



## Safe Passage Board of Directors Profiles – June 18, 2020

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### **Susanna Badgley Place, President - Milton, MA**



Susanna is a graduate of Princeton University (BA History) and Yale University School of Management (MBA in Finance and Marketing). Her career includes US Peace Corps Service in Africa, Project Analysts for the World Bank, owner/manager of import business, and consultant for non-profit service organizations. Her focus is management information systems and building institutional management capacity. She has served on the Boards of Planned Parenthood (MA), International Institute of New England (MA), Climate xChange (MA), and Safe Passage (Guatemala). She divides her time between Massachusetts, Maine and Guatemala, and is author of *Guatemala Journey Among the Ixil Maya* (2013) and its Spanish translation, *Los Mayas Ixiles de Guatemala* (2017).

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### **Xavier Andrade - Guatemala**



Xavier Andrade has been a real estate developer in Guatemala for 35 years. He specializes in home building for low and middle income Guatemalans. Xavier served as the President of the National Housing Association (ANACOV) from 2011-2013. Xavier is a founding member of the Las Americas rotary club and was club president 2012-2013. "As a Guatemalan, I had a rare opportunity to be able to get a good education and have the means to provide for my family. I believe it's my duty as a human being to provide others a chance in life- it doesn't take much."

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### **Rebecca Evarts, Secretary - Yarmouth, ME & Barcelona, Spain**



After graduating from Harvard in 1974, I worked as an editor in New York publishing houses. I moved to Barcelona in 1985 with my husband and our first child, where we lived for the next seven years. I have worked as a freelance writer, and in 2002, received an MFA degree from Bennington College. We now live in Yarmouth, Maine, and spend half the year in Barcelona.

My involvement with Safe Passage began in 2006 when I first went to Guatemala as a Spanish interpreter for a group of Maine surgeons and it occurred to me to write an article about Hanley Denning for a Maine publication. During that trip, I spent a day with her at the Project and came away both amazed by her and by what she was doing. After the tragedy, I became the sponsor of a two-year-old child, Linda Rosmery Ayapan Sánchez, whose mother was one of Hanley's earliest students. I've been back to Guatemala almost every year since which has allowed me to get to know our sponsored child, as well as her mother and little brother. I am also sponsoring Linda Rosmery's little brother, John Paul Ayapan Sánchez, who has just entered the third grade in the Hanley Denning School. We always take an excursion together that gives us time to talk. Since 2012, my husband and I have been working as interpreters for Shared Beat, the group of doctors who conduct twice-yearly physicals of Safe Passage students. This has given me an opportunity to see a broad spectrum of students as well as to observe the evolution of the Project.



**Ellen Meyer Shorb, Treasurer - Lincoln, MA**

Ellen has over 25 years experience in the nonprofit sector as a senior manager, consultant, trainer, and coach. She is the Principal of Blue Sage Partners, a strategy consulting firm that works with nonprofit and higher education senior teams and boards. She helped start a consulting company with Heifetz and Linsky, who developed the Adaptive Leadership model at Harvard; taught leadership at Northeastern University; and worked in several senior management positions in nonprofits ranging from start-ups to established, nationwide organizations. She holds a Master's in

Public Policy from Harvard University, an MBA from Stanford University, and a BA from Dartmouth College. She was a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, traveled around the world for a year, is fluent in Spanish & conversational French.

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**Ernesto Jose Viteri Arriola - Guatemala**

Ernesto Viteri is an attorney practicing in Guatemala. He is a partner at VITERI & VITERI and was admitted to the bar in the State of New York. He is a graduate of Liceo Javier school in Guatemala and Millbrook School in New York State, and holds degrees in law from Universidad Rafael Landivar in Guatemala and New York University in New York. Mr. Arriola is a former faculty member at University Rafael Landivar (Guatemala) and member of the Departmental

Electoral Board of Guatemala's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) to Guatemala General Elections.

