

# EMEA Winter 2020 Newsletter

Europe, Middle East and Africa Alumni

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Welcome to this newsletter about alumni matters in Europe. Hope you are doing well and got well over Christmas Holidays and the start of the New Year. This newsletter should have been sent earlier, but new information kept coming in and therefore it might be a bit long but hope you will enjoy a few moments and dig into what is happening in the Up with People Alumni world.

2019 has been an exciting year for Up with People Alumni in Europe, with a great outcome of more than 200 alumni from 20+ countries meeting in Ennis in Ireland for the annual European Alumni Meeting – or EAM as it mostly is called. Lots of energy and enthusiasm and plenty of ideas on how we can bring alumni closer together in Europe and ensure that our activities are relevant for us alumni at the various stages we are at now in our lives. We have so much in common, we have so much to share, we have so much we can do to help each other. We share the Trust and the Visions and Values, and we must let this bring us together across the borders.

Who are involved at the moment? A group of volunteer alumni from all over Europe came forward during the EAM in Ennis, or through bi-monthly Euro Chat talks, where approx. 20 alumni each representing different EMEA countries are participating in a Zoom chat. All organized by Filomena Lopodoto.

Alumni across Europe are currently working together to get new interesting initiatives started. From the talks in Ennis, one of the main ideas were Sharing and Exchanging – and a Facebook group started by Jolanda van Beek on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October and within less than two months grew to more than 1.190 members. What a fantastic interest. Just confirming that this is a great idea. The first talks on this issue started by Tineke Turck back in the early 90's, where internet was not used much and e-mails were rare, and the most common way of communication was with letters. Tineke's idea was great, and I guess she was just a bit ahead of her time. With new technology and communication platforms things are way easier today.

We will get back to you on this issue later, as a group of alumni right now are discussing and working actively on developing an exciting new platform for "Sharing and Exchanging" as well as other initiatives. But I will keep it a secret for a few months until it is ready to be launched, and I can promise you that you will like it – a lot. We have currently alumni from Germany, Finland, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden and Belgium involved in this and more will be involved shortly. Be excited – it will be great and will play an essential role in bringing us alumni even closer together.

To get the activities up flying and launched we are looking for support. If you are a graphic web designer with experience of working with Joomla and you would be ready to help us for some hours to design the user interface, we would love to hear from you. We have the technical platform developed but need some help in making it look nicer.

Activities were started on Professional networking, Ilse Delo from Belgium and Rick Lucero from Sweden are two teachers who have initiated the first cooperation between teachers. We hope this cooperation will develop further very soon and will be very interested in hearing from other alumni who are ready to get involved in developing how we can start to cooperate within the professions we all do for our daily living.

Sebastian Hesse or Basti as most people know him from Germany developed the Bizdar app which we beta-tested at the EAM in Ennis and is has been improved and developed further and could be a good help to see if you are close to an Up with People Alum and potentially can do some business together. You can download the app in your usual app store today.

Suzy Waterschoot in Belgium will lead a group focusing on assisting Up with People. The areas of focus will be agreed with Up with People and can be issues as: improving of marketing, recruitment of students, better cooperation between Up with People and alumni. We would like more members to join this group as well, so please get in contact with me or Suzy if you are interested.

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## Up with People Junior Camp

Suzy is also starting an Up with People Junior Camp in Belgium. Last year the first Up with People Junior Camp was held in Hasselt in Belgium and this inspired Suzy to go ahead making another one in Belgium as well. Here is a short note from Suzy:

**Up with People Jr.**  
Cultuureel muzikaal kamp voor jongens en meisjes van 8-12 jaar

**A Camp Like No Other**

**13-17 APRIL**  
**6-10 JULI**  
OLVE De Link, Patroonstraat 21  
2650 Edegem  
Elke dag van 9u tot 15u30  
prijs: €200

**CULTUREEL BEWUSTZIJN**  
**SAMENWERKEN**  
**DIENSTVERLENING**  
**PODIUMKUNSTEN**

[www.UpwithPeopleJr.org](http://www.UpwithPeopleJr.org)  
Suzy Waterschoot 0478/73.10.69  
Edegem@UpwithPeopleJr.org  
f Up With People Jr- Edegem, Belgium

After having UWP in town in May 2019 the vibes were back ! ( you know that feeling of course 😊)

So, end of august we went to see the show of the kids at UWP junior camp in Hasselt. The team, led by Greet Gevers did a wonderful job. It was great to see the kids having fun crafting, learning and performing the show and bringing the message of UWP to the audience.

