

**SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION  
AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE ASSOCIATION • APRIL 2023**

The Committee on Elections is conducting the AFSA Governing Board election.  
This packet contains the candidate list and candidates' statements.

**AFSA Governing Board Election for the 2023 to 2025 Term  
Governing Board Candidates**

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Position</b>
Tom Yazdgerdi	President	Kimberly Harrington	State Rep
Sue Saarnio	Secretary	David Josar	State Rep
John O'Keefe	Treasurer	C. Logan Wheeler	State Rep
Hui Jun Tina Wong	State VP	Whitney Wiedeman	State Rep
John K. Naland	Retiree VP	Mary Daly	Retiree Rep
Randy Chester	USAID VP	Edward G. Stafford	Retiree Rep
Lorraine Sherman	USAID VP	Bruce Kay	USAID Rep
Joshua Burke	FCS VP	Krina Patel	USAID Rep
Eric Wolff	FCS VP	Christopher Saenger	USAID Rep
Lisa Ahramjian	FAS VP	Jay Carreiro	FCS Alternate Rep
John T. Cadieux	Full-Time State Rep	—	FAS Alternate Rep
Gregory Floyd	Full-Time State Rep	Steven Herman	USAGM Rep
Lynette Behnke	State Rep	—	APHIS Rep

**ELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Members**

Dao M. Le, Chair (FCS)  
John Dinkelman (State)  
Mort Dworken (Retiree)

Marcia Friedman (State)  
Erin Nicholson (USAID)

**AFSA Staff Members**

Ásgeir Sigfússon, Executive Director  
Sharon Papp, General Counsel

Contact the Committee on Elections by email at [election@afsa.org](mailto:election@afsa.org) ■

## 2023-2025 AFSA Governing Board Election Candidates' Statements

The order of statements was determined by a drawing of lots. Not all candidates submitted statements.

### David Josar, State Department Representative

Respect. Accountability. Transparency. These would be my guiding principles in representing Foreign Service officers if elected as an AFSA representative for the State Department.

Being an FSO is immensely rewarding, but the job can also be unnecessarily difficult, especially for our family members. We are losing too many excellent colleagues who are tired of battling the Department over bungled paychecks, drawn-out security clearances, mental health support, and arbitrarily applied regulations. And the frustration over the lack of diversity across the Department is very real. AFSA can be a force for change to help members navigate State's many challenges. In a previous career as a reporter, I was a bargaining unit member of the Newspaper Guild of Detroit Communications Workers of America Local 34022. I know and believe in the power of organized labor.

I have been an FSO for nearly 13 years and currently serve in Washington as a country officer in Overseas Citizen Services/Children's Issues. I've been a vice consul in Luanda and Santiago; an information officer in Phnom Penh; fraud prevention manager in Hyderabad; and was in Kabul as part of our evacuation efforts.

I'd be humbled by this opportunity to be your advocate.

### Joshua Burke, FCS Vice President

When SFS promotions takes years,

When 59% of new Officers quit within 10 years and Management doesn't ask Why,

When it takes 93 days longer to complete the assignments cycle than in past years,

When 34% of our FSOs are women, but only 29% of our SFS are women,

When sensitive personnel information remains unsecured on our intranet,

When it takes 18+ months for new Officers to receive formal mentors,

When issuing a simple travel order takes months,

When colleagues are separated from their families because of 'inadvertent' bureaucratic errors,

When the number of WOC in our service can be counted on fingers,

When Management has a window into our private chat group,

When well-meaning colleagues in OGTM are overburdened by decades of underinvestment,

When Officers are regularly asked to work 48+ months before taking home leave,

When we reward patronage and personality over performance, policies, and procedures,

(Pausing here due to character limitations)

...It's time to ask if the status quo is working.

In sharing stories of triumphs and challenges in my 1-on-1 conversations with nearly 40% of our Officer Corps in recent years, I have learned that the status quo is not/not working. For decades FCS has allowed long standing issues to fester. From workplace harassment, to deliberate retaliation, to administrative process failures, to professional burnout, the morale of our Officer corps is at an all-time low.

