

Eileen Kurkoski

Position: Membership Development Committee Chair - partial term, ends January 2026

Newton, MA

Line of work/profession: _Retired Nurse Practitioner - Internal Medicine & Occupational Health

How long have you been a member of WILPF US? (minimum of 24 months of continuous membership is required) _9 years

1. WILPF US is a mission-driven membership organization. What does that mean to you? To me a mission-driven membership organization is one with members who have similar values. They live and promote these values. Two key values I share in WILPF include opposing and of1 8 preventing war and violence in resolving differences, and rectifying injustices inflicted on humans and the environment.

2. Please describe your involvement in WILPF, including a brief summary of work at the level of branch, national, and/or international: When a church friend in our social action committee invited me to a weekend WILPF Boston retreat in 2015, I immediately joined WILPF because I met so many other women like her- friendly, knowledgeable, and passionate about matters I cared about. I immediately volunteered for the job as branch secretary. Two years later, when the WILPF national office was moving from Boston to DesMoines, Jan Corderman asked me to apply for the WILPF U.S. secretary position. Since the end of my three year term as secretary, I've been involved in WILPF's finance and development committees, and the Earth Democracy, Disarm, and Women, Money & Democracy issue committees. My other WILPF activities include attending the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women four times and, in 2023, being a representative in our WILPF U.S. Local to Global program, I was also a member of the nominating committee in 2023. In 2024 I worked on the program committee for the WILPF 35th Triennial Congress: "Water on the Frontiers for Peace".

Locally, I am co-chair of my Boston WILPF branch, and am active on anti-nukes, drones & war, environmental issues, MA Public Banking & promoting more diversity, equity and inclusion into our branch. Another member and I fundraise yearly to end female genital mutilation in Mali.

3. Why are you interested in filling this position? The Israel-Palestinean injustices and war and its affect on my city stirred me to build our WILPF membership five months ago; it is a major reason for getting involved as Interim Membership Dev. Chair, a long empty position. I strongly believe women with our WILPF values and know-how CAN make a difference and if we grow in numbers we WILL make a difference in our bellicose society with growing climate disasters .

4. Please describe your other non-WILPF work or involvement that you believe helps qualify you for this position: My nurse practitioner skills have helped at vigils and in-person

meetings when someone has been injured or having medical symptoms. My travels in the U.S. and to other countries have broadened my understanding of people, other cultures and their relationships.

5. What skills can you offer in this position? My art work and photography have provided and will continue to provide some interesting vigil signs, flyers and computer layouts for WILPF work.

Candidate Statement

My name is Eileen Kurkoski, a 9 year member of WILPF, Boston branch, who wants to continue growing WILPF US as its Membership Development Chair (MDC). I am passionate and committed to our WILPF mission and know more intelligent and informed women are needed in anti-war, anti-nukes and justice work to make a difference in our war mongering nation with growing human injustices and inadequate commitments to deal with growing environmental disasters.

Since becoming the Interim MDC 5 months ago,

- I have contacted all of our WILPF branches to answer several survey questions regarding their branches.

- I was on the search committee for a talented and energetic Field Organizer, whom WILPF hired last month. This field organizer, Shelby Young, has already started to contact several branches interested in growing their membership. Together with Jan Corderman, Shelby's liaison, I set up several measurable goals for Shelby, who put them in her 14 month work plan.

My own measurable goals as Membership Development Chair are:

1. To assist Shelby in reaching her goals with branch and member development.
2. To build a reliable and talented 6-10 member Membership Committee which

A. Will brainstorm ideas: -

- For member sustainability and growth (gaining new energetic members)
- To help connect members of the Jane Addams branch (at-large members).
- To help build 2+ new branches (particularly NYC).
- To help develop more tools as needed to meet these goals.

B. Will propose Membership options for the board to consider. (ie. Should the cost of membership dues be changed?)

3. Encourage members to support all regional or large WILPF gatherings.
4. Work with the Executive Director's emerging strategies regarding membership.
5. Create a yearly budget that supports committee goals.

These goals are ambitious but possible with help. I hope some of you who are reading this

statement will consider being on the committee.

Activist Bio

Prior to becoming a consistent activist I traveled to numerous countries which opened my mind to other people's cultures. While working as a nurse practitioner in the Bedford, MA, Veterans Administration emergency room, clinics and residential homes, I learned of the ongoing struggles veteran men and some women are going through because of war.

2004 My consistent activism started slowly through the Social Action (S.A.) committee in my Unitarian Universalist (U.U.) society. A group of us regularly went to the Women's Lunch place in Boston and brought food and prepared it for dozens of woman, some unhoused, all struggling to survive in Boston. After several years I became the chair of the Hunger & Homeless task force. In 2021 & 22, I was a co-chair of the Social Action Committee.

2012 The Wall Street movement stemming from Tunisia captured my attention because a unhoused part time college women who came frequently to the Women's Lunch Place and the meetings Occupy had in Boston. I learned of the economic inequalities from the stories they told in these places where I brought food and in rallies. During this time, Nancy Wrenn, a WILPF member also in the S.A. group, began educational meetings on the unjust prison system in Massachusetts. I admired and liked Nancy and we as a group of 20 supported and helped to promote legally a more just penal system in MA.

