

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



American Foreign Service Association





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AFSA President Bob Silverman and Master of Ceremonies Andrea Mitchell of NBC News look on as Secretary of State John Kerry addresses dinner guests at AFSA's 90th Anniversary Gala.

Photos on this page and on back cover courtesy Joaquin Sosa/AFSA.

President's Report: **Robert J. Silverman**



A FSA enjoyed a robust, healthy 90th birthday year in 2014. We celebrated at an anniversary dinner on May 22, bringing together a full spectrum of Foreign Service members from youngest to oldest with AFSA staff, members of Congress and the media, and senior administration officials. AFSA is in good shape, energized and committed to work for you and for the collective welfare of the Foreign Service.

AFSA's Four Pillars of Strength

The people who make AFSA relevant and active on your behalf are organized into four groups or pillars.

First is the AFSA professional staff of 36 members. I hope you will get to know them and enjoy working with them as I do.

Second is the AFSA Governing board of 29 elected members, who meet monthly to decide AFSA's policy direction. As the Board chairman, I enjoy working with this diverse, intergenerational group from seven constituencies (State, USAID, retirees, Foreign Commercial Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service).

Third are the members of the seven AFSA standing committees, all volunteers. Their important work runs from serving as judges on the Awards and Scholarship Committees to selecting articles for publication on the *FSJ* Editorial Board and attending congressional receptions on the AFSA Political Action Committee.

Fourth are the 16,500 members of AFSA, which represents one of the highest participation rates of any public sector employee organization. You support the Foreign Service through your payment of dues, attendance

at AFSA events, participation in letter writing campaigns and in many other ways.

We have many other sources of strength, including our networks with other public sector unions and professional associations and, of course, our secure financial standing.

Three Highlights This Year

AFSA has scored numerous wins for the Foreign Service this year, collectively and individually, many of which are described in the following pages. I would like to briefly highlight three.

In January, the Board adopted the "Guidelines for Successful Performance as a Chief of Mission." It addresses the question of what should be the qualifications for the job of U.S. ambassador. The guidelines cite the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and draw on the collective experience of our ambassadors to offer four qualifications for office that should apply to all ambassadorial nominees. The document has been widely cited in the press, and is now used by the State Department in drafting each nominee's Certificate of Demonstrated Competence, which is posted on the department's website prior to the nominee's confirmation hearing. This transparency initiative is a promising step toward moderating the practice of appointing non-career ambassadors.

In April, AFSA's advocacy with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee paid off for 1,800 Foreign Service members awaiting



President Bob Silverman addresses visiting Chiefs of Mission at a breakfast held in their honor at AFSA headquarters in March 2014.

commissioning, tenure and promotion into, and within, the Senior Foreign Service. Senate staff had raised concerns about the adequacy of vetting done prior to nomination. We addressed these concerns, in close collaboration with the State Department. There is ongoing work to ensure that future lists of names continue to receive expeditious treatment, but our Hill relationships are working.

Also in April, the AFSA Board approved a series of issue papers and provided them to the State Department as input to the

paying off in terms of a new QDDR that recognizes and supports the critical role played by the Foreign Service in our diplomacy. And I won't be surprised if some of the ideas in our papers appear in the final QDDR.

Continuing Challenges

As we start 2015, renewing our commitment to the profession of diplomacy on behalf of our country, we can take a certain amount



Governing Board Members: (from left) Neeru Lal, Amb. Ed Marks, Marshall Adair, Chuck Fee, Homeyra Mokhtarzada, Jeri Dible, Sharon Wayne, David Mergen, Matthew Asada, Larry Cohen, Robert Silverman, F. Allen 'Tex' Harris, Angela Dickey, Ken Kero-Mentz, Todd Crawford, Mark Prescott, Nancy Rios-Brooks, Clayton Bond, Ronnie Catipon, William Kutson, Steve Morrison. (*Not pictured:* Sue Saarnio, Jeffrey Cochrane, Dan Spokojny, Amb. Charles Ford, Alex Copher, Andre De Nesnera, Barbara Farrar, Amb. David Greenlee, Andrew Levin, Ronita Macklin, Elise Mellinger, Rachel Nelson, Mark Petry, Jason Singer, Michael Thomas, Lillian Wahl-Tuco, David Zwach.)



Executive Assistant
to the President
Patrick Bradley.

