

Cyndi Chen – Taiwan Cyndi grew up in Taipei Taiwan as the oldest of seven children. One of her first jobs was in refugee camps in Thailand that helped more than 10,000 Cambodian refugees. She came to Iowa as a visiting scholar to Buena Vista University where she taught Chinese and established exchange programs with China. As the first Administrator of the Status of Iowan Asian Pacific Island Heritage, she helped ensure that Asians and Pacific Islanders have the same benefits and services as other Iowans. She also worked as a disability consultant and provided disabled individuals with the skill sets need to find employment and be successful. After the 2004 tsunami, her and three other community leaders raised over \$100,000 to go toward humanitarian efforts. As the current Resource Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Human Rights, she is identifying issues and securing partners and funding to address them. Cyndi's passion for helping others has led her to volunteer for many boards, committees, and projects.

Zeljka Kravica – Bosnia Prior to arriving in the U.S., Zeljka worked as a professor of English Language and Literature, as well as serving on the Organizing Committee of the 14th Winter Olympic Games. She also worked at the Yugoslavia Embassy in Washington, D.C. for five years. Zeljka, a Catholic, married a Muslim, and in 1992 that union put their safety in jeopardy. Her family was forced to flee with their two sons, ages three and nine months, to a refugee camp in Croatia. After spending a year in the camp, they qualified for refugee status and arrived in Iowa in 1993. Zeljka has worked with many ethnic groups through teaching ESL classes, volunteering at public schools as an outreach worker and interpreter and helping with citizenship classes. She is one of the founders of "Voices of Bosnian Women", an organization that provides resources to victims of domestic violence. Zeljka is also a founder of Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association. She has dedicated her life to serving some of the most vulnerable Iowans. Thousands of refugee families are able to lift their heads a little bit higher because they have Zeljka as their champion.

Shazia Manus – Bangladesh As a young girl growing up in Bangladesh, Shazia was a highly motivated and brilliant student. She was able to attend Dhaka University by winning scholarship competitions. After her father was diagnosed with terminal cancer, she dropped out of school to care for him. Her father attempted to protect her future in the best way he knew how; by arranging a good marriage for her. Shazia explained to her mother that it was not an arranged marriage that she wanted, but the opportunity to pursue an education. She immigrated to the U.S. and after graduating from Iowa State University, she began work at the Greater Iowa Credit Union as a lender. Shazia was quickly recognized for her hard work and at the age of thirty she became the youngest CEO of the Greater Iowa Credit Union. Having experienced poverty firsthand, she understands that the roots of poverty are numerous and complex. Shazia wisely states, "We will not have true economic justice until we have empowered people through financial literacy, this allowing them to dream the dream of all people – to eat well, to educate their children, to afford healthy shelter, to work or own a business, to participate actively in society. How can you envision true peace without economic justice?"