About that same day Nicole Verschooten (B84), her daughter Lise Hens (will travel 2022) and me decided to organise 2 camps this year also in Edegem.

Having a hands-on mentality we already raised some cash at the Christmasmarket so we , as alums, can sponsor some kids too.

Here in Edegem we will have 2 weeks, the week after Easter and the first full week of July (in Hasselt also this week)

We had a great training about UWP junior in Harrisonburg VA in December, so now it is time to get everything ready.

Please join us to see the show on the Friday's. All info you can find on the facebookpage wich we be online soon.

Suzy Waterschoot A89

[www.UpwithPeopleJr.org](http://www.UpwithPeopleJr.org)

Contact e-mail [Edegem@UpwithPeopleJr.org](mailto:Edegem@UpwithPeopleJr.org)

Facebook Group Up With People Jr-Edegem,Belgium

So far the following Up with People Junior Camps are planned in Europe:

Edegem, Belgium – April 13th to 17th and July 6th to 10th

Hasselt, Belgium – July 6th to 10th

## European Alumni Association – Up with People

We are in the process of preparing registration of a pan-European non-profit legal entity, which will be able to legally carry the responsibilities for future EAM meetings as well as other initiatives crossing borders. The legal entity will also be legal and financial platform for the running of the EMEA Representative position, which today do not fit under any registered organization. After detailed discussions with alumni lawyers and a group of alumni, it is our understanding that the organization must be kept as simple as possible, in order to make it easy to operate, as it will first of all carry legal and financial responsibility for the cross border activities. More discussions will take place during the next month with all the registered alumni organizations in Europe, and it is expected that the legal entity will be registered prior to the EAM in Liège. It is the aim that the legal entity will be registered within the next months, but discussions are still going on for the location of the registration. It will depend on the local laws and simplicity in running the organization from a legal point of view.

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### What is new from Up with People?

**Welcome to the new Chairman of the Board of Up with People. Swedish Alumni Robert Cygnaeus.**



In November 2019 I took over as Chairman of the Board of the Up with People organization from the legendary Chuck Jarret, very proud to be the first European chairman.

I traveled in UWP between 78-80 in the US, Latin America and Europe where I had a life changing experience. After my university studies in different managerial positions both in the Nordics, the UK and managing European businesses.

I started and ran an IT-company 20 years with growing business all over the Nordics. A native of Sweden, living in Stockholm, married with five children where the two oldest, traveled 07-08 and my third child Amanda wrote some songs for UWP, among them “Footsteps of a girl”, that still is in the show.

I have served on the UWP Board of Directors since 2011.

Up with People has an amazing legacy, second to none, that we are all a part of. Since the early years the world has changed and so must we. In the “old” days, we traveled with five casts of 100+ students each and impacted around 400 communities every year. Now we have one cast per semester with around 160 students per year, fewer stops and therefore can impact 40 communities per year.

The Up with People board has worked intensely over the past years to develop ways to ensure that our impact in each community is deeper and long lasting. We have seen the birth of Camp UWP and UWP Jr which enables us to work with younger youth in order to share our important message of global understanding, compassion and peace.

We have recently hired a new inspiring CEO, Vernon Grigg III, and I hope you will join me in giving him all the support possible to take UWP to the next level.

My vision for the future is that we will be able to increase both the depth and the width of UWP. Enable more students to travel to more communities where our message and work is most needed and develop community impact programs that will position UWP as a leading, world renowned catalyst for positive change well beyond our own constituents.

