



Alliance Française
Reno

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
as of November 3rd, 2024



Josette Marsh
President

Josette joined the board of directors of the Alliance Française of Hawaii in 2003 and served as its president until 2019.

She was elected to the board of directors of the Federation of Alliances Françaises USA in 2010 and has served two terms as its president. Because she wanted to improve her overall command of the French language and learn more about French history and literature, Josette enrolled in the University of Hawaii, Manoa to pursue her Masters in French which she earned in 2011. In 2020, she was elected to the board of directors of the Fondation des Alliances Françaises based in Paris.



Misha Pascal
Treasurer

After being away from the Reno/Tahoe region for so long as a child and ultimately growing up in the Bay Area, Misha Pascal returned to attend the University of Nevada, Reno. And never left.

28 years later, he continues to raise his two young boys with his lovely wife. After receiving two degrees: one in economics and another in mechanical engineering, Misha works as a pricing specialist for NV Energy.

His love for France comes from his family where his father and mother, both native speakers, raised him surrounded by the culture and the language. Being part of the Alliance allows him to continue his journey of being part of France, with the ability to share that experience with his children.



Mavis Helaine LePage Leathley, PhD
Secretary

My interest in France began years ago when I started to trace my family tree. Even when studying Norwegian in Norway, I explored the geography, culture, and history of France as well as traveling there often and with my husband after we were married.

I was happy when I joined the French Club in Reno as I was able to meet wonderful people who gave me opportunities to practice my French. I know being on the Board of Northern Nevada Alliance Française, I will have many interesting experiences that I cannot wait to share with the members.



Carina A. Black, PhD

Director

A native of Argentina and a citizen of Switzerland and the US, Carina Black has lived in the United States since 1988. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1997 in Comparative Politics. She is the first Executive Director of the Northern Nevada International Center, an organization that manages public diplomacy programs with funding from the US Department of State and USAID.

In 2016, Black initiated a new project to resettle refugees in Northern Nevada. Black has also been actively involved in various nonprofit local and national non-profit organizations that champion diversity, social justice and citizen diplomacy. She is fluent in four languages. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, everything related to the outdoors, reading, gardening, and cooking.

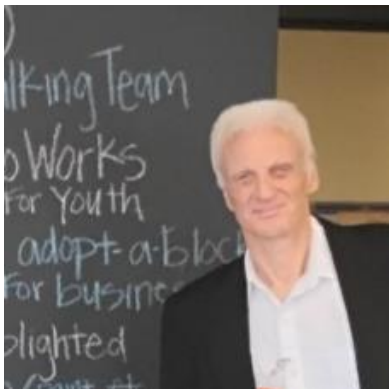


Erin E. Edgington, PhD

Director

Erin is assistant professor of French at the University of Nevada, Reno where she also serves as associate dean of the Honors College. Edgington earned her Ph.D. in French Literature from Indiana University - Bloomington in 2013. She is a specialist of 19th-century French literature and art and the author of *Fashioned Texts and Painted Books: Nineteenth-Century French Fan Poetry* (North Carolina, 2017).

Her current book project reconsiders the tumultuous career of 19th-century French- Canadian poet William Chapman against the backdrop of turn-of-the-century (literary) politics and the rise of industrial capitalism and cultural patronage. Born and raised in Reno, Nevada, she is passionate about making the richness and diversity of the Francophone world accessible to residents of Northern Nevada.



Walter Frankmoelle, PhD

Director

Walter is a retired scientist. He has over 20 years of R&D experience in the field of biotechnology and worked for drug discovery, engineering, and medical device companies.

As a young adult, Walter spent most of his summer vacations in the south of France. He passionately followed all TV episodes of Jacques-Yves Cousteau's 'Underwater Odyssey' and dreamed of becoming a marine scientist. Lo and behold: Years later, as a research scientist, he worked at the University of Hawaii and Scripps Oceanography, where scuba diving became an integral part of his professional life.

Today, scuba diving remains one of his favorite hobbies and his love for winter sports brought him to Reno. He is passionate about languages and would like to help convert local Francophiles into Francophones.



Isabelle Favre, PhD
Director

Isabelle is a professor of French/Francophone studies at the University of Nevada, Reno. She authored three books and multiple articles based on contemporary literature and cinema. She comes from the Francophone Pre Alps of la Suisse romande, and practices all mountain sports, probably due to sheer atavism.

Besides that, she remains in daily contact with French & Francophone cultural news and events in France and the Francophone world, to the point of sometimes missing other news in the US!