By standing on the shoulders of my predecessors, as AFSA VP my intention is to support the wellbeing of our Officers, to collaborate with (and to confront when needed) management on issues that impact our lives and our mission, and to tell our story to the Hill to finally get the appropriations we deserve. No stranger to AFSA procedures, and with a downside-up view of our organization in recent years, I am uniquely positioned to serve as Your AFSA VP.

I am grateful for your consideration of Our candidacy. Unified, we can, and we will help all our stakeholders understand and rectify the issues that obstruct our ability to serve the American people.

Bio Note: Joshua Burke is an impact-oriented Officer (O1) who has served in the Domestic Field, Ankara, Bucharest, Lagos, and Headquarters. Prior to joining FCS, Josh worked as a strategy and operations consultant and served as a Peace Corps volunteer. His work has contributed to: combating ISIS in Turkey, countering malign influence in Romania,

creating one million American jobs through advocacy efforts, and launching a Diversity and Inclusion group in EUR. Josh has received numerous Department awards and his team has received the DOC Silver Medal and the LE Staff of the Year award.

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### **Randy Chester, USAID Vice President**

My name is Randy Chester and I am seeking your support for my candidacy as the USAID AFSA Vice President.

Unions and associations are an important force in supporting a healthy work environment conducive to personal and professional growth and advocating and engaging in constructive communication and dialogue. The role of Vice President is vital to the success of individual FSOs and the Agency. It is important that USAID has a strong active voice for positive change, a passionate promoter of workers' rights, and an enthusiastic advocate for inclusive and constructive dialogue. I believe that I bring the needed skills and passion to keep moving our agenda forward and continuing to improve FSO and Agency employee relations.

I am a long-time union member, as a teamster, as a graduate student, and since 2004 with AFSA. I served as the AFSA Representative in Pakistan from 2018-20. In 2021, I was named the co-winner of the AFSA USAID Post Representative of the Year (2020). As a Post Representative, serving USAID and STATE, I learned the importance of advocacy for FSO needs at the Post and Agency levels, especially in the early days of the COVID pandemic. I also deeply understood the critical role of being a sounding board for FSOs to voice their concerns and find solutions. Now, I hope to serve the USAID FSO community as your Vice President.

USAID FSOs are some of the best and brightest development professionals in the world, but our ability to operate effectively overseas and domestically is not without challenges. AFSA is our principal advocate for safeguarding our interests. My priorities as Vice President include:

1. Improving transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of the promotion and assignments process;
2. Completing a strategic workforce plan addressing Foreign Service staffing requirements, recruitment, and retention;
3. Focusing on our professional development and welfare:

4. Applying diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility principles to leadership, work life balance (teleworking/AWS), travel, and elder/child care;
5. Acknowledging household dynamics (single headed households, tandem couples, singles, and dual career/EFM needs); and
6. Engaging leadership on other work-life balance issues;
7. Recruiting and empowering FSOs for senior domestic positions, currently vacant or held by political appointees; and
8. Ensuring the rights of FSOs are protected and promoted in all matters.

If elected, I will build on previous efforts by our VP and continue advocating to improve quality of life and professional opportunities; expand and grow USAID participation in AFSA; and elevate our profile within Congress, and the USAID Front Office.

I hope that you will support my bid.