2014 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. These papers cover issues ranging from security overseas, the economic and public diplomacy cones, use of technology, career paths and other issues. AFSA working groups composed of a mix of active-duty and retiree members drafted and refined the papers. They were a down payment on AFSA's continuing engagement with the QDDR office. I believe this engagement is

of comfort in the vitality of our professional association and union. We should not, however, be complacent. Career development remains a priority concern, as promotions slow and the expansion of political appointees at mid levels of our agencies continues apace. For all of us and especially our retiree members, we must remain vigilant in opposition to efforts to cut federal pensions. We at AFSA will look to our four pillars of strength in making the case to the American public that a professional Foreign Service is a critical asset to our country, needed now more than ever. I believe this advocacy will resonate and become an issue in the 2016 presidential campaign. Let's work together and stand up collectively for the Foreign Service. ●

Executive Director's Report: Ian M. Houston



nications, member services, professional issues, awards or retiree counseling—is larger and better than it has ever been.

AFSA also continued to maintain a strong financial posture during 2014, placing great emphasis on the overall stewardship of member resources. This year we again

received the highest possible commendation: a clean bill of financial health from an outside auditing firm. Our wise financial investments have provided options for AFSA that didn't exist in years past.

Ultimately, AFSA's mission is to serve the needs and advance the goals of our membership. In 2015, the staff will extend its record of effective professional service to the elected leadership, committees and the membership. I hope this Annual Report gives you a sense of how the association is working for you, with commitment to your interests and those of the entire Foreign Service. ●

In 2014 AFSA celebrated two significant 90th anniversaries. In May 1924, President Calvin Coolidge signed the Rogers Act into law, combining the United States diplomatic and consular services to create the U.S. Foreign Service. And in October 1924, the American Foreign Service Association was formed.

To mark the occasion, AFSA organized a year-long commemoration, including a series of events and activities designed to deepen public understanding of diplomacy, development and foreign affairs; provide opportunities for the Foreign Service community to come together and celebrate the accomplishments of those who serve—and have served—at U.S. foreign affairs agencies over nine decades; and encourage diversity in the Foreign Service so as to share the true face of America with the countries in which our officers and specialists serve. It was a special year, indeed.

I am pleased to report that the staff of AFSA continued to do a first-rate job serving the interests of the organization. In 2014, AFSA further expanded and realigned our capacity to better advance the interests of the Foreign Service. Throughout the year, I have seen the increasing returns on that investment effort, which began several years ago. The professional staff we have assembled—whether in advocacy, labor management, scholarships, *The Foreign Service Journal* and other publications, commu-



AFSA Staff: (left-right) **First row:** Lori Dec, James Yorke, Janet Hedrick, Ian Houston, Perri Green, Charlie Brown, Kristen Fernekes. **Second row:** Chioma Dike, Raeka Safai, Sharon Papp, Brittany DeLong, Lindsey Botts, Matt Sumrak, Femi Oshobukola, Shawn Dorman, Javier Cuebas. **Third row:** Neera Parikh, Colleen Fallon-Lenaghan, Amanda Whatley, Douglas Broome, Jason Snyder, Patrick Bradley, Janice Weiner, David Murimi, Kalpna Srimal, Ana Lopez. **Fourth row:** Andrew Large, Allan Saunders, Ed Miltenberger, Todd Thurwachter, Jonathan Crawford, Jeff Lau, Debra Blome, Ásgeir Sigfússon, Zlatana Badrich. (Not pictured: Cory Nishi, Kristy Pomes, Susan Maitra.)

State Vice President's Report: **Matthew Asada**



For the past year AFSA has focused on improving benefits and the quality of work/life, career and professional development, and security, in accordance with our 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. To do this effectively we have expanded communications and outreach with membership and forged new partnerships with outside organizations. As a union, we've worked collaboratively with State

Department leadership to negotiate new personnel policies and regulations. Where we have failed to reach agreement, we have filed institutional disputes with agency management and the Foreign Service Grievance Board to protect employees' individual and collective bargaining rights.

This year we appointed five new State Representatives to the Governing Board to replace those retiring or returning overseas. We had a fantastic response to our solicitation call, and I am proud to serve as part of what is AFSA's most diverse—whether measured by ethnicity, gender, cone or specialty—State Representative contingent ever. In 2015, we look forward to revitalizing our AFSA post representative program, the eyes and ears of the union overseas.

Benefits and Quality of Work/Life

This year's membership survey confirmed that a permanent authorization of full overseas comparability pay (OCP) continues to be the number-one priority for our members. Members also sought more workplace flexibility and better work-life balance. We partnered with three employee organizations and affinity groups—Balancing Act, GLIFAA and Executive Women @ State—in an effort to improve parental leave and adoption options for employees.

