

Shilpa Pandey

Position: Co-President - full term, ends January 2028 - with Martha Collins

Port Hueneme, CA

Line of work/profession: Department Head- Information Systems & Security

How long have you been a member of WILPF US? (minimum of 24 months of continuous membership is required) 7 years

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 that means that we are driven by a common goal, a common vision and a common mission that brings us together to join, be a member and be a part of a movement towards achieving those common goals.

To me it also reflects a need for us to ensure that as members we take pride in that solidarity and commitment that we implicitly conform to when we sign up to be a member of WILPF.

Over the years, WILPF not only in the US but across the world has been able to do its important work of feminist peace building because of our members and because our membership drives its inspiration as well as support from one another. The fact that the success of any movement lies in its ability to sustain itself is hugely dependent upon how involved and committed its members are towards achieving the goal of the movement as well as how well they can all work together. Members in that sense are the real driving force in WILPF. Their contributions are what keeps WILPF alive as well as relevant at all times.

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

- I became a member of WILPF in India during the WILPF International Congress that was held in India in 2009-10.
- I then became actively involved with WILPF-US 2013 onwards and became a member of WILPFUS
- Served on the national board for 2 terms as the membership chair between 2017-2022
- Lead the WILPF-US sponsored UN Practicum in Advocacy program since 2019.
- Continue to serve on several national standing and ad-hoc WILPF-US committees
- Recently joined the WILPF-International Peace Team- this is the most recent initiative taken by WILPF-International to offer conflict resolution and mediation within WILPF.

3. Why are you interested in filling this position?

I believe that I not only have the skills and experience to fill this position but also a deep sense of commitment and solidarity with WILPF as an organization. I feel that my stepping up at this time will

help encourage other women of color or women from diverse backgrounds in future to apply for leadership roles within WILPF.

I also believe that its important for someone like myself who has been a WILPF member for a long time and having witnessed the challenges that we face today, that I offer my experience, skills, ability and most importantly, my love and passion for what WILPF has stood for so many decades.

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

I Serve on the advisory board of our nations largest coalition of activists and legal professionals working the issues of "Human Trafficking" called the FNUSA (Freedom network USA). As an advisory board member, I get to closely and directly interact with both the victims and hear personal stories that help me understand the issue of human migration as well as border crises in more in-depth manner. I also see how these issues are intricately linked with so many other issues such as racism, poverty and war, all of which are issues that WILPF has been working on for many decades. Additionally, I serve within my local community as a member of our local public library and that helps me appreciate the value and importance of knowledge and resources that our public libraries provide so that our communities are better informed as well as have access to other resources such as the internet and computers. knowledge is power and better informed communities are an asset to society at large.

5. What skills can you offer in this position?

Based on a combination of both my professional and nonprofit/advocacy related experience, skills and knowledge, here are some that can be of great value to this position-

- Management skills, ability to think and act strategically.
- ability to work cohesively in a team environment
- leadership with a vision and compassion
- Empathy and understanding of our individual differences and challenges we all come with and an ability to see the unity in diversity that is much needed in-order for any organization or movement to succeed.

Candidate Statement

I grew up in India and was raised in a family of social and political activists who were at the forefront of the freedom struggle of India against the colonization of British rule.

It was in India that I was first introduced to WILPF, during one of its International Congresses held in 2009. The congress was held at the WILPF-India, headquarters in Gujarat Vidyapeeth, a University that was founded in 1923 by Mahatma-Gandhi.

This was the first time where I met and heard from some absolutely outstanding WILPF-women from across the world who spoke about their work as well as what WILPF did internationally through its various sections and it opened my eyes to this organization.

I came back hugely impressed by its history and legacy and soon found myself becoming its active member, initiating a start up of an all youth WILPF-branch in the city of my birth in Delhi-India.

Few years later, I migrated to the US because of personal and family reasons and was thrilled to discover the US section actively engaged in the global work of WILPF.

Since 2014, I have been an active member of WILPF-US. Over the years, I have served in several of our national standing and ad-hoc committees, including my service as the Membership Chair on our national board.

The work of peace building is not easy, however, as we continue to be faced with the uphill task of feminist peace building process, it's so important that WILPF not only remains relevant and sustainable organizationally, but also gets much needed strategic and forward looking vision, renewed energy and momentum to carry forward the mantle of our foremothers.

As a senior management professional who has held leadership roles for several international government and trans-national corporations and as a young woman of color actively pursuing a career in information systems at present, I believe that I bring a unique perspective to the table.

Additionally, at a time when we in WILPF-US are planning to hire an executive director and bring on board a team of professionals as part of our Lloyd Legacy initiative, it is imperative that we prepare to provide such professionals a structure and professional environment that will support them in successfully accomplishing their goals.

I believe that Martha Collins and myself as co-presidents will be able to provide the needed leadership as we march forward together as an organization.

Activist Bio

I hold a Master's in Business Administration with dual concentrations in Management Information Systems and Human Resources Management. I have over 15 years of experience working in the areas of project management, change management, instructional design, training and development.

Over the years, I have transitioned from non-profit management to leading information technology based projects.