### **Krina Patel, USAID Representative**

I represent the future of USAID's Foreign Service. As a daughter of immigrants from a developing country, I have seen firsthand the importance of development and diplomacy as I was raised by family members who survived extreme poverty, debilitating infectious diseases, child marriage, and countless other challenges that our foreign affairs agencies address every day. Determined to give back, I joined USAID roughly a decade ago through the Donald M. Payne Fellowship, a program designed to help our Foreign Service better represent the rich diversity of the American people. As a USAID FSO, I've served in a range of backstops, Missions, and Washington offices, including most recently the Office of the Administrator. I also co-founded and led USAID's Payne Fellowship Network, an Employee Resource Group whose DEIA advocacy across the Agency and interagency has benefited our entire diplomatic corps. Through many rewarding stretch assignments, I have led and supported colleagues across hiring mechanisms and witnessed firsthand many of the challenges that our USAID AFSA members require support on: chronic short-staffing, EFM/MOH needs, clearance issues, evacuations, MED concerns, access to career development opportunities, equity of pay and benefits across agencies, and so much more. I look forward to working with AFSA and interagency leadership to advocate on behalf of an increasingly modernizing Foreign Service—one where professionals of all backgrounds can thrive, from recruitment through retirement.

### **C. Logan Wheeler, State Department Representative**

My name is Logan Wheeler, and I'm running for the AFSA Governing Board as a State Representative. In my 15 years as a State FSO supervising teams in domestic and abroad positions in AF, EUR, GTM, INL, S, and WHA, I have worked in both inspiring missions and in toxic workplaces. The difference has been leadership. Internal State surveys indicate that poor leadership ranks among the top reasons that staff leave the Department. We cannot afford to lose talent and experience at the hands of bad managers.

Our State culture is both averse to failure and reticent to deliver honest feedback. As long as the promotion and assignment systems rely on a supervisor's evaluation as the central yardstick, staff will be incentivized to shy away from dissent, academic debate, and constructive criticism. This weakens U.S. diplomacy, preventing thoughtful consideration of new ideas and instructive lessons in failure.

It is easy to complain but much harder to resolve these issues. I believe AFSA to be a place to pursue the latter, working to expand leadership training and to improve the EER and lobbying systems to more formally record truthful perspectives from supervisors, colleagues, and supervised staff alike. I would consider it an honor to work on these concerns and more and to represent you on the Governing Board this term.

### **Gregory Floyd, Full-Time State Department Representative**

I am asking for your vote to serve as the Full-time State Department Representative.

I am a 17-year member of AFSA, and have served as an AFSA Post Representative. Before joining the Foreign Service, I was a labor and employment lawyer with experience in collective bargaining, application of labor law and regulation, and the protection of employees. I have drafted regulations establishing rights for public employees, I have taught labor and employment issues at the university level, and I have given dozens of technical seminars on labor and employment issues to public agencies.

I am uniquely qualified to serve in a full-time professional position representing our membership, supporting our President and Vice President, and vigorously working for our members. If elected, I will seek input from the membership, use my experience and professional background to seek reform and protect our members in line with that input, all while focusing on the unique needs of our specialist members.

There are more than 5,000 specialists spread over 19 skill codes, but the current structure struggles to treat such a broad group equitably. I see different rates of promotion, different challenges with overtime pay, and different needs for professional development. I pledge to help persons from all skill codes equally, addressing inequities and creating a more nuanced structure to better respect the diversity of our members.

I believe there is a window of opportunity right now to do this complex work, shown by M's recent establishment of a Specialist Advocate and the DG's agreement to pilot this new position. Taking advantage of this chance while building a new portfolio will require expertise, a representative willing to seek guidance from the membership, and a representative who will neutrally work for all, regardless of skill code. I would like to be that representative.

Thank you.

### **Lisa Ahramjian, FAS Vice President**

Originally from Wilmington, Delaware, my federal career began in 2006 at the National Institutes of Health, with stops at USDA's National Organic Program and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative before joining the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in 2015. After a rewarding first tour in the Dominican Republic, the violent military coup in Myanmar and the leadup to Russia's war of choice in Ukraine unexpectedly brought me to AFSA. As FAS Vice President, I have cherished being a strong advocate for FAS' Foreign Service and its FSOs and am now seeking reelection in hopes of finishing what we started on several critical fronts.

