, and enhance WILPF's impact in addressing pressing global issues. I look forward to the opportunity to serve WILPF US and contribute to its long-standing legacy of advocating for a more just and peaceful world.

Thank you for your support.

## **Resume**

### **PROFILE**

Registered Nurse with 24 years of expertise in healthcare, leadership, and advocacy; Manager of 2 women led nonprofit organizations, passionate about advancing world peace, social justice; health equity, and empowering women through policy development and program coordination. I bring a strong background in public health, social justice with a proven track record in nonprofit leadership and international collaboration.

### **EDUCATION**

PhD in Public Policy (in progress) John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

Master of Arts, International Relations John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA May 2019 |

Graduate Certificate in Gender, Leadership, and Public Policy John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA May 2015 |

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Magna Cum Laude) Salem State University, Salem, MA May 2000 |

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Registered Nurse Mass General Brigham, Boston, MA | September 2000 – Present

I provide high-quality care and manage patient needs in a high-pressure environment for over 20 years; collaborate with multidisciplinary teams to address patient health disparities and ensure culturally competent care.

Program Coordinator, Refugee and Immigrant Health Massachusetts Department of Public Health | August 2000 – August 2004

I spearheaded the implementation of the H. 4917 Emergency Room Interpreter Bill, ensuring access to interpreter services for non-English-speaking patients across Massachusetts hospitals; I developed and disseminated the PLINE (Primary Language is Not English) brochure to highlight linguistic challenges in public health.

President & CEO of 2 Community-based organizations Congolese American Women Empowerment and Leadership (CAWEL), Brockton, MA | 2016 – Present

Mission: empower African refugee and immigrant women through leadership development and public health education; I secured grants for community outreach initiatives, including a gynecologic cancer awareness campaign; I direct program management, budgeting, and strategic planning for health equity initiatives. Leadership et Autonomisation de la Femme Congolaise (LAFCO), Kinshasa, DRC | 2022 – Present

Mission: promotion of education and health for Congolese women. I secured funding for critical health programs, including a malaria and sanitation conference; I lead community-based efforts to improve women's health outcomes and increase educational opportunities.

## PUBLIC HEALTH PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Public Health Inspector H. 4917 Emergency Room Interpreter Bill, Commonwealth of Massachusetts implementation: I ensured hospital compliance and developed interpreter services for non-English-speaking patients.

Health Disparities Report Massachusetts Department of Public Health: I updated comprehensive reports on health outcomes for 21 ethnic groups, raising awareness of cultural and linguistic challenges.

PLINE Brochure Development Massachusetts Department of Public Health: I generated statistical reports using Department of Education data to highlight language barriers and their impact on health and education.

## RESEARCH & SCHOLARLY WORK

UNEP and Global Governance of Climate Change: An Ethical-Moral Stance for Effectiveness (2019); Congolese Women in Parliament: The Road to Democracy and Economic Development in the DRC (2018); Gender Equality Education: A Key to Eradicate Wartime Sexual Violence Against Women (2015); Immigrants and Healthcare in the City of Lynn: The Role of the Ideal Public Health Nurse (2000)

## MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

- U.S. Representative, WILPF International Advisory Board (2024–)
- President, Leadership et Autonomisation de la Femme Congolaise (2022–Present)
- President, Congolese American Women Empowerment and Leadership (2016–Present)
- Brockton Health Alliance: member of steering committee (2021-present)
- Greater Brockton Minority Business Association (2022-present)

## **Letter 1**

Julie Kabukanyi will be an excellent leader for the 2025 Nominating Committee. She has experienced the national WILPF US nomination process this year and no doubt realized some of the confusing aspects and the good aspects of the procedure as it is currently. She will be able to recommend changes in the procedures and explanations – some of which may be feasible to change before the 2025 election process begins but also some changes which would require a bylaws vote by the membership, which can be developed for 2025 membership voting – to be changed for the WILPF US 2026 election. Julie is a member of the Boston Branch and thus has several excellent local co-members with whom to share about the process and also on ways to educate our national WILPF US membership about the nomination and election processes. And there are people all across the national membership who will be glad to be consulted and to offer their experiences, insights, and ideas. She has experience internationally as U.S. member of WILPF's Advisory Board as well as the work she does ongoing for the Congo (DRC) while having lived in the U.S. for 24 years – as a citizen since 2007 and a WILPF member since 2015. She is a working Registered Nurse and currently also a part-time student at the University of Massachusetts Boston, working towards a PhD in Public Policy degree.

Joan Goddard  
WILPF San Jose CA Member

## **Letter 2**

Re: Recommendation of Julie Kabukanyi for the US WILPF Board of Directors

Dear Members,

It is a pleasure to strongly recommend Julie Kabukanyi to the US WILPF Board of Directors. I have known Julie for over 7 years. I have always been struck by her dedication to empowering women, especially women of color, and her commitment to justice and peace. Julie worked on WILPF Boston's Congo Action Task Force for many years. One of their triumphs was introducing a bill to the MA State House to regulate and track conflict minerals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Conflict minerals commonly used in cellphones were believed to be the source of war in the Congo and brutal attacks on women there. It took several years of dedicated work to get the bill passed.

In addition to work on statewide efforts, Julie has worked diligently in her community of Brockton, a majority minority city in Massachusetts, to promote minority business owners. She also works as an RN and cares for patients with COVID at the Faulkner Hospital in Jamaica Plain, within the City of Boston. This is clearly a demonstration of day-to-day caring for very vulnerable people. When Julie is not working at her profession or in her community she often travels. Her recent travels have included trips to the Congo and to Geneva, Switzerland. Her experience from her work and travel is very relevant to WILPF as an international organization.

In WIFLP, we talk about doing work that is local to global. Julie lives this work everyday.

She is passionate about justice and empowerment while grounded in day to day practicality. She has lived experience of knowing the effects of war, colonialism, racism, and patriarchy – all systems that WILPF works earnestly to transcend.

Julie is a person with a strong desire to improve the world around her. She shares the values fundamental to WILPF. WILPF should, in my opinion, seize the opportunity to benefit from Julie's willingness to serve as a board member. It is my sincere hope that she be welcomed and embraced by the US WILPF board.

Sincerely,  
Virginia Pratt  
WILPF Boston Co-chair