Elana Leopold is a founding partner at Seneca Strategies, focusing her efforts on long-term strategic fundraising and political consulting for local and statewide campaigns.

Leopold has experience in local and national fundraising and politics. Prior to founding Seneca Strategies, Leopold worked as finance director for Mayor de Blasio’s successful re-election campaign, where she was responsible for raising over $10 million, developing a citywide finance plan, and organizing hundreds of fundraisers from a deep network of donors. In 2014, Leopold joined City Hall and served as the Mayor’s right hand, building his executive team from the ground up and running the Mayor’s day-to-day schedule. She went on to serve as a senior member of the Mayor’s political team, overseeing community engagement and political strategy with elected officials and advocates for city agencies.

Leopold serves as Co-Founder and Chief Financial Officer for the Broad Room, a non-profit activist training camp for millennial women in New York. A native New Yorker, Leopold graduated from Hunter College and currently lives in Brooklyn.

Mariama Camara is the founder of Mariama Fashion Production, MARIAMA CAMARA, a New York City based sustainable fashion brand and the co-founder of There Is No Limit Foundation. She is an entrepreneur, humanitarian and advocate for women and girls, born in the Republic of Guinea, West Africa. Mariama is one of the most influential African woman in philanthropy, fashion and entrepreneurship. Her entrepreneurial spirit and humanitarian work has led her to interact with some of the most influential individuals in the business, fashion, entertainment, political, and nonprofit sectors. She lived in Senegal and has traveled to various countries in Africa, the Americas and Europe. She moved to New York City in 2001 and started working in fashion.

In May 2014 Cosmopolitan Magazine choose Mariama as a fun, fearless female and referred to her as a dream weaver. Mariama was also featured in New York Magazine “the Cut” as the Humanitarian giving back through Fashion and Revlon final 15th provocateur. Mariama Camara is part of the cast of Dream Girl Film, a documentary showcasing female entrepreneurs of New York City. Her face has been seen in New York Times, and Wall Street Journal. Through Mariama Fashion Production, Mariama’s focus is on working with artisans to create unique textile and accessories for consumers, emerging and established brand internationally and developing talents throughout Africa.
LAILA ZEMRANI | @LAILAZEM

Laila Zemrani is the Co-founder and CEO of Fitnescity, a HealthTech company that aims at empowering people to learn more about their wellness. Fitnescity offers fitness and wellness tests that enable anyone to understand their wellness profile. Laila was named a Legatum Fellow in Entrepreneurial Leadership and a MasterCard Foundation fellow at MIT. She is a frequent speaker on the topic of personalized wellness and self-collected data. Her work has appeared in numerous media outlets and venues such as Stanford Medicine X, MIT, Harvard, NYU, Future Healthcare Week, the Quantified Self and HyperWellbeing. Prior to Fitnescity, she was a founding employee at Dataxis, a global data analysis firm. Laila has an MBA from MIT Sloan. As an undergraduate, she studied engineering and management at Télécom ParisTech.

HAMEL VYAS | @HAMLEE

Hamel Vyas received a B.A. in Political Science (with honors) from York University, Toronto, and her Juris Doctor from Widener University School of Law. Upon her admission to the New York State Bar, Ms. Vyas began her immigration law career in Buffalo. She is also admitted to the US Supreme Court. Ms. Vyas is currently the Associate Dean for International Personnel, and HR Regulatory and Compliance, at the Mount Sinai Health System where she oversees all employment immigration matters as well as I-9 and E-verify for the health system.

She is the Responsible Officer for the J-1 Exchange Visitor visa program and the Principal Designated School Officer of the F-1 Student Visa Program. She served as immigration co-chair for the South Asian Bar Association, North America, served on the Board of Directors of the South Asian Bar Association of New York (SABANY), and as Vice President. She served on the AILA Board of Governors during her term as chair of the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) and also served as YLD co-chair (2001-02). Ms. Vyas has spoken and written on various immigration topics.

Ms. Vyas is the recipient of the inaugural 2014 Pro Bono Attorney of the Year from the South Asian Bar Association of New York Pro Bono Clearinghouse for outstanding commitment to pro bono legal service for the South Asian community and 2018 recipient of the Public Interest Award from the South Asian Bar Association of New Jersey.