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**Tania de Zedan - Guatemala**

I have worked in education for more than 25 years, part in private business and part with the Ministry of Education delivering reading and writing workshops for elementary teachers in the public sector. Currently she participates in several boards in the non for profit world that attend educational and health issues.

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**Carolyn Johnson, Vice-President - Yarmouth, ME**

Carolyn has been a member of the Rotary Club of Yarmouth, Maine, and a Rotarian since 2001. She served as Governor for D7780 (Western Maine/ Coastal New Hampshire) in 2013-14.

Professionally, Carolyn is an educator with more than 30 years experience. She taught and was a principal at the elementary school level. She was selected as a Distinguished Educator by the Maine Department of Education to assist schools in developing Student Support Teams and anti-bullying programs. In 2006, she volunteered with the Guatemala Literacy Project, an effort that quickly evolved into her developing a program to improve the quality of literacy instruction for

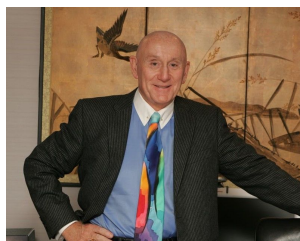
indigenous children in Guatemala. Carolyn is the founder of the Culture of Reading Program (CORP), providing training and support in effective literacy instruction for rural schools in Guatemala. Beginning in one school in 2008, CORP now serves more than 15,000 children in 80 primary schools.

Carolyn is a member of the Rotary Club of Yarmouth and served as District Governor of clubs in western ME and coastal NH. She is active as a facilitator with Rotary International, working with local clubs and districts. She is a frequent motivational speaker at regional and international events. Carolyn is Vice-chair of the Literacy Rotary Action Group, an advisor to the Rotary Foundation's Water, Sanitation & Hygiene In Schools programs, and serves as a consultant and project reviewer for major Rotary Foundation education & literacy grants. Carolyn was awarded the Service Above Self Award, Rotary's highest award recognizing Rotarians who demonstrate their commitment to others through volunteering their time and talents.

Carolyn has been involved with a number of community organizations, including Yarmouth Senior Housing, which provides safe, affordable housing options for older citizens. She is on the board of Learning Works, which offers education opportunities for at-risk youth, immigrants, and low-income families.

Carolyn and her husband, PDG Peter Johnson, live in Yarmouth, Maine. Their son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren live in Michigan - much too far away from Maine!

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#### **Douglas McAdams - Pittsburgh, PA**

Douglas is one of the original founders of Transport Investments, Inc. and American Transport, Inc. He has over 40 years of experience in the transportation industry. After a successful 10-year career in banking and finance, he entered the trucking industry in 1974 when he joined Jenna Corporation, a company that managed the Special Commodities Division of Carolina Freight Carriers Corporation.

In pursuit of opportunities resulting from deregulation of the transportation industry, Douglas and co-founder Burton S. Singer formed ATI. ATI went on to become the platform and flagship carrier of TII. Douglas holds a B.S from the University of Pittsburgh, advanced studies in Accounting and Finance at the University of Wisconsin, Duquesne University and the University of Pennsylvania.

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#### **Jessica Britt - Cambridge, MA**

Jessica started her career at Safe Passage as a long-term volunteer nearly a decade ago after graduating from Bowdoin College. While at Safe Passage she managed the Guatemala-based development team stewarding Support Teams, sponsors, international visitors, and local donors. For three subsequent years Jess worked as project manager for USAID-funded Democracy and Governance programs throughout Latin America. She also holds a Graduate Certificate in Program Monitoring and Evaluation from American University. Since 2015 Jess has been on the National Research & Evaluation team at Year Up ([www.yearup.org](http://www.yearup.org)) a workforce development organization in 17 US states. In her work at Year Up she focuses on program performance management, staff data capacity building, internal research studies, and externally-funded program evaluations.