We joined with our two Civil Service union counterparts to sign a memorandum of agreement with the State Department to establish a one-year pilot leave-bank program. We proposed to the department new regulations covering extended leave without pay for department employees, enabling them to take multiple years without pay for personal reasons or professional development opportunities. Finally, we kicked off a discussion of after-hours accessibility and the tyranny of 24/7 email (see <http://bit.ly/1ApeB9P>) that we hope will produce guidelines for supervisors and employees.

Sometimes our efforts focused on simply making it easier for employees to travel to and from work, or to travel overseas. We welcomed the department's announcement of employee enrollment in the Transportation Security Administration's trusted traveler program TSA PreCheck, and we are pursuing a similar program for U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry to facilitate customs processing on return to the United States.

AFSA also inaugurated the first Capital BikeShare station at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (still known as the Foreign Service Institute, or FSI) and a new free employee shower facility at SA-3 to make it easier to bike, run or walk to work. Finally, AFSA partnered with FSI and Arlington County to survey FSI students, staff and faculty about their commutes, and we look forward to working on the recommendations (new pedestrian and bicycle entrance, free shower and locker facilities).

Career and Professional Development

Early in the year AFSA submitted seven Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review thought papers to QDDR Special Representative Tom Perriello for consideration as it developed the State Department's second QDDR. One paper looked at career paths and professional development. For almost a decade the department has had individual career development programs in place to help guide an employee's career; however, what has been missing is a more detailed look at what such a career would look like given recent hiring patterns.

AFSA encouraged the department to do a "career path analysis" for all officers and specialists, across all cones and specialties, which would include promotion projections, upward mobility and the future of the skill code. We have had preliminary engagement with members of several skill-code groups—office management specialists, construction engineers, security technical specialists, information resource officers—and look forward to continuing this work.

According to this year's membership survey, two-thirds of AFSA's active-duty State survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the "pig in the python" problem (the large numbers hired during Diplomacy 3.0 who are moving through the system) would directly affect their careers. In a separate question, two-thirds disagreed or strongly disagreed that the department recognized the problem and had done the requisite analysis and adjustment of positions to ensure satisfying careers for all.

The department's five-year workforce development plan, and separate report to Congress, failed to fully address the pig-in-the-python problem, the mid-level position deficits and the false sense of security provided by what may not be "flat" attrition rates. AFSA highlighted these issues, as well as concerns about changes to the Foreign Service conversion program, in its first transmission to Congress on the department's plan (in accordance with 22 U.S. Code § 4173 requiring incorporation of the exclusive representative's views on workforce development).

AFSA continued its efforts to support a diverse, innovative and professional workforce. It advocated changes within the department on the oversight and reporting of diversity, including more granularity of demographic data, and reforms to the assignment restrictions and preclusion programs that particularly affect Asian-Americans and other ethnic groups.

Security

AFSA's focus post-Benghazi has been to ensure that employees have the security awareness and language training necessary to safely and effectively engage overseas. According to the membership survey, more than half of employees disagree or strongly disagree that the department has struck the right balance between risk and reward; more than half agree or strongly agree that, post-Benghazi, it is *more* difficult for employees to effectively engage overseas. Most strikingly, six out of seven respondents noted that it is important for AFSA to be at the table when the department makes decisions that impact employee security or exposure to risk.

AFSA will continue to pursue participation in the department's new risk-management decision-making model—the Vital Presence Validation Process (known as VP2)—because those decisions affect where and under what conditions employees serve overseas. This is especially important now that the department seeks to avoid the traditional authorized and ordered departure designations in favor of new “temporary relocation” procedures.

AFSA was able to negotiate changes to the language designation process to enable posts for the first time to language-designate based on security concerns. We also negotiated new work requirements regarding security and personal accountability that addressed our concerns regarding potential overly broad application. We provided feedback to the department on the revised “crash and bang” security awareness training—now mandatory for all employees—and the new course “Doing Diplomacy in High-Threat Posts.”

Outreach

AFSA engaged its active-duty State members using a full spectrum of tools: webinars with AFSA post representatives and information resource management specialists; visits to five overseas and two domestic posts; and mid-term member information sessions at AFSA headquarters, Main State and FSI. The FSI event can be viewed online at <http://www.fsivideo.state.gov/videos/afsa>. In addition, in partnership with FSI and the Bureau of Human Resources, we have begun work on a first-of-its-kind online course on Foreign Service labor management relations that we hope to roll out in 2015.

