



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Inclusive Social Development



United Nations
Global Communications
Civil Society



INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF FAMILIES
15 MAY 2019

Families and Climate Action: Focus on SDG13

**Civil Society Briefing
Thursday, 16 May 2019, 11 am - 12:45 pm
UN HQ New York
ECOSOC Chamber**

Biographical Notes of Speakers

Moderator



Dr. BENJAMIN FREER is an associate professor of psychology and the Director of the University Core program at Fairleigh Dickinson University. The University Core program is an interdisciplinary program that prepares students for responsible citizenship in the global community. Dr. Freer earned his doctorate in Experimental Psychology from the University of Kentucky with a focus on child cognitive development. He has worked with the NGO Committee on the Family-New York since 2012 and currently serves as co-chair. The goal of the NGO Committee on the Family-New York is to “promote, preserve, and protect the well-being of the family” as “stable families are essential for stable communities, stable nations, and a stable world.” Dr. Freer’s research examines how life experiences can impact children, adults, and families with a specific focus on the response to potentially traumatic events.

Speakers

VIOLAINE HAERINGER is the Environmental Sustainability Manager at the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance of the UN Secretariat in New York. She coordinates the development of a UN Secretariat wide policy framework for Environmental Sustainability Management and previously managed UN Headquarters greening activities in the Office of Central Support Services. For the past 3 years, she has been serving as the Department’s Greening the Blue focal point, collaborating closely with Sustainable UN, a UN Environment programme that coordinates UN system internal environmental sustainability efforts. With an education in agricultural engineering and business administration, Ms. Haeringer joined the UN in 1998. Her commitment to the environment comes from her love of nature, having seen, on one hand, the rapid effect of habitat degradation in pristine pacific islands and, on the other hand, the generative power of the earth in urban gardens.





MATTHEW KAPLAN, Ph.D. is a Professor of Intergenerational Programs and Aging at Penn State University. In this position, he conducts research, develops curricular resources, and provides leadership in the development and evaluation of intergenerational programs. He has a Ph.D. in Environmental Psychology (from CUNY Graduate Center, 1991) and was a Visiting fellow at the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing (2015) and a Senior Fulbright Scholar (1994-95), studying intergenerational initiatives in Japan. He has published several books highlighting the international dimensions of the emergent intergenerational studies field, including *Intergenerational pathways to a sustainable society* (with M. Sanchez and J. Hoffman, 2017). Dr. Kaplan is an affiliate member of the Penn State Center for Healthy Aging and core faculty member of the Comparative and International Education Dual-Title Graduate Degree Program at Penn State.



STEVE CHIU is Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation's Main Representative at the United Nations. In alignment with Tzu Chi's work in disaster relief, climate action, education for global citizenship, sustainable development and gender equality, Mr. Chiu works to build relationships, share best practices and develop programs with other organizations to make tangible impacts on the ground, with the mission of alleviating the suffering of those in need. With over 19 years of experience in community-based development and local interfaith partnership, Mr. Chiu seeks to connect the importance of grassroots action to policies that are being developed on the international level.

TOLU OLUBUNMI is an entrepreneur and global advocate for migrants, refugees, and displaced people. Born in Nigeria and raised in the United States, Ms. Olubunmi has spent her career inspiring young people to action and giving voice and value to the voiceless. In May 2018, she was tapped by the Director General of the UN Migration Agency (IOM) for a special appointment to the United Nations. She currently serves as the Campaign Manager for the United Nations ActNow Climate Action Campaign. Ms. Olubunmi is also the founder and CEO of the social-impact venture Lions Write. She was named one of 15 Women Changing the World and an Outstanding Woman Entrepreneur by the World Economic Forum and was honored by the Anti-Defamation League for her work on behalf of migrants and refugees. Ms. Olubunmi is an inaugural Leadership Institute Fellow at the Center for American Progress and holds a Chemistry-Engineering degree from Washington and Lee University.

