

Finnish American Cultural Corporation

The FACC Board of Directors with biographical information.

Chairman - Frank Gottberg:

Education: AAS in Food Preservation, and BS in Agricultural Economics

Currently I am retired. I worked as a sales manager and in marketing for 13 years with electrical and mechanical products, then for 25 years as a manufacturer's representative for equipment of automatic valves and control systems (overhead crane radio remote controls).

Currently I volunteer time to church and other worthy causes.

I am a first generation Finn, born and raised in the USA. Both parents were from Finland. I am interested in passing on Finnish culture and traditions. The Finnish language is different from other languages. I have belonged to Finnish groups wanting to pass on the interesting events and accomplishments of Finnish people in America. I have served in leadership roles and written articles about Finnish groups.

Vice Chairman - Cortland Book:

Education: BS in Pharmacy

I have worked as an Associate Professor of Bacteriology at the Detroit Institute of Technology/College of Health Sciences, and as a Pharmacist Manager for Rite Aid Corporation.

I have served as: Vice President of Cunningham Drug Stores Management Association; and Distinguished Lt. Governor, Michigan Division, Kiwanis International;

The following are some of my past volunteer positions: Vice President of Drug Employees Federal Credit Union, President of the Danish Club of Detroit, President of Danish Brotherhood Lodge 228, President of the Swedish Club, President of the Scandinavian Symphony Orchestra, and Secretary and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Finnish Center Association.

Secretary - David Sharpe:

Education: BA in Education, MA, Educational Administration Wayne State University

I am a retired science teacher and student teacher advisor, having taught in the Detroit Public Schools for 34 years.

My volunteer service includes serving as the secretary of the FACC Board of Trustees. I have served as a board member of the Michigan and National Education Associations and currently serve on four non-profit boards of directors. I live with my wife in Farmington Hills, MI and enjoy gardening, writing poetry, and nature photography. I am the founder of Finlandia Gardens of the Finnish Center and am currently the landscape coordinator of the FCA. My Finnish mother was born in Champion, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Director - Norbert Leppanen:

Education: BS in Mechanical Engineering, MS in Environmental Sciences.

My career was in mechanical engineering.

I am retired as a maintenance provider at Tapiola Village (Finnish Center Senior Housing), performing electrical, mechanical, and custodial services.

I have been a member of the Finnish Center Association for 22 years, and have served the Board of Trustees as Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary, and have volunteered for many responsibilities during that time.

Director - Glenn Kujansuu:

Education: Associates Degree in Electrical Engineering from the Milwaukee School of Engineerint.

I worked at the following (in no particular order): draftsman, estimator, trainer (computers), factory clerk, press operator, project manager, photographer, purchasing agent, help-desk support person, bookkeeper, computer repair person, webmaster, e-mail administrator, Hi-Lo driver, laborer, layout person at print shop, and other jobs. Currently I am a photographer (events and other), with my own business.

As a volunteer at the Finnish Center Association, I have done the lay out the monthly "FCA Newsletter," maintain the website, taught computer classes, helped maintain the computers, and run a Camera (Photography Club).

Director – Dan Linna

Daniel Waino Linna was born & raised in Bruce Crossing, in the western end of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Both his paternal and maternal grandparents were born in the Alaharma area of Vaasa, Finland and came to the U.P. of Michigan in the early 1910's.

He grew up on the farm that his grandfather built and there he learned the Finnish language and culture while listening and observing relatives who came every Saturday night to take a sauna, drink coffee, eat baked goods and tell stories.

Dan has received his BS Degree in Secondary Education & Masters Degree in School Administration at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI.

After working nearly 33 years in education, with 32 of those years as an Administrator, he retired for health reasons in 2006.

He has 5 children and three of them live in the SE Lower Michigan area, so it only made sense to move to Royal Oak, MI after retirement, to enable him to visit his children and grandchildren often.

In the summer of 2001, Dan & three of his children visited cousins in the Vaasa, Finland area for two weeks to reconnect with his ancestors and visited other areas of Finland as well. The following summer, Dan hosted several Linna's from Vaasa who came to Michigan to do the same.

He re-joined the Finnish Center Association in the summer of 2011 and has volunteered his time researching potential sources of grant funding.

Director - Ruben Nayback

Ruben Nayback is a retired industrial salesman who attained managerial responsibilities with his firm. He served as the honorary Finnish Counsel for the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Finnish Cultural Center for almost a decade. As board member of Suomi College, now Finlandia University, he served for twenty years. A member of St. Johns Lutheran Church in Redford, Ruben has always been proud of his ethnic heritage and continues to promote Finnish education and culture.

Director – Gayle Gullen

Gayle Gullen is an retired Ford engineer who started her own gardening business which drew her to the Finnish Center and Finlandia Gardens. She is the treasurer of FCA Senior Housing, past FCA alternate, held various automotive, testing, and chemistry-related board positions, and has worked for the Milford Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals

Gayle has a degree: B.S. in Chemistry from Lawrence Institue of Technology

Treasurer – Erik Lindquist

I'm so excited to join as the newest member of the Finnish American Cultural Corporation Board of Directors, and to be elected as the Board Treasurer. I am also a member of the Finnish Center Association and the Farmington Elks, and I serve the City of Farmington Hills as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Now an attorney with a growing solo practice and a new office in Bingham Farms, Michigan, I have previously worked as outside counsel for Comerica, General Motors, Comcast and Kmart. Prior to coming to Michigan, I was an entertainment attorney with The Walt Disney Company, Universal Music Group, EMI-Capitol Records and Rhino Entertainment.

Born in Louisiana and growing up in Colorado, I went to Colorado State University and had a career in retail management. Eventually, I was able to pursue my dream of going to law school, and graduated within two years from California Western School of Law in San Diego.

My father's grandparents were all born in Finland, and his parents in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Joel was born and raised in Minnesota, splitting time between Aitkin County and Minneapolis. His first job as an aerospace mechanical engineer was with Boeing, working on the Apollo program. He met my mother, a native of Nicaragua, in New Orleans (which makes my brother and me the only Hispanic Finns I know!) Dad was very proud of his Finnish-American heritage, and excited about my move to Michigan because of its Finns.

My wife Dina and I reside in Farmington Hills. Dina is a Farmington Hills native of Polish and Canadian descent, and her parents also live nearby. We share our home with three felines.

If I don't know you already, I look forward to meeting you at the next event!