

Vitalia Deriabina

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Vitalia Deriabina grew up in Kyiv, Ukraine and dedicated most of her life to the democratic development of her home country. After the start of an active phase of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, she fled the country with two daughters and became a cultural ambassador of Ukraine in the United States. Since May 2022, Vitalia made public speeches about Ukraine and its current developments at Spackenkill High School, First Congregational United Church of Christ (Poughkeepsie), New Hackensack Reformed Church (Wappinger Falls), SUNY (New Paltz), and Center for Lifetime Study/Marist College (Poughkeepsie). Also, she returned to painting in *petrykivka* (Ukrainian folk style) to show its beauty and positive energy to the American community. Few artworks are being exhibited at the Office of Assemblywoman Didi Barret. Currently Vitalia holds Arts Mid-Hudson Residency, works with Primrose School in Rhinebeck, NY and offers workshops to learn how to paint *petrykivka*.

Prior to moving to Poughkeepsie, NY, Vitalia worked as independent political consultant and served as Political Party and Parliamentary Program Manager at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (USA) in 2005 - 2020. NDI is an international nonpartisan non-governmental organization that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world last 30 years. For over 15 years Vitalia managed NDI training programs, as well as designed and conducted activities for more than 20,000 activists in Ukraine. In 2006-2010 she supervised and managed two parliamentary and one presidential election observation projects for political parties with more than 3,000 official party observers trained. Vitalia served as a party trainer bringing her experience in issue advocacy, political communication, election campaigning, women's political participation, and managed public opinion research projects on freedom of assembly and women's political participation conducted by NDI. Also, Vitalia taught Political Science and Political Communication at National University "Kyiv Mohyla Academy" in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Vitalia Deriabina holds a Bachelor of Arts in Pedagogy from the Pedagogical College of T. Shevchenko National University (1997), BA in Political Science from the National University "Kyiv Mohyla Academy" (2001) and a Master of Arts in International Development from the Center for International Affairs, Ohio University, USA (2003).