I started my career with Dell Computers as senior technical trainer and transitioned to the field of adult training and development during my time as a consultant to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in India. During this time, I worked on developing training manuals, advocacy and outreach materials on several topics ranging from peaceful conflict resolution, to mediation, to gender based violence and volunteering skills for the development of sustainable development goals (formerly known as the millennium development goals). Over the weekends, I use to work with the national TV network in India and created and presented media reports on social and development related events in the city (see link below). I was also interviewed live by the national TV network in recognition of my work as a young leader working on the MDG's.

Since migrating to the US, I have worked as an instructional designer and training consultant for one of the leading companies providing consulting services to the US government. For the last few years, I am working as a department head for information systems.

I also continue to actively engage as a volunteer, with several local community groups on issues of climate change, human trafficking and migration.

Few links-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zRVfoUj6cQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=KOU7uXghdk0>

Letter 1

Letter Recommending Shilpa Pandey, WILPF Board Co-President

I have been a WILPF member for over 40 years and have had the pleasure of working with many outstanding WILPF members. Shilpa Pandey is one of them. I enthusiastically support her candidacy with Martha Collins for the Co-Presidency of the WILPF US Board for the following reasons:

I was introduced to Shilpa by a good friend and well respected WILPF member. Joan Drake contacted me: "A wonderful young WILPF woman is moving to Texas. You must get to know her!"

My experiences with Shilpa have increased my own engagement and global awareness. While Shilpa was living in San Antonio she organized a community event on violence in the media. She invited me to participate. I was able to tie in my work at that time with the Jane Addams Children's Book Award. Shilpa and I have conversed about the challenges we faced as board member and issue committee leader respectively. Shilpa reminded me that the US perspective on the Middle East is only one perspective. She opened my eyes to how

the rest of the world views the area, and US policies. This has shaped my activist work.

Shilpa's background within WILPF and in her career give her the skills needed to lead WILPF US at this time. Shilpa worked as a consultant with the United Nations Development Program in India. Her journey with WILPF began at this time. She initiated an all youth branch and served on the Board of WILPF India as its youngest board member. Since immigrating to the US, Shilpa has served on the WILPF US Board as Membership Chair 2016-2022 and since 2021 has led the UN Practicum. Because of her familiarity with the UN and its agencies she could mentor the participants and anticipate what they need as they develop their careers. Shilpa's own career over the last ten years has been in senior management where she led large teams of professionals at multinational and international organizations. She holds an MBA with dual concentrations in human resource management and information systems.

During the nearly 20 years that WILPF US has operated without an Executive Director, the role of the non-profit Executive Director has evolved considerably. We hope to hire an ED early next year for a job that is now highly professional and operates in the current information and fundraising environments. Shilpa Pandey and Martha Collins understand these issues from their work experiences - Shilpa in information systems and management, and Martha Collins in fund development and nonprofit advocacy. I believe that a successful Board-Executive Director relationship will be critical to WILPF's future.

Sincerely,
Tura Campanella Cook
Jane Addams Branch at Life Member

Letter 2

Dear Ellen Schwartz and Other Nominating Committee Members,

I am honored to write a letter nominating and supporting SHILPA PANDEY for Co-President of WILPF.

One outstanding qualification that SHILPA PANDEY has is a sense of audience. I have watched repeatedly as women in their senior years make public talks to young women while they as speakers remain in their own rhetorical "comfort zone" assuming that it is up to young prospective members to join them is what is habitual and routine in their senior world of interests.

I know that Shilpa has a more developed sense of audience than a too-often seen lack of focus on *audience* interests. With a Ph.D. in rhetoric and four years in grad seminars devoted to principles of audience analysis, audience awareness is crucial to being listened to and having an effect upon any audience. How can WILPF grow without somebody in top leadership who understands what it takes to attract a more diverse and younger population to our organization? Answer. WILPF needs such people.

In addition, SHILPA PANDEY impresses me with her ability to reach out globally as well as locally. These qualities are shown in her activities and work experience summarized below.

And in her home state of India, Shilpa

-has worked as a consultant with the United Nations Development Program in India which is where my journey with WILPF started and initiated a startup of an all youth branch in the capital city of New Delhi- India.

-was interviewed live by the national TV network in India as one of the young leaders making a difference by actively contributing towards the achievement of the SDG's (sustainable development goals mandated by the United Nations Organization).

-has represented young WILPF-India at the centenary celebrations of WILPF internationally at the Hague in 2015

Coming to the US and to WILPF US, Shilpa

-migrated to the US and became active in WILPF-US around 2015-2016

-served as membership chair between 2016-2022

-for last 3 years, leading the UN Practicum in advocacy program that brings in young women from across

Educationally, Shilpa has

-a Masters in Business administration with dual concentrations in human resource management and information systems.

-over 10 years of senior management work experience leading large teams of professionals including multi national and international organizations such as Dell Computers, the UNDP and Defense Health Agency- (US)

In conclusion, in all her dealings, Shilpa remains calm and seeks common ground as others flare up. Her ability to de-escalate situations of conflict is another outstanding ability possessed by Shilpa Pandey. I will find Shilpa easy to approach and to interact with on WILPF issues, as will others. Overall, I will vote her in any day.

Submitted by,

Gloria McMillan

Re-Start Chicago Team, Tucson and Chicago branches, DISARM Committee