Catherine Farahi
Director



Upon graduating from high school in Tehran, Iran in 1975, Catherine Farahi moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to attend the University of Pittsburgh where she lived with her sister's family. When the family relocated to Illinois, she was accepted to the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago.

In 1978 she met and married John Farahi and joined him in Reno, Nevada where she completed her degrees in visual arts and music at the University of Nevada, Reno.

For ten years she was a dedicated children's piano teacher in Reno, during which she also sang with the Nevada Opera and served on the board of the Cambridge Montessori School.

She remains an artist at heart as a calligrapher, sculptor, and painter and has been on several philanthropic boards including the Nevada Museum of Art, the Reno Philharmonic, the Reno Chamber Orchestra, the United Jewish Communities, Hadassah, and Temple Emanu-El of Reno.

Her greatest achievement is her four children.



Jean Pierre Pascal
Director

Commonly known as J.P, he is a retired businessman and ski professional who landed as a young French ski instructor in Squaw Valley (now Palisades Tahoe) in 1968.

His passion for sports and travel led him to run international businesses in skiing and bicycling, including as President of Greg LeMond Bicycling in Reno, before being recruited to run the second-largest bicycling manufacturing company in France, located in the Touraine, grossing some \$50 million with over 200 employees. After 25 years of commuting back and forth between continents, he and his wife, Helene, finally decided to return to the Reno/Tahoe region where they first met and worked for nearly 20 years, including at UNR.

J.P. is ready to commit himself by putting his international experience to good use for the Alliance.



Tali Farahi Dayan

Director

Tali est née à Reno, dans le Nevada. Elle est francophone et francophile confirmée! Son amour pour la culture et la langue françaises a pris racine lors d'un stage à Paris dans la plus ancienne maison de couture, Lanvin, puis dans l'une des plus grandes entreprises de communication du monde, Publicis. Elle a obtenu son MBA à la Columbia Business School, et est mère de quatre enfants qui parlent couramment le Français.

Tali a l'intention de soutenir l'Alliance Française de Reno en aidant à mettre en place un programme pour enfants comprenant des cours de langue et des activités culturelles.



Roswitha Kima Smale, Phd

Director

Born and raised in Germany to Estonian parents, Roswitha is a multi-lingual world traveler and philanthropist who now lives in Nevada and spends part of the year in Southern France.

With a master's degree in Anthropology and a PhD in Communication, Roswitha's career included teaching at the University of Colorado and the University of Denver in both fields.

As a communication consultant she worked on many health-related projects, served on and chaired several major boards in the Healthcare field in Denver. She is currently on the boards of the Nevada Museum of Art, Desert X in Palm Springs and the Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia.

France has been a focal point for Roswitha and her husband especially after they purchased a house there 39 years ago. Now a widow, Roswitha continues to spend as much time as she can in her « magical » hilltop village in Southern France.

After moving to Reno, she was delighted to join a vibrant chapter of the Alliance Française. She loves the broad range of available programs as well as the congenial French speaking members.



Christophe Soulet

Director

Christophe is a businessman since the 90's.

Born French, he spent his childhood in Morocco. Then he studied in France and got a Telecom engineer degree and an MBA. Christophe built his career in the telecom industry in Africa.

He met Allison, his American wife in Gabon (Central Africa). They lived as a bilingual family for 25 years overseas all over Africa, Europe and the Middle East in more than ten countries.

Christophe is glad to share his passion for the French culture in all its aspects with the Reno-Tahoe community through the Alliance Française, whether it's the language, the music, the literature, the movies, the paintings, the gastronomy or the sports: France has it all!



Helene Pascal

Director

Born in Morocco to Ukrainian WWII refugees, Helene grew up multilingual, learning French and later English after immigrating to the Bay Area at 13. She studied English with a French minor at UC Berkeley, graduated from UNR with teaching credentials, and earned an MBA and a master's in education.

Alongside her husband J.P., she founded several international ventures, opened travel agencies, created the first Marketing & Central Reservations Department in Squaw Valley, organized Olympic-level ski camps in Argentina and Chile, and collaborated with Tour de France winner Greg LeMond on cycling events in Japan.

Helene represented various international destinations in the U.S. and served as President and Treasurer of the North Tahoe Visitors & Convention Bureau, as well as on the Executive Board of the Reno-Tahoe Winter Olympics 1992 Organizing Committee.

After 25 years in France, she returned to Reno, where she married Jean-Pierre 55 years prior and raised three children in Tahoe. She is eager to work with the Alliance Française to promote the incredible French culture!