Renegotiating the FAS-AFSA collective bargaining agreement (CBA): The FAS-AFSA CBA serves as the rulebook for policies impacting our Foreign Service, from assignments to selection boards and prerequisites for the Senior Foreign Service (SFS). In the current term, I persuaded Management to take a fresh look at the substance and structure of this critical tool, which was last substantively renegotiated almost three decades ago. If reelected, I would be able to herd this monumental undertaking to the finish line, ensuring that FSOs remain engaged throughout the process.

Significantly improving HR support: Just before taking on my current role, the 2021 transfer season led to major payroll errors for many FAS FSOs. I immediately began advocating for the new, in-house HR team to make FSOs whole and create process improvements to prevent future errors. When progress stalled, I drafted a letter to Secretary Vilsack to request his assistance in resolving long-standing payroll issues. This

outreach led to his written commitment to correct payroll errors within 90 days and provide interest on back pay. In a second term, I would continue to hold HR accountable for paying FSOs on-time and correctly.

More broadly, I would advocate for a thoughtful rebuilding of our Foreign Service, which is currently recovering from decades of attrition and weathering related growing pains. In addition, I would seek to persuade USDA leadership to change the department's executive pay structure, which unfairly confines 67 percent of USDA's SFS officers to only a 1-2 percent pay increase annually due to statutory limitations. Finally, I would encourage Congress to increase its appropriation to FAS, which would help expand and provide better resources to overseas offices. In addition, I would seek an increased allocation of two-year funds, increasing flexibility for programming throughout the fiscal year.

This strategic engagement with USDA, FAS, and Congress would allow me to address key FSO concerns and bolster morale and retention across our service. If reelected, I would be honored to continue being a fierce advocate for FAS, its Foreign Service, and its FSOs.

### **John O'Keefe, Treasurer**

As Treasurer of AFSA the past two years, my fiduciary responsibility has stood as the first order of business. We have finished the last two years with a surplus; we have operating reserves of \$3,800,000, sufficient to see us through any decline in revenue or unexpected expenses. We have received a clean audit, the highest standard for a non-profit, for 2021 and 2022. We have, through the excellent work of AFSA's professional staff, revamped our investment policy, last done 20 years ago. In sum, AFSA remains on sound financial footing.

The challenges facing the new Board reflect a tightening of the federal budget in the looming fiscal year and building bi-partisan support for the Foreign Service's essential role in maintaining our national security. Essential to our effort is encouraging Congress and the Executive to enhance our presence abroad, provide for our members and their families, and ensure accountability and good leadership from our senior officials. The Department, from the Secretary on down, supports these efforts and we will work in partnership with them to promote those goals.

With my colleagues on the Board, I will wholeheartedly support the reforms aimed at modernization and diversity, the initiatives on granting in-state tuition for children of our members, and protecting our range of benefits, particularly

our retirement system. We in the Foreign Service are exposed to dangers much like our military colleagues. As an Army veteran, I have been exposed to more danger and threats in the Foreign Service than in my military service. Parity with those in the service beside whom we work so closely is an idea we must explain and promote in our legislative initiatives.

Should you honor me with another term as Treasurer, I will continue to put your interests first, will keep a weather eye out for proper management of your dues, and will join fellow Board members in issues that will benefit our country and those in the Foreign Service.

### **Sue Saarnio, Secretary**

I am seeking re-election to AFSA's Secretary position which I was appointed to fill in 2022. After 36 years active duty, I am happy to be able to devote my time in retirement to support AFSA's efforts to maintain a strong diplomatic corps in the field. I previously served twice on the AFSA Governing Board from 1991-94 and 2013-2015 and am proud of AFSA's track record looking out for the interests of our Foreign Service colleagues serving at home and abroad.

I bring to the board a commitment to diversity, accountability, support for families, and a determination to increase staffing and professional development for officers. We need to ensure that our payroll system functions and that our bidding and evaluations systems are fair and transparent and hold the State Department accountable. I benefited during my career from workplace flexibilities including tours job sharing and taking LWOP. I support making those options more widely available to all officers without impacting career opportunities. I believe that AFSA should continue to work with the State Department to encourage accelerated security clearances, EFM employment, DETOs opportunities, and establishment of a Reserve Corps to address the growing workload.