Wouldn't it be great if UWP one day was nominated for global awards, why not the Nobel Peace Prize, thanks to the important work we do?

What can we do as alumni to help?

- Recruit students! We always need more motivated young people to join, especially from different countries and backgrounds. I hereby launch a challenge and will give an award to the alum who recruit the most number of confirmed students before the EAM in Liège this spring.
- In order to help our main fund raising we would benefit so much if more of our alumni donated something to UWP. Don't worry about the amount, if you can spare only €5 per month or even less, that is great. If we can show the large and institutional donors that a high percentage of our alumni base actively supports UWP, that makes all the difference in the world for our fund raising staff. Look at our web site for how you set up recurring donations.

I am really looking forward to meet as many of you as possible at as many of our events as possible.

*Robert Cygnaeus*

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**Welcome to the new President and CEO of Up with People. Vernon C. Grigg III.**



We welcome Vernon C. Grigg III as the President and CEO of Up with People. A great choice for the leader of our beloved organization, with an amazing CV and experience since he traveled with up with People in 1981.

Here is a summary of an intro from Up with People Chairman Robert Cygnaeus, who became a Chairman of the Board of Directors of Up with People in November 2019.

*Vernon C. Grigg III has taken on the position as new President and Chief Executive Officer of Up with People*

*effective January 6.*

*The selection of Vernon culminates a comprehensive search that began last June when current CEO Dale Penny announced his planned retirement.*

*The Board is confident that Vernon's vision and rich history of accomplishments have prepared him to lead the organization at this time. The son of two public school educators in Tucson, Arizona, Vernon traveled as a cast member of UWP in 1981. After spending time in Ann Arbor, Michigan preparing for UWP's Super Bowl XVI halftime show, Vernon enrolled at the University of Michigan where he received a bachelor's degree in economics. He then went on to earn his law degree from Yale Law School.*

*Following his graduation from Yale, Vernon served as a law clerk on three continents; first at the Supreme Court of Israel, second as the first black law clerk to the Supreme Court of South Africa during that country's transition out of apartheid, and finally to the Chief Judge of the United States Federal Court in San Francisco. Vernon received Up with People's first J. Blanton Belk Award for his work in Israel and South Africa.*

*Vernon settled in San Francisco and began his career in law and public service. He served as one of the city's top prosecutors and on several city and county commissions, addressing some of San Francisco's most challenging problems, including homelessness and drug abuse. These public service experiences ultimately led Vernon to pause his legal practice and focus his energy on nonprofit arts and educational organizations. Vernon's first nonprofit leadership role was as the chairman and executive director of the San Francisco Bayview Opera House, where he launched the revival of the historic community theater. The Bayview Opera House provides cultural enrichment and arts education programs to disadvantaged youth.*

*In 2016, Vernon joined the Up with People Board of Directors, where he has served until his appointment as President and CEO.*

*The full letter can be read here <https://upwithpeople.org/upbeat-news/new-ceo/>*

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### **And here is the news from Brad Bungum from Up with People:**

We completed a successful 5-week tour of Europe in the Spring of 2019, spending time in Belgium, Germany and Denmark, with great alumni engagement in every city.

Followed by an 8-week tour of Europe in Fall '19 (5 weeks in Italy, 2 in Germany and 1 in Switzerland).

In Spring 2020 we will be heading to the following cities:

- Namur, Belgium
- Hamburg (repeat from 2018)
- Aubel, Belgium (EAM week, UWP show on Thursday, 21 May in Aubel)
- Germany
- Rheden, Netherlands (end-of-tour)

The Fall 2020 tour is looking as follows:

- Bulach, Switzerland (repeat from 2017)
- Gotha, Germany
- Brugge, Belgium (repeat from 2018)
- Brakel, Belgium
- Netherlands

Please follow us, and get ticket information, at <https://upwithpeople.org/tours-events/>

Happy New Year to you all! I look forward to seeing many of you down the road, and particularly at the EAM in Liege in May.