Partnerships

AFSA strengthened relationships with its Civil Service union counterparts—AFGE Local 1534 and NFFE Local 1998—on items of mutual interest, such as employee protections enshrined in the Vance Memo and establishment of an employee leave bank. We developed new relationships with our military association counterparts (Army and Navy), enlisting their support in our efforts to obtain Senate confirmation of career ambassadorial nominations. Finally, we worked with the department on appointments to the Foreign Service Grievance Board and Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel, both of which play an important role in resolving labor management disputes.

Negotiations

Throughout the year, AFSA negotiated the substance, impact and implementation of new department policy proposals. We negotiated new regulations governing employees' private communications (3 FAM 4170), ensuring that the department would make an agency decision within 30 days of submission on the permissibility of private-capacity publication; we increased employee eligibility rules for details and long-term training to accommodate employees remaining longer in class; and we agreed to a review and reform of the Priority Staffing Post incentive program.

We ensured that employees at five posts slated for R&R elimination would have additional time to take advantage of the R&R benefit before it was eliminated. And, though we couldn't prevent elimination of the skills incentive pay benefit, we negotiated an extra six months of eligibility for some IRM professionals.

The year concluded with an ambitious department proposal to reform the performance management system—the form, number of boards and process for conferring Meritorious Service Increases. AFSA is reviewing the proposal.

Implementation Disputes

Despite the many successful agreements and resolutions, there were a number of disputes on which we were unable to reach agreement with the department.

AFSA filed implementation disputes regarding the department's decision not to implement any of the 554 MSI recommendations of the 2013 Selection Board and only half, or 270, of the 2014 Selection Board recommendations. The 2013 and 2014 cases are currently before the Foreign Service Grievance Board. AFSA alleges that the department's actions violate past practice and negotiated labor agreements—i.e., the 2013 and 2014 procedural precepts—and expects decisions by the Foreign Service Grievance Board in 2015.

We filed a cohort grievance on behalf of the 11,000 Foreign Service employees who were required to repay more than the Overseas Comparability Pay overpayment they had received through no fault of their own. AFSA believes that all employees have an obligation to repay the actual amount of overpayment—no more and no less.

We also filed an implementation dispute regarding a violation of the procedures and past practice governing the two-year pilot Overseas Development Program that governs the assignment of non-Foreign Service personnel to overseas Foreign Service positions. AFSA alleges that the department violated our agreement by proceeding over AFSA's objection to include the FS-2 Iran Watcher position in the program.

Finally, AFSA filed implementation disputes concerning Diplomatic Security's entry-level assignments policy for new local hires and the department's failure to obtain union agreement before proceeding with new post policy. ●

USAID Vice President's Report: Sharon Wayne



The 90th anniversary of the Foreign Service and AFSA gave us the chance to reflect with pride on the work of USAID Foreign Service members toward preserving human dignity around the world while advancing U.S. security and prosperity. AFSA plays a vital role in promoting the value of the Foreign Service and providing checks and balances within the foreign affairs agencies.

I would like to highlight a few of the issues tackled this year at AFSA USAID.

Parity

Extensive work was done to rectify the imbalance in benefits between the foreign affairs agencies, in particular the imbalance between USAID and State. We used benefits data collected from USAID members to educate agency management and the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review team on this issue and its implications for the USAID Foreign Service. This work has gotten traction on many levels, and Administrator Rajiv Shah directed the agency to address the inequalities and cost-out the funds needed to close the gap.

AFSA's ability to push this issue to the fore resulted in a number of positive steps by the agency. For example, the Management Bureau is researching a temporary housing program for USAID that is much like the one already in place at the State Department. Such a program would remove the FS member as the middleman for bill payment, and it would provide secondary benefits, such as guaranteed housing should a lease extension be needed because of visa delays or the need for additional language testing.

USAID has secured funding for a pilot trial of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry program. As pre-screened Global Entry members, USAID travelers would benefit from shorter processing lines and have access to expedited entry benefits, allowing for more efficient use of travel. Although the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck is currently available at the State Department, Global Entry will provide a more comprehensive benefit for replication among foreign affairs agencies.

The QDDR team is particularly interested in the lack of parity in language training provided to USAID FSOs and eligible family members (EFMs) compared to opportunities available to

State FS members and EFMs because this has ramifications on multiple levels, including safety, morale, efficiency of work and public perception.