AFSA's most important role is to serve as the voice of the Foreign Service. I have been impressed by AFSA's support in the past for an active reform agenda, career ambassadors, and Foreign Service benefits and pensions. I believe we need to re-double our efforts working with Congress to ensure support for retirees and the interests of family members.

### **Kimberly Harrington, State Department Representative**

I am running for reelection to serve you as a State AFSA representative because I am committed to strengthening the FS to position us to best meet the growingly complex challenges

presented to 21st-century diplomats. And I have seen how AFSA plays a critical role in pushing the Department towards common-sense policies that help our members thrive both in the office and at home.

First, I will work to advance key principles to maintain talent, like more transparency in promotions and assignments. We need to not just recruit great talent; we need to retain it, and increased fairness in these pivotal elements of our HR system will enable that.

Second, I will push for a healthier FS. That means equal access to essential women's reproductive health services overseas, and improved access to mental health service. I will also advocate for the Department to take more proactive measures to recognize and address the grave dangers we face on many of the world's roads, and the urgent need to improve road safety.

We have all seen State make encouraging strides on its commitment to DEIA. I believe there is still important work to be done, including policies like name blind evaluations. Last, as part of a tandem couple, I will continue to advocate for policies that enable our members to navigate two careers, another key to retention.

### **Bruce Kay, USAID Representative**

As a DG officer at USAID for more than two decades, I ask you *not to vote for me* if you're satisfied with Agency support to your family during overseas assignments. *Don't vote for me* if you think the Agency is following directives to empower, protect and rebuild our career workforce; or doing enough to root out "sludge"—the paperwork and bottlenecks that hold us back and frustrate the people we try to assist. (Using 'sludge' to describe red tape is unfair to real sludge which actually converts into useful biofuel.) My unscientific poll of USAID AFSA members via WhatsApp leads me to a metaphysical certitude that USAID's foreign service officers have a few notes for the Front Office; we want the Agency to improve what still sucks. And you? Think we can better help families navigate schools, employment, stress, and other aspects of life in difficult environments? Me too. Let me be your voice for improved family support services. Think we need to pump the brakes on short-term non-career hiring? You're in good company. I will advocate for the career cadre. Think burden-busting will help your productivity and job satisfaction? Hell yes! I will do my part to nudge the unbudgeable sludge. My promise: An open mind to your ideas, time to hear your concerns and energetic representation of your interests.

### **Lynette Behnke, State Department Representative**

I am running for AFSA State Representative to contribute to the ongoing development of a modern, high-impact Foreign Service where people are proud to work.

After 17 years at State, I can imagine no more rewarding career. At the same time, I have also experienced firsthand the challenges of life in the Foreign Service at various stages: being single, later as an officer with a trailing spouse, as a pet owner, a nursing mother, and an evacuee from a post on ordered departure.

If elected, my priorities will include advocating for 1) accountable leadership that takes input from the full spectrum of FS employees; 2) a rational, modern approach to telework and DETOs that helps us retain talented employees and do our work efficiently and effectively; and 3) additional resources and attention for women's health and mental health of employees and their families.

I pledge to work closely with DEIA councils and affinity groups, which generate experience-based and actionable ideas. I also believe strongly in the importance of improving our assignments and evaluations processes in ways that give everyone a fair chance and limit the impact of unconscious bias.

I hope to have the opportunity to work with all of you to create a Foreign Service that works smarter, produces better results, and takes care of its people. Thank you for your consideration.

### **Christopher Saenger, USAID Representative**

I'm running to represent USAID FSOs on the AFSA Governing Board and offer service to all of our hardworking colleagues around the world. I don't have a grandiose platform or a few pet priorities. I want to do my best for singles, families, tandems, new officers, wooly veterans, and even our pets. I'll be an advocate for the issues that matter to you. I'm ready to work on accreditation of same-sex partners, spouse employment, women's health, mental health, further diversifying the Foreign Service, parity across agencies and hiring mechanisms, retaining our staff, and more.