One other big event in the UWP world in 2019 was the retirement of Dale Penny, and the hiring of Vernon Grigg (B81) as our new President & CEO. Vernon's first day was 6 January, and he's off to a fast start with staging getting underway in mid-January. We expect Vernon to join us in Liege/Aubel, and are looking forward to having him on European ground!

Thanks as always to so many of you for your continued interest and tremendous support of UWP through our European tours and bringing us to your cities, your recruiting efforts, financial support, and for just 'Keeping Hope Alive' in your own unique way. This ship wouldn't sail without you!

My best for a happy 2020  
Brad

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**And Welcome to our New Alumni from B19:**

|                        |                   |                |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Ahmed Hassan           | Donaueschingen    | GERMANY        |
| Pauline de Liederkerke | London            | UNITED KINGDOM |
| Nora Farahat           | Bocholt           | GERMANY        |
| Léonie Jensen          | Tarp              | GERMANY        |
| Nadine Lüthy           | Solothurn         | SWITZERLAND    |
| Visar Rraci            | Gjakova           | KOSOVO         |
| Alice Rutte            | Alseberg          | BELGIUM        |
| Alina Saalman          | Partenheim        | GERMANY        |
| Marie Sandnes          | Mjolkeraen        | NORWAY         |
| Amélie van Berchem     | Geneva            | SWITZERLAND    |
| Arizona Xhiha          | Gjakova           | KOSOVO         |
| Jamie C. Nimitz        | Uster             | SWITZERLAND    |
| Anna Roos              | Den Haag, Holland | NETHERLANDS    |
| Merel Tomassen         | Doorn             | NETHERLANDS    |

**And 15 Europeans are travelling in cast A20 and they are:**

|            |           |                           |
|------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| Aline      | Hoop      | Liechtenstein             |
| Anna       | Roos      | NETHERLANDS, 2nd semester |
| Axelle     | Orbant    | Belgium                   |
| Bertil     | Laier     | Denmark                   |
| Camille    | Lemaitre  | Belgium                   |
| Fiona      | Krahmer   | Germany                   |
| Jamison    | Nimitz    | Switzerland, 2nd semester |
| Jonas      | Pohlmann  | Germany                   |
| Kellian    | Lybeer    | Belgium                   |
| Marie      | Sandnes   | Norway, 2nd semester      |
| Merel      | Tomassen  | NETHERLANDS, 2nd semester |
| Nikolai    | Rasmussen | Denmark                   |
| Sara Marie | VACCARI   | Italy                     |
| Valerie    | Corten    | Belgium                   |
| Arizona    | Xhiha     | Kosovo PR STAFF           |

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## What's new from the Up with People International Alumni Association (UWPIAA)?

Registration has opened to the 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion of Up with People, which is held from July 23<sup>rd</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

“LIVE it LIVE @55!”

<https://connect.upwithpeople.org/events/reunion20>

Early Bird registrations has opened and will be open until February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The Early Bird registration fee is USD \$345.



The UWPIAA has run a survey on new ideas about how the future UWPIAA should look like and what it should do. More than 800 answers were received, and the answers are right now being examined and some conclusions on the survey will be discussed at the next board meeting in UWPIAA which takes place in Atlanta from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. The ideas will then be presented to the alumni in some form which is still to be decided. Thank you to all of you who participated.

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## Introducing the right hand and support of the EMEA Representative. Vicky Milde A2000

Hey guys, I'm Vicky from Germany and I travelled in Cast A2000. Since then I have been involved here and there in alumni activities. The most recent: I am on the board of the Swiss Alumni Association as their international representative and that although I am neither Swiss nor live there! :-). If you want to know how that could happen, just ask me!

I have been around the European alumni family for quite some years and got to know so many of you that I decided I wanted to contribute more. I am very happy to be Birger's right hand and second brain. In my spare time I work as a school library expert and manager, I'm a book and Christmas nerd and also mother to two girls of which I hope will one day be part of our amazing group as well. They sure have enough reunion and show experience already...

