Darryl studied computer science at university, then began working for Nortel Networks in the UK. He enjoyed working for this company and relished the international travel that it required. While seeking an opportunity to move to Spain with the company, he instead found a post in France. France was far from Darryl's first choice at the time, but as a colleague in Spain put it, if you're looking for an international opportunity, take the one available - who knows what will happen after that?

He met his wife, Geneviève, while they were working at the same company in Nice. When the company went under in the early 2000's, they found themselves looking for work, and Darryl started his own business. He began selling investment properties in the south of France; he also found opportunities selling properties in Croatia, traveling there often and speaking at investor events.

By 2006, Darryl was ready for another opportunity. He applied for a job in the UK that was a perfect match for his skills, but it turned out the job was in German-speaking Switzerland. Darryl had become fluent by then in French and knew the importance of language skills when trying to integrate, but reasoned that Switzerland is a multilingual country, and he felt confident that he could also learn German. So, they decided to move. His first week on the job, Darryl encountered the reality of Swiss German. As Darryl says, he likes German as a language but doesn't get to speak it much. On the other hand, because his job now is in French, helping people looking for mortgages in Romandie, his French has actually improved since he moved to Zurich.

Darryl and Geneviève have been in Switzerland for 20 years, but for a long time Darryl had not sought out any English-speaking clubs or organizations because he wanted to integrate. However, the language situation remained a challenge, and Darryl also describes their early interactions with the Swiss as not great. Soon after they moved into their Uster home, a neighbor came over to tell them off about a grapevine growing across their property from another neighbor's. This vine attracted birds who would leave droppings on her balcony. They've become friendly with this neighbor in the years since, but the cultural difference exemplified by such encounters is a hard lesson, and bridging the gap can take years. Darryl also explains that Uster has changed a lot since they moved there in 2008, describing it at that time as a village. He says he was about the second Black person in Niederuster when they moved there, and that there weren't many non-Swiss at all in the housing development where they live.

Having decided to seek out English-speaking activities, Darryl found the AICZ as well as ZEST, the theatre group. He'd been a member of the British Swiss Chamber of Commerce but likes that the AICZ is a social club. He says that the US is seen by non-Americans as a very open, welcoming society, where a person can be who they want. His experience having traveled to the US is that it is a welcoming place, and this is what he's found at our Club too.

Darryl and Geneviève have a daughter, Grace, who is currently studying in the US. Geneviève's daughter Ingrid lives in Lausanne; at some point they might consider moving there to be near her. In the near future, he'd like to do another play if time allows, but in the meantime, he's planning to see at least one play when back in the UK for Christmas.