I've been a USAID Program Officer for 14 years (shouts to DLI 6), serving in Ecuador, Iraq, the Middle East Bureau, the Middle East Regional Platform, Colombia, and soon back to Washington to work on Ukraine in E&E. I have a demonstrated record of service to USAID colleagues within and beyond my Mission. I'm an FS-1 who has supervised and mentored Payne

Fellows, volunteered as a trainer in the RISE program, and co-chaired my backstop's Field Advisory Council. I firmly believe we can lead with empathy for the many circumstances and identities of our FSOs without compromising USAID's commitment to advancing a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. I'm Chris Saenger and it would be my honor to represent you on the AFSA Governing Board.

### **Hui Jun Tina Wong, State Department Vice President**

Throughout 2021-2023, I listened, advocated, and collaborated across State, linking our employee organizations with AFSA, and translating your issues into concrete policy and legislative actions. As State Vice President, I will continue to deliver for you. My vision is based in these three principles (ABC):

**Accountability**—I will hold the Department accountable for its implementation of all its FS modernization agenda and DEIA goals. As I recount our wins this term, I also recommit to pushing for more positive institutional change. We built allyship with S/ODI and GTM on disaggregated DEIA data; implemented the DEIA core precept and other EER reforms; advanced bidding standards and transparency; won Congressional authorization for DETO overseas comparability pay; established paid internships; and pushed for Assignment Restrictions FAM updates and reform. We continue to address barriers, toxic work environments, bullying and harassment that can keep groups behind or silenced (including but not limited to women, African American, Latino/a, AANHPI, Arab American, LGBTQI+, the disability community, Pickering/Rangel fellows, among others). We need to confront gaps in the post-COVID telework policy, families with special needs children, tandem bidding, and nontraditional tandem opportunities, and passthroughs, preclusions, and other security clearance issues.

**Building Bridges**—Advance AFSA as the leading-edge organization to build allies in Congress and cross-fertilize initiatives with our Department Employee Organizations that break down institutional barriers impeding our foreign policy mission. This includes addressing staffing gaps in our critical missions abroad and continuing our push for speedy ambassadorial and other State leadership confirmations.

**Creative Solutions**—Our Department and AFSA as our professional organization must continually evolve (inside and out) to equip and invest in our employees in ways that inclusively and equitably transform our institutional culture. We need to offer more work-place flexibilities while balancing

the needs of all employee types, details/career development opportunities, extended LWOPs, and other incentives to bring up and retain multigenerational cohorts of FSOs. We need to think out of the box, reach across the federal agencies and other public and private sectors, base our policy decisions on disaggregated data, and to take calculated risks at all levels. I welcome your ideas and promise to partner closely with the GTM retention unit and M/SS to turn them into reality.

I am a leader with a proven track record on DEIA, data transparency, and advocacy within the Department, in AFSA, and across the interagency. I can only achieve these goals with your support and partnership. Let's get to work for a better State Department.

**Bio:** Tina Wong was elected AFSA State Representative 2021-2023. She is the current DEIA co-chair of Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Driving Diversity, Growth, and Excellence (EUR EDGE) and former President of the Asian American Foreign Affairs Association.

### **Tom Yazdgerdi, President**

First, thank you for being an AFSA member. Without your support, we would not be able to engage our five foreign affairs agencies, the Congress, the media, and others to make things better for our folks on both a collective and individual basis.

