



Safe Passage Board of Directors
October 2022



Carolyn Johnson, 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 of experience. She taught and was a principal at the elementary school level. She was selected as 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!



Jessica Britt, Vice President - 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 a 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) 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.



Kolia John O'Connor, Secretary – New York, NY

Kolia currently serves as an advisor and mentor to educational leaders in the United States and around the world. He formerly served as Head of School at Sewickley Academy from 2003 until 2021. With a B.A. in English from Boston University, and 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. He then moved 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 at 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.



Alyson Welch, Treasurer - Plainfield, VT

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 that are 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. Alyson served as a project director at DAI, overseeing the implementation of Latin American projects that focus on a variety of governance and environmental issues. She has both a bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology and is fluent in Spanish. She is currently the Executive Director of FOOD 4 FARMERS and resides with her family in Plainfield, Vermont.



Rebecca Evarts – Katonah, NY & Barcelona, Spain

After graduating from Harvard in 1974, Rebecca worked as an editor in New York publishing houses. She moved to Barcelona in 1985 with her husband and first child, where they lived for the next seven years. Rebecca has worked as a freelance writer, and in 2002, received an MFA degree from Bennington College. She now lives in Yarmouth, Maine, and spends half the year in Barcelona.

Rebecca's involvement with Safe Passage began in 2006 when she first went to Guatemala as a Spanish interpreter for a group of Maine surgeons and it occurred to her to write an article about Hanley Denning for a Maine publication. During that trip, Rebecca spent a day with Hanley at the Project and came away both amazed by her and by what she was doing. After Hanley passed away, Rebecca became the sponsor of a two-year-old child, Linda Rosmery Ayapan Sánchez, whose mother was one of Hanley's earliest students. She has been back to Guatemala almost every year since, which has allowed her to get to know her sponsored child, as well as her mother and little

brother. Rebecca is now also sponsoring Linda Rosmery's little brother, John Paul Ayapan Sánchez, who has just entered the third grade in the Hanley Denning School. Since 2012, Rebecca and her husband have been working as interpreters for Shared Beat, the group of doctors who conduct twice-yearly physicals of Safe Passage students. This has given her an opportunity to see a broad spectrum of students as well as to observe the evolution of the Project.



Esther Brol – Guatemala

Esther is a founding partner of Communication Consulting Group, where she has been a consultant in strategic communication, as well as in the conceptualization and organization of corporate events for more than 25 years.

She has been an advisor to: private companies; (Banco Industrial, Copa Airlines, EPA, Guatemalan Association of Insurance Institutions, Guatemalan Chamber of Construction, etc.); public entities (Guatemalan Tourism Institute); diplomatic corps in Guatemala (Embassies of Canada, Spain and the Foreign Commercial Service of the United States Embassy); different programs of cooperation agencies and international financial institutions (USAID, European Union, Counterpart International, Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children, Inter-American

Development Bank, Central American Bank for Economic Integration) and different agencies of the United States government (Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce), among others.

She has a bachelor's degree in political science from Francisco Marroquín University and a master's degree in reengineering, information and social communication technologies from Galileo University. She also has a diploma of National Strategic Studies. She is currently studying a master's degree in leadership and senior management at the Miguel Cornejo School of Leaders in Mexico.

She is a Service Best trainer. She has several certifications in the meetings Industry. She is a professional speaker and interpretive announcer. She participated in several emergency procedure courses taught by Corporate Communications of Continental Airlines (now United Airlines) in Houston and Copa Airlines in Panama. She has been a professor at Galileo and Istmo Universities and has offered training through Panamerican Business School and the Guatemalan Management Association.

Currently, she is the president of the Guatemala Convention and Visitors Bureau, a member of the board of directors of the Guatemalan Management Association, as well as a member of the board of directors of Safe Passage. She is a correspondent for the magazine Rotary in the Heart of the Americas and was an editorial counselor for the magazine Gerencia of the Guatemalan Management Association. She is a founder and an active member of Guatemala La Reforma Rotary Club. She has been the chair of the Public Image Committee of Rotary District 4250 for Guatemala for the last five years. She is the founder and president of the Guatemalan Rotary Academy of Arts and Letters. She lived in Switzerland from 1988 to 1989 (AFS International Intercultural Programs). She speaks Spanish and English and lives in Guatemala City.



Jeff Katz – Cambridge, MA

Jeff is a nonprofit consultant specializing in organizational development, fundraising, and transitional leadership. He has served as an executive director to two organizations and interim executive director to 13 different organizations including homeless shelters, community development corporations, a Vietnamese community center, and a school in rural Nicaragua. In addition to serving as an interim executive director, Jeff also helps nonprofits in searches for executive directors and other key positions. Jeff helped Safe

Passage with an executive transition in 2013, an experience he describes as life changing.

In addition to his work as a nonprofit consultant, Jeff has been very active as a child welfare advocate. He was a member of the Obama for President Child Policy team, testified before Congress, and played a role in passing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. His op-ed pieces have been published in the Washington Post, Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor, and he has been interviewed on CNN and National Public Radio. He also served as a child welfare expert at the Neiman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University.

Jeff attended the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he was a Public Service Fellow and received a master's in public administration. Jeff later served as a Fellow at the Kennedy School, where he developed the *Listening to Parents Project*, an influential national study of how prospective adoptive parents are treated by public child welfare agencies. He also holds a master's degree in social work from Boston University.



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.

Christian von Oppen - Berlin, Germany



Christian holds a degree in economics from Humboldt University in Berlin (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.



Kevin González - Guatemala

Kevin is the creator of technological products through the Guatemalan brand Molvu, which was considered one of the 30 promising companies in Latin America by Forbes magazine in 2015. Kevin has more than 15 years of experience doing business between China and Latin America and is an expert in e-commerce and social networks. He is also a mountaineer and systems engineer. Kevin was winner of the Young Manager of the Year award by the Association of Managers of Guatemala AGG in 2018 and is also recognized as an Illustrious Guatemalan in the business category in 2019.

Juan Francisco Roldan - Guatemala



Juan Francisco has held various volunteer positions at Safe Passage for over a decade, as well as worked within the organization in the public relations department. In Guatemala he has developed spaces for youth participation and civil society and is a member of the founding group of the Asociación Jóvenes por Guatemala. He has promoted community development and youth leadership projects within different sectors of the country and has participated in the development of campaigns to eradicate violence in Guatemala such as Subida por la Vida, Rompe el Ciclo, and No Más Violencia, among others. In addition, he has developed his sports career as a professional soccer player and coach, a technical analyst, and scouting, in both Guatemala and Europe. He currently works on projects for La Asociación Futbolista Españoles

AFE and in the international area of RC Deportivo La Coruña, in Spain.

He has a B.S. in communication and information media, from the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala and La Universidad Galileo. He also has a master's in soccer management from La Escuela Universitaria Real Madrid in Spain and completed studies in big data. He is also UEFA licensed as a soccer coach.