AFSA lobbied for more employment opportunities and language training for EFMs, and a new USAID initiative is set to address these issues. The overarching goal of the initiative is to increase agency efficiency by tapping into an underutilized human resource, the EFMs of FSOs stationed at USAID missions overseas. It also supports FSO retention by helping the agency offer more professional employment options for family members.

Policy

AFSA worked to protect members this year in a number of different areas. For example, AFSA successfully intervened when the Administrator doubled the length of service required, from one year to two, in a critical priority country before an employee is eligible for priority bidding status. AFSA USAID immediately compiled member responses to this change and shared our mem-



USAID Board Representative Andrew Levin, USAID VP Sharon Wayne and AFSA President Bob Silverman meet with USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah (center left).

bers' concerns with agency management. This led directly to the agency's agreement to postpone any change and engage all stakeholders to determine the best way forward.

AFSA encouraged further discussion on a decision to abruptly change the eligibility requirements for FSOs bidding into senior



AFSA members mingle with invited guests from Capitol Hill at a networking event and presentation honoring Women's History Month and International Women's Day.

leadership group (SLG) positions. The policy sought to enact and enforce a minimum eight-year overseas requirement and a three-year minimum as an FS-1 to be eligible to bid on an SLG position. The policy was rescinded to allow for wider discussion to determine the best mix of criteria for eligibility.

In addition, to better leverage the field perspective in agency policymaking, AFSA pushed for, and has begun to see, the creation of more Foreign Service positions in Washington.

Outreach and Honors

As AFSA's USAID VP, I had the pleasure of serving as emcee at a Congressional Networking event in March celebrating Women's History Month and International Women's Day. The event placed a spotlight on the profound role played by women in the history of the Foreign Service, diplomacy and AFSA.

In a first-ever event, AFSA hosted a happy hour for mission directors during the annual Mission Directors' Conference in Washington, D.C., to hear from agency leadership on issues from the

field. We hope to make this an annual occurrence.

In May, AFSA held a memorial ceremony at USAID for Foreign Service Health Officer Antoinette "Toni" Tomasek, who died at post in Haiti from injuries sustained in a car accident. FSO Tomasek's name was also added to the AFSA Memorial Plaques at State in a separate ceremony.

This year we were proud to honor USAID FSO Ambassador Jonathan Addleton, who received AFSA's Christian A. Herter Award for constructive dissent by a Senior Foreign Service officer. His dissent addressed the State Department's restrictive outreach policies and the resulting missed opportunities.

The coming year will hold many challenges, including keeping the momentum going on revamping our performance management system. AFSA USAID plans to launch a standing committee in early 2015 to allow for more engagement and communication on the issues that affect us all. ●

FCS Vice President's Report: Steve Morrison



It seems 2014 was a very good year. Commerce Assistant Secretary and Commercial Service Director General Arun Kumar took up his new position in March. Commerce Under Secretary for International Trade Stefan Selig began three short months later. The Commercial Service's leadership dance card was filled up—for the time being—three months after that with the arrival in Washington of FSO Mike Lally, as executive deputy assistant secretary for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. This is a key position “won” by AFSA during consolidation.

In 2014, AFSA representative Barbara Farrar became Commercial Service assignments officer; and Bill Kutson, well-known in the building and Washington for his team-building and organization reengineering prowess, took over for Barbara as AFSA representative. Capping the year was the Nov. 18 Senate confirmation of career Commercial Service FSO Craig Allen to be U.S. ambassador to Brunei—something AFSA can take great pride in having helped to make happen.

International Trade Administration consolidation continued apace in 2014. AFSA has worked with the Commerce Department's Office of Inspector General on its final report, due in early 2015. A key topic will be the private sector's view of the reorganization.

Regionalization, on the other hand, continued to evolve, as evidenced by the move of Europe's “Super Senior Commercial Officer” from Rome to Brussels. AFSA is closely monitoring this situation to ensure AFSA and career officer “equities” (assignment and promotion opportunities) are protected.

The new money that AFSA fought hard to help get for the Commercial Service has resulted in multiple new office openings, increased promotions (20 percent more), increased hiring (24 new officers and more on the way), more training and more of everything needed to promote exports.

We also successfully negotiated changes to the Foreign Commercial Service's language training and assignment policies. Principles that helped guide our thinking were consistency, transparency and compassion. Four years of AFSA advocacy culminated in 2014 with the announcement of a new, revised when-actually-employed (WAE) program—called the Reemployed Annuitant program here at Commerce.