I am running for president because I care deeply about our service and want it and our members to thrive. As a proud Iranian and Czech American, I have spent the past 30 years serving our country and the cause of diplomacy, including two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. I want to build on the tangible outcomes that AFSA has produced during the current Governing Board term. Here are just a few:

- We demanded that the State Department provide back-pay with interest when an abortive new payroll system kept people from getting their salary and benefits.
- We put the parents of special needs kids in control of the Special Needs Educational Allowance (SNEA) rather than a faceless bureaucracy.
- We got USAID leadership to agree to a new framework agreement that secures AFSA's rights and are currently negotiating the first such agreement with the Department of Agriculture.
- We worked with Congress to pass the HAVANA Act so that our members who have suffered from "Havana Syndrome" can get the treatment they need.
- We pushed the State Department to overhaul the assignment restrictions process that appeared discriminatory,

especially against Asian American employees.

- We spearheaded the Foreign Service Families Act, which President Biden signed into law, so that our members can break financial obligations without penalty when they go overseas and get the in-state tuition break for their kids, just like our military colleagues.

I want to recognize the dedicated AFSA staff in the Labor Management office at the State Department and at our headquarters that helped make this happen. And we all owe a huge debt of gratitude to outgoing AFSA President Eric Rubin, whose knowledge, experience, and wise counsel have made such a difference to our success.

Looking to the future, AFSA will in 2024 commemorate its 100th anniversary as the professional association of the Foreign Service. If elected, I want to leverage that milestone to highlight the following priorities:

- **Resources:** We have over 200 positions at State, overseas and domestically, that remain unfilled because of this lack of funds. As our members take on more work, this has led to burnout and has hurt retention. Our great advocacy staff, the constituent VPs and I will do our utmost to make the case for more funding.
- **Helping our newest members:** I want to see per diem and housing for all new hires, whether locally hired or not. In the last Congress, we had support in the House for this change but unfortunately not in the Senate. I also support making the FS oral assessment virtual, as the State Department plans to do, to level the playing field and help those who cannot afford to travel and/or take time off from work.
- **Parity with the military:** We are proud of the wins we have gotten, but there is more to do: aside from the perennial issue of Overseas Comparability Pay (OCP), we need to do away with Re-employed Annuitant (REA) caps on pay and hours that affect our pensions. The military does not have this limitation. They get their pension no matter what work they do afterward retirement—we should, too.
- **Foreign Service Reform Agenda:** I'd like to look at the FS reform agenda across AFSA agencies, looking particularly at assignments and promotions, which we know are the top two concerns of our members. This includes making the assignments process more transparent and the EER form more indicative of success at the next level.

If elected, I look forward to working with all of you and putting these ideas into action.

## Jay Carreiro, FCS Alternate Representative

Dear Colleagues:

The Foreign Commercial Service plays a critical role in advancing U.S. interests in every region of the world. While you as commercial officers do the hard work to ensure U.S. companies get a fair shake and that our interests abroad are protected, it's AFSA's job to ensure that your agency provides the tools and resources you need to work effectively. I'm excited to be part that of that effort and I ask for your vote for FCS Alternate Representative.

As you all know, living and working overseas requires resilience and sometimes sacrifice. AFSA can, and should, play a role in ensuring that life in the foreign service goes as smoothly as possible for you and your families. My line will always be open, and if you feel you're not getting the support or guidance you need, please don't hesitate to contact me. Together with our AFSA Vice President, I will do everything I can to assist you, bridge any gaps with management, and ensure that our organization provides the assistance you need and deserve.

Biographical Note: Jay Carreiro is a career Foreign Service Officer whose career with the Commerce Department spans more than 20 years. He holds degrees in Political Science, Public Administration, and Law. He is currently serving as PCO in Düsseldorf, Germany and can be reached at: [jay.carreiro@gmail.com](mailto:jay.carreiro@gmail.com).

## Mary Daly, Retiree Representative

Representing retired Foreign Service members has been a great honor. Recalling the many of you I worked with has me smiling as I type! If re-elected, I promise to keep AFSA focused on what retirees need, whether keeping a sharp eye on Congress to protect pensions, pressing our agencies to serve us better, or supporting AFSA staff who ably assist with individual cases, craft seminars, and tap your talent for public outreach.