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**Kolia John O'Connor - Pittsburgh, PA**

Kolia has served as Head of School at Sewickley Academy since 2003. With a B.A. in English from Boston University, an M.A. in English from the University of Avignon (France), Kolia began his career at a boarding school, teaching English, working in a dormitory, and coaching soccer. He spent the subsequent six years as an English teacher and Dean of Students at the all girls' Chapin School in New York City before moving to The Browning School, an all boys' school where he served as Head of Upper School and was later appointed Associate Head of

School. While in New York, Kolia earned an M.A. in Educational Leadership from Teachers College, Columbia University, served as secretary of the Assistant Heads Association, and was a founding member of the New York State Association of Independent Schools Diversity Committee. Kolia currently serves on the Boards of Trustees of the Headmistresses Association of the East, where he is the treasurer, and Robert Morris University for which he chairs the Academic Affairs & Enrollment Management Committee. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools and the Assistant Heads Association, for which he served as secretary. Kolia and his wife, Susan, are the proud parents of two sons.

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**Ines Torrebiarte de Bolaños - Guatemala**

Ines Torrebiarte de Bolaños majored in International Relations and Italian at Franklin and Marshall College in the US and lives in Guatemala. She has served as the Executive Secretary for Grupo Coban's Board of Shareholders since 2010, a conglomerate of manufacturing, agro and commercial developers, and she focuses on Family Governance. As part of her work with Grupo Coban, she has been a member of the Board of Courban since 2006, the Commercial Development Division.

Ines is also an advocate for quality public education and serves on the Board of Empresarios por la Educación, a group whose mission is to improve the public education system of Guatemala. She represents the Comité Coordinador de Asociaciones Agrícolas, Comerciales, Industriales y Financieras (CACIF) on the National Council for Education. She has recently joined the Board of Directors of FUNDEGUA, a group of Guatemalans that believe that the best way to effect change is through sustainable and culturally appropriate development projects supported by a base of extensive research.

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**Christian Von Oppen - Berlin, Germany**

Christian holds a degree in economics from Humboldt University in Berlin in 2001 and is a certified foundation manager. After completing his studies, he worked for the Munich Re Group in the area of private equity for 7 years. Christian has been an independent entrepreneur in the creative industry since 2007 and founded various photo art and design labels as managing partner of designers group GmbH. As part of a sabbatical, he came to Guatemala for three months in 2006 and volunteered for Safe Passage. Back in Germany, he joined the German support organization Camino Seguro e.V., which he now heads as a board member for more than 10 years.

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### **Ines Saravia de Stahl - Guatemala**



After graduating with a B.S in Biochemistry with a specialization in Genetic manipulation, Ines started out in Business and Science where she founded a food company that she later sold in 2009. Soon after she worked on innovating through science using her background to create the backbone of genetic development for Comeragua in the agricultural industry. After having a family and taking some years to raise three girls, she started collaborating in Colegio Americano de Guatemala (CAG) as a volunteer. In 2014 she became President of the CAG's Parent Teacher Assoc and founded the formal incorporation of the "Asociación Civil de Padres y Maestros del Colegio Americano de Guatemala." In 2018, she was hired as CAG's Development Officer where her focus has been Fundraising, Alumni, and corporate affairs. Here she found her true calling and love for non profit organizations creating strategic relationships with companies to support the programs all while developing a sense of community and identity. She thrives on creating momentum for the causes that she believes in, bringing people together with candor and care. Most recently she founded GuateDon, a Crisis support organization, which delivers food to over +200 families in need. She is also the founder and creator of [www.ascendingmind.org](http://www.ascendingmind.org) which is a platform that gives advice and inspiration to Guatemalas for free while raising funds for different NGOs.

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### **Alyson Welch - Alexandria, VA**



Alyson is an international development professional with more than 10 years of experience in the industry. Since 2011, she has worked in increasingly complex roles for large government contractors, managing projects in Latin America financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), including two years in Mexico as the Director of Operations for a project focused on preventing crime and violence and providing opportunities for at-risk youth. She currently serves as a Project Director at DAI, overseeing the implementation of Latin American projects that focus on a variety of governance and environmental issues. Alyson has both bachelors and masters degrees in psychology and is fluent in Spanish. She lives with her family in Alexandria, Virginia.