As for 2015, three “asks” or challenges come immediately to mind: a CS contract lodging program along the lines of the State Department's agreements with Oakwood and other extended stay

hotels here in Washington; a “deep dive,” which we have already begun, with ITA Deputy Under Secretary Ken Hyatt and others regarding the less-than-stellar results of the government-wide Employee Viewpoint Survey; and the March 23-24 SelectUSA Investment Summit. This is the second such meeting and a good opportunity to reassess CS progress in promoting inward investment—a key goal of the new, consolidated ITA. ●

FAS Vice President's Report: David Mergen



This will be my last annual report as FAS Vice President before my assignment overseas this summer, so I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of the work AFSA does in support of the Foreign Service in the Foreign Agricultural Service.

AFSA was particularly successful in 2014, working with Congress and the administration to clear up the backlog in approval of promotions for the Senior Foreign Service and commissioning for more junior officers, as well as long-delayed confirmation of career ambassadors, including our own Allan Mustard. AFSA was also successful in ensuring continued payment of the two-thirds overseas comparability pay (OCP) we have received in recent years and kept up the push for eventual implementation of full OCP.

More directly related to FAS, the AFSA advocacy staff helped us convince Congress to almost double the representation and reception allowance available for FAS in the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. The longstanding cap on that allowance hindered the ability of FAS officers to effectively represent U.S. agriculture overseas.

Within FAS, we continued to push for promotions of more junior officers to replace the large number of retiring officers. During the two-year period of FY2014 and FY2015, a third of our senior officers at the FO-1 and SFS level have either already retired or will be retiring. The failure to promote enough officers to fill the gaps is creating serious problems in staffing senior overseas positions; more than 30 percent of our overseas positions are currently filled by officers working in stretch assignments.

Management's decision to fill some of these gaps with Civil Service employees on temporary assignment makes the development of the next generation of Foreign Service officers even more difficult, and has negative implications for our ability to effectively represent U.S. agriculture overseas in the long term.

The work of our Foreign Service officers both at home and overseas is more important than ever. The United States had a huge crop this last year and is relying on our efforts to export it.

For large sectors of rural America, maintaining a strong Foreign Service is vital. While the agency has focused on budget savings, the USDA faces a potential budget hit of billions of dollars for farm payments triggered by falling prices. This is the wrong time to downgrade the Foreign Service, and AFSA has made and will continue to make this point. ●

Retiree Vice President's Report: Lawrence Cohen

Federal benefits remained a central issue during 2014. AFSA joined with other federal employee associations to press for protection of these benefits, and current annuitants will likely not experience reductions that would result from a lower cost-of-living calculator. The focus, however, has shifted to younger federal employees and new hires who, unfortunately, can look forward to substantially higher pension contributions and trimmed annuities. We must not only protect the benefits of current retirees but also the benefits of those who, in the future, following full careers, will themselves become annuitants.

In 2013 the Department of State launched its “centralized” when-actually-employed (WAE) registry, maintained by the Human Resources Service Center. Its purpose was to supplement the current bureau-centric WAE system and widen the pool of quali-



fied, multifunctional job seekers. Such a program could benefit both the department and retirees. In our view, the central registry has yet to bear fruit. Anecdotally, we understand that a few retirees may have been hired off it. But until the department and HR join the 21st century and establish the type of profile- or resume-based program used by almost every company, multilateral institution and NGO, the registry will amount to little more than a list of names and contact information.

On a positive note, the Foreign Commercial Service has moved toward its own WAE network. And, incidentally, Foreign Service retirees from FCS and other foreign affairs agencies are also eligible to seek Department of State WAE work.

Another issue on which we engaged in 2014 is retiree access to the State Department and its annexes. When visiting these facilities, retirees ought to be afforded the dignity earned by their decades of service. AFSA continues to receive stinging comments from members indicating that respectful access often falls short. We strongly support activation of the chip in the brown “chipped” retiree badges to allow passcode access to the department, especially for retirees who still hold active security clearances. In any case, no retiree holding an appropriate ID should suffer the indignity of a bag and body search. Unfortunately, progress to date has been slow on this front.

Other challenges popped up, as well. AFSA learned, for instance, that divorce decrees lacking explicit language regarding a Foreign Service pension plan may become potential bombshells upon retirement. The financial implication of this is huge for those affected. On another matter, for non-seniors who retire from overseas assignments, virtual locality pay preserves your full annuity. However, for WAE work, a surprise may be in store when a lower pay cap is applied.

In retirement, AFSA has our backs, protects our Foreign Service legacies and provides powerful networking capabilities