Ms. Vyas was appointed as an inaugural member of the Immigration Affairs Commission for Jersey City, New Jersey in January 2017 and is currently a member of Sadhana’s Project Samaanata Domestic Violence Advisory Committee. Sadhana engages and mobilizes Hindus in New York City and beyond to stand up for social justice causes including environmental justice, racial and economic justice, gender equity, immigrant rights, and anti-casteism.
Shabana Basij-Rasikh / @SBASIJRASIKH

Shabana is the co-founder and president of the School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA), a nonprofit dedicated to providing Afghan girls a rigorous education that promotes critical thinking, a sense of purpose, and respect for self and others. SOLA is a recognized pioneer in education that prepares Afghan girls from diverse backgrounds to become compassionate, curious, and confident women leading a peaceful, prosperous, and united Afghanistan.

Born and raised in Kabul, Afghanistan, Shabana completed high school in the U.S. through the State Department’s Youth Exchange Studies program. She went on to attend Middlebury College in Vermont, graduating magna cum laude in International Studies and Women & Gender Studies in 2011. During her time at Middlebury, Shabana was awarded the Davis Peace Prize to build wells on the outskirts of Kabul and was selected as one of Glamour Magazine’s Top 10 College Women of 2010 for building a school for girls in eastern Afghanistan. She also received the Vermont Campus Compact 2011 Madeleine Kunin Public Service Award for outstanding leadership and service to others. Her greatest achievement came in 2008 when she co-founded SOLA. Upon graduating, Shabana returned to Kabul to establish SOLA as Afghanistan’s first boarding school for girls. SOLA is paving the way by providing quality education to an underserved and underrepresented population, helping graduates enter universities worldwide.

Shabana is widely recognized as a leading advocate for girls’ education. She is a global ambassador for Girl Rising, a global campaign for girls’ education, and was named one of National Geographic’s 2014 Emerging Explorers as well as one of CNN International’s Leading Women of 2014. When Shabana is not home in Kabul, she is often traveling abroad to gain support and further SOLA’s message as well as advocate for investment in girls’ education globally.

Monique Coleman / @GIMMEMOTALK

Monique Coleman is an actor, producer, and global youth advocate. She’s most recognized as Taylor McKessie in Disney’s High School Musical franchise. However, she’s known to many as the first ever United Nations Youth Champion. During The International Year of Youth, Monique organized and funded a 6-month global tour to 24 countries and raised awareness about the most pressing issues facing today’s youth.

Mo balances her work in entertainment with her passion for impacting the world. She appears in the upcoming film “Steppin’ Back To Love” on TV One and “Somebody’s Someone” airing on Lifetime. She’s also the founder & CEO of Motivated Productions and has several exciting projects in development, including Season 1 & 2 of “GimmeMo” airing on Discovery Life this Fall. Monique is a longtime champion for “Girl Up” and is Allstate Foundation’s “Good Starts Young Ambassador”.
PERFORMER BIOS

ALEXANDRA GOOD / @ALEXANDRACLAIREG

Alexandra Good is an avid student, storyteller, and performer. She has been in numerous school and camp productions and served as student director for a recent student drama production. Alexandra dances in the Alvin Ailey School Pre-professional Program and has given musical performances with Play On! Studios. Alexandra was nominated as a NY State finalist for the 2017 Timpanogos Storytelling Festival. Alexandra is 11 years old and lives in New York City.

EMERSON DAVIS / @EMI2K7 @ONCEISLANDBWAY

Emerson Davis made her Broadway debut in the 2018 Tony Award winning musical Once On This Island. Recent performances include CG Paterson in Annie Warbucks and Sabine in Back O'Town. Emerson also plays the cello and has performed solo, ensemble and orchestral pieces at Carnegie Hall, Steinway Hall and the United Nations. Emerson is 11 years old and attends middle school at Professional Children's School. Emerson and Alexandra share a joint YouTube channel called "alexandra emerson."

THIS BRIEFING WAS CREATED FOR WOMEN...

Emily Ward, Hawa Diallo, Judith Abebe-Long, Kathryn Good, Lindsey Sokol, Swati Dave & Victoria Gorelik

...BY THE WOMEN OF UN DPI NGO