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## **Country news including annual meeting Germany, Switzerland and TAD meeting.**

**Germany:** A fantastic general assembly and an epic band-birthday-party took place in Bochum in October. You missed a helluva party if you weren't there! <https://avuwpd.de/>

**Switzerland:** Celebrated the clubs 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday not in Switzerland but in the mountains of nearby Liechtenstein with lots of cake and sunshine. <https://www.uwpsaa.ch/>

**TAD:** Another jubilee was celebrated: The 10th TAD took place in Tallinn/Estonia with a total attendance of 40 alumni from more than 10 different countries. Join the Triangle Alumni Date Facebook page if you want to know about the upcoming event! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TriangleAlumniDate/>

**Finland:** From the looks of it the Fins are gearing up for EAM2021! A tEAM has been found and things are slowly taking shape. Stay tuned for more info throughout the year...

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## **News about Belgium and the be.UWPaa**

In 2015, when the 50th anniversary of Up with People was celebrated in Brussels, a group of alumni came together to brainstorm about the future of the alumni in Belgium. Now, 5 years later, in 2020, we are proud to tell you that there is an official alumni association in Belgium: be.UWPaa!

The founders of the association are Joram De Maeseneer (B14), who will be the President of the Board, Karina Vanhoedenaghe (C93), and Lutgart De Backer (C96). Ilse Delo, who travelled in A00, will be the President of the executive board of the alumni association be.UWPaa. This news was announced at the annual brunch of be.UWPaa on January 26th in Mechelen. We are sure that we have a good fundament to build an association that will connect all the alumni in Belgium and Belgian alumni worldwide.

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## **News about EAM Liege**

You have all heard it singing from the trees: REGISTRATION HAS OPENED!!!

Make sure to get your early bird discount until February 29th!

Don't forget to also look at the great Pre-EAM-tours the team has come up with.

Everything you need to know and more to find right here: <https://www.uwpeam.com/>

*Vicky Milde*

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## Introducing Up with People Alumni in the EMEA Region



We would like to introduce alumni in the European, Middle East, African Region to you over time. Our first choice has fallen on presenting Samson Kaed, B18 from Madagascar. Here is a little intro...

My name is [Samson Kaed](#), I was born and raised in Antalaha, Noth/East of Madagascar. Currently I study Communication in the capital city of Antananarivo. I founded the English Association of the Region SAVA ( [Link to the association](#) ) in 2014, a program that involves youth in learning and speaking English throughout the SAVA region, and I am a well-known composer under the name SmK' Mikol' Art [Facebook link to SmK Mikol Art](#)). My songs focus on social justice issues in Madagascar, like women's empowerment and family planning/sexual health. And they're catchy, too!

I have a lot of experience educating others, a cultural facilitator at Peace Corps Madagascar, and recently I worked with Skyline NGO (<https://www.facebook.com/ongskyline2019/>) as an event manager of Bright Top III project which is a motivational English public speaking contest in Antananarivo.

I am an Associate Producer of Voice of Vanilla (<https://www.voiceofvanilla.com/>), a feature-length observational documentary following women in Madagascar who farm, process, and export most of the world's vanilla. A collaboration with Maureen Lee Maloney, Director/Producer.

I recently traveled around the world for 6 months with Up With People Cast B18, and now I work as Customer Service. The next project that I am involving is Camp Fiavana 2020 (<https://www.facebook.com/campfiavanana/>), a new approach to youth leadership education and development in Madagascar to offer a two-week summer day camp that fills the learning gaps of Malagasy schools, where hands-on, interactive learning opportunities are lacking. I am collaborating with the founder Jessica Razanadrakoto (The first Malagasy UWP alumni)



Very Best Regards,

Birger Husted A87  
EMEA Representative 2019-2021

And

Vicky Milde A2000  
Assistant EMEA Representative

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