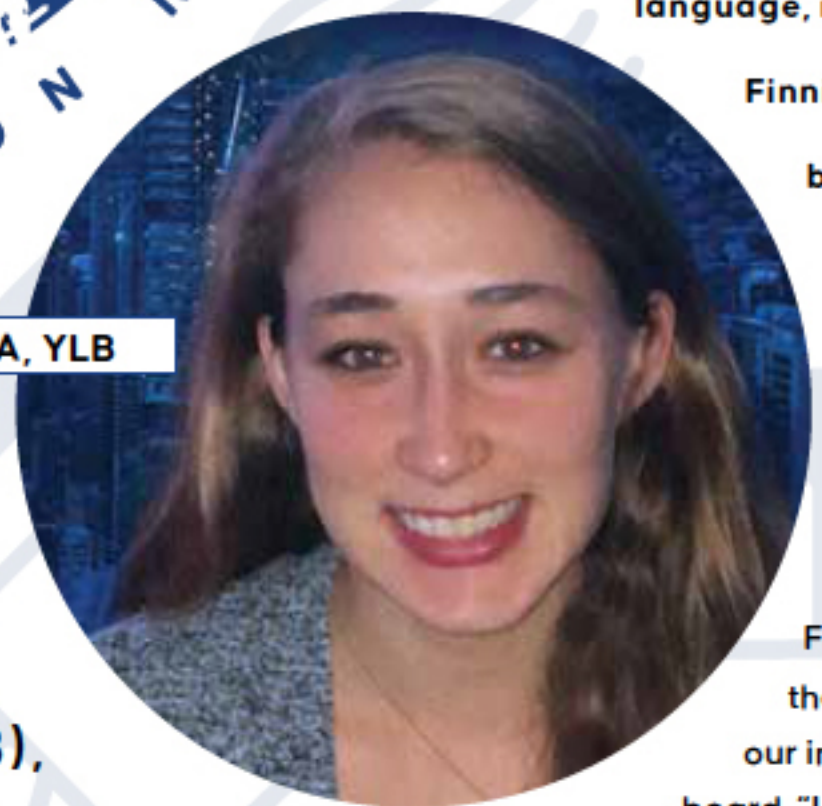




The YLB has continued to meet virtually, bonding through ice breakers, discussion of our Finnish backgrounds and a shared passion for increasing awareness of Finnish culture and history. Throughout and in between our meetings, we've started to outline and act on the priorities for our new group. In the near term, we plan to focus on creating opportunities to practice and learn the



BY LAUREN TUISKULA, YLB

THE NEW FINLANDIA FOUNDATION YOUNG LEADERS BOARD (YLB), CONSISTING OF EIGHT FINNISH-AMERICAN MILLENNIALS, FIRST CONVENED VIRTUALLY IN FEBRUARY FOR AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING LED BY FFN PRESIDENT ANNE-MARI PASTER.

language, raising the profile of Finnish popular culture and broadening our reach in order to welcome more millennial Finns into the Finlandia Foundation community.

For the eight YLB members, these priorities align with our initial interest in joining the board. "I was excited to hear about the creation of the FFN YLB because it is something that I wish had existed when I was in high school and college and trying to figure out how I could keep Finland and the Finnish language as a central part of my life," says YLB member Mirva Johnson.

The YLB also had the opportunity to meet with the FFN Board at its spring meeting held over Zoom on March 26. Although our group was just over a month in the making, we were

excited to share our early accomplishments ---the creation of a LinkedIn networking group for young Finnish-Americans and a curated Spotify playlist with contemporary Finnish music---in addition to our longer-term vision and goals for the future.

Other projects we're excited to begin working on include hosting virtual coffee chats, where young Finnish-Americans can connect and practice the language, and an interview series to share the stories of Finns in sports, entertainment, business and more. The YLB looks forward to eventually meeting in person, and further collaborating with the FFN Board to bring these projects to fruition.

My fellow YLB member Mirva perfectly summarized our goal of building on the legacy of FFN while reaching new

audiences. "I hope the YLB can give other young adults ideas and options for pursuing their interest in Finland, building on and amplifying the work the FFN has been doing for decades, especially by offering additional resources to connect them to Finland, Finns and other Finnish-Americans."

HERE'S A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO EACH YLB MEMBER:



MIRVA JOHNSON is a Ph.D. candidate in Scandinavian Folklore at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



TATU KUNTO is originally from the northern parts of Finland and currently resides in San Diego, working as a marketing executive for FootBalance.



TOMMY FLANAGAN lives in Washington, D.C. and works as a Language Program Officer at the Goethe-Institut, a German cultural institution.



JULIA PASTER works as an analyst in Private Wealth Management with Goldman Sachs in Chicago.



ANYA PECK is a global public health social entrepreneur, currently based in New York City.



KAIJA PERKIÖMÄKI is a communications and marketing professional in Portland, Oregon.

AND, AS FOR MYSELF, LAUREN TUISKULA, I'm a second-generation Finn from Worcester, Massachusetts working as a writer for The GIST, a female-founded sports media company.

With our diversity of professional expertise and broad range of experiences as Finnish-Americans, the YLB is eager to help amplify the work of FFN and bridge to the next generation.



MIKKO MCFEELY works as the resilience and sustainability director for a group of the nation's largest public water utilities.

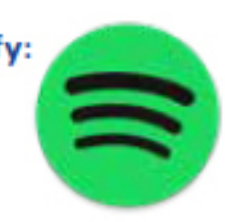
In its first month, the Finlandia Foundation Young Leaders Board launched two initiatives:

Young Finnish Americans on LinkedIn: A space for young Finnish Americans to connect and network.



[linkedin.com/groups/13959445/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13959445/)

FFN YLB Finnish Favs on Spotify: A curated playlist of favorite Finnish bops.



<https://open.spotify.com/>

Find more information at the YLB webpage at [Finlandia Foundation.org.](https://www.finlandiafoundation.org/)