AFSA endorsed my proposal to ask Congress to lift caps on re-employment as part of our advocacy for parity with the military. We haven't won, yet, but I will continue to push. You shouldn't lose the pension you earned, or limit hours worked because you answered a second call to duty.

What can AFSA do better? Are we advocating the issues most important to you? Communicating well so you know AFSA's priorities and feel your voice is heard and your talents deployed? I would love to hear from you and would be honored to have another term as your advocate.

Mary Daly is a retired Foreign Service officer who focused on National Security, Congress and Human Rights.

### **Eric Wolff, FCS Vice President**

The Foreign Service is an amazing institution and critical resource for our nation. Simply put, what we do matters. And yet, we know that in the years ahead FSOs will undoubtedly encounter both challenges and opportunities. We need a strong Foreign Service to be able to continue representing our country overseas and domestically. If I am elected as FCS VP, my goal will be to serve our fellow AFSA members and strengthen our unique community.

This year marks my 20th year with FCS and, upon reflection, I would not trade the experiences and relationships made along the way for anything. As a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, it has been my honor to serve in postings in various diverse locations around the world, including in Asia, Latin America, Caribbean, and in the U.S. Thanks to these experiences and countless conversations and relationships that I've had with colleagues along the way—who have served in Europe, the Middle East and Africa as well—I understand the scope of issues that we are currently facing as a global Foreign Service community.

Within the Foreign Commercial Service, we are at a critical juncture with our senior leadership in advocating on key topics, such as ensuring consistent and effective processes for officer assignments. AFSA plays a key role in these important dialogs and, as a member of the Senior Foreign Service, I would represent the Foreign Service community's interests in driving these conversations to resolution. My hope is that my work would help pave the way for FCS officers to maintain key positions of leadership within our service.

Over the course of many years, I've experienced many twists and turns in balancing careers, family, and other outside activities. Utilizing this background, my goal would be to serve and engage further with our beginning and mid-level officers. Within my agency, I have been very impressed with the quality and professionalism of the newest members of our team. The future of our Foreign Service community is bright, capable and very promising.

No matter what the issue, facilitating a diverse and welcoming workplace is crucial for our mission. The Foreign Service is nothing without the individuals who make it up—all who have different backgrounds, opinions, and perspectives. My hope is to see more opportunities for leadership that reflect this diversity.

I believe that I have the qualifications and experience to help AFSA make a difference and as a result ask for your vote. This will be my last active-duty tour, I will have no onward assignment afterwards. Serving you and being accessible to you will be my total focus.

Thank you very much for your consideration!  
Eric

### **John K. Naland, Retiree Vice President**

I ask for your vote so I may continue to represent you as AFSA Retiree VP. If re-elected, this would be my final term since the AFSA bylaws set a limit of four consecutive terms in any one position. I would use my final term to continue to apply my expertise as a former Director of the Office of Retirement in working with AFSA's Retiree Counselor to assist Foreign Service retirees, their spouses, and survivors.

For example, if re-elected I would continue to write substantive items for AFSA's bimonthly Retirement Newsletter, continue to give online retirement benefits presentations, and continue to meet with senior officials of the Office of Retirement and the Office of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services to raise retiree concerns.

Beyond my efforts focused on retirees, if re-elected I would volunteer to continue to chair the Foreign Service Centennial Celebration Committee, to continue to chair the Scholarship Committee, and to continue to serve on the Awards and Plaques Committee.

Having served as AFSA President (twice), State Vice President, and now Retiree VP, I possess the institutional knowledge to help members of the next AFSA Governing Board navigate the critical issues facing the Foreign Service.

If you give me your vote, I will continue to work hard contributing to AFSA's vital mission. If you decide not to vote for me, please let me know what I could do better in the future. You can reach me at [nalandfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:nalandfamily@yahoo.com). Thank you.



**AFSA works,  
because of you.**

**Please vote in the  
AFSA election.**