2015 When Nancy invited me to a weekend WILPF Boston retreat in 2015, I immediately joined WILPF because I met so many other women like her- friendly, knowledgeable, and passionate about matters I cared about. I immediately volunteered for the job as secretary. Activism was becoming a bigger part of my life.

2017 Two years later, when the WILPF national office was moving from Boston to DesMoines, Jan Corderman asked me to apply for the WILPF U.S. secretary position.

2020 Since the end of my three year Secretary term I've been more involved in the WILPF Finance and Development committees, and the Earth Democracy, Women, Money Democracy and Disarm issue committees. After George Floyd's murder, with two other WILPFers, I organized a 6 session book study of author, Paul Kivel's, "Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice." In the Disarm Committee I chair a small subcommittee on autonomous weaponized drones and artificial intelligence, from which I inform the committee and sometimes co-author articles.

My other WILPF activities include attending the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women four times and, in 2023, being a representative in our WILPF U.S. Local to Global program. I was on the nominating committee in 2023. In 2024 I worked on the program committee for WILPF's 35th Triennial Congress: "Water on the Frontiers for Peace".

Locally, I am co-chair of my Boston WILPF branch, and am active on anti-nukes, drones & war, environmental issues, MA Public Banking & promoting DEI into our branch. Each year another WILPFer and I fundraise for an organization that is stopping the practice of

Female Genital Mutilation in Mali. I vigil 1-2x per week and write letters or sign petitions on-line weekly on many subjects, most are listed above. With other branch members we have tabled to promote WILPF and its mission, yet did not adequately follow up with petition signers. Several new women have become members but not active. Several years ago I applied and received funding from WILPF International for a play about the ERA called "We Did It For You". We didn't know what to do to follow up....BUT....last month the play returned and we are trying to get contact info of the younger group which was at the play. If we do get names our WILPF Boston steering group and I will discuss them with the new WILPF Field Organizer to strategize as to how to approach them.

2024 In May 2024 I became very involved in my city's conflict over the Israel- Palestine war. For 10 days, I read a lot about the situation, and spent 2 hours each day listening to people's views on war, on this war, in a photo exhibit of Palestinians in my local library. Those 10 days had a powerful emotional, intellectual & spiritual impact on me. Those days stirred me to leave my comfort zone and take the job of Interim Membership Development Chair 5 months ago, because more intelligent and informed women are needed in anti-war, anti-nukes and justice movement. And many WILPF women know how to work for peace and justice.

Letter 1

To: WILPF US Nominating Committee
Re: Reference for Membership Development Chair

Dear WILPF Committee:

It has been by honor to vigil weekly for peace in Newton, MA with Eileen Kurkowski for seven or eight years. I have been a male member of WILPF, Boston for 20 years and also work on a proposal for a new global peace movement led by women – a Global Movement of Nonviolence.

During our vigils and in person to person communications, Eileen and I discuss programs for eliminating nuclear weapons, global and local initiatives for peace, and Eileen's work at WILPF. Eileen delves deeply into the issues of her causes to understand the details and is tireless.

For many years, Eileen has discussed her work for building membership in WILPF locally and as of late, nationally. I highly recommend Eileen Kurkoski for the position of Membership Development Chair.

She will truly be an asset. Please contact me for any further information or discussion required.

Thank you.

Peace and Love,
Andre Sheldon
Founder and Director, Global Strategy of Nonviolence, For the Children

Facilitator, CALL to WOMEN, a World-Wide Unity Campaign

Website: www.GlobalStrategyofNonviolence.org (A new website is planned)

Facebook: Global Movement of Nonviolence

Sister Joan Chittister, September 11th, 2004, at the Omega / V Day conference: "Women and Power, Our Time to Lead" said, "The lives of our children, the protection of millions, the hopes of all humankind, wait again now for women, from opposite cultures, opposite tradition, to step over the line of political hatred to save them." (I was there)

Letter 2

Dear members of WILPF-US's Board,

I nominate Eileen Kurkoski for the position of Membership Chairperson 2025-2027.

From the time I first met Eileen — at a rally against Raytheon in Boston in [2019?]—, I was impressed by her energy. She was holding one end of a huge sign and wearing a white mock HAZMAT outfit to help bring attention to our message from occupants of passing vehicles. She had planned every detail and invited a number of folks to participate in the rally, and she was very friendly to newcomers like me. Since joining the Boston branch of WILPF (as a transplant from the St. Louis branch), I am still amazed with her ability to reach out both to long- and short-time members and to strangers.

Eileen's dedication to WILPF issues is also amazing. Her interests and knowledge about the variety of WILPF issues is unparalleled in my 55 years of experience with WILPF.

As Interim Membership Development Chair during the earlier months of this year, she proved herself to be a dynamic membership recruiter and so was appointed to officially fill this vacancy for the rest of 2024. Her activity since then has been equally dynamic, so I recommend Eileen Kurkoski for election to the next 3-year term as Membership Chairperson.

Ginger Harris
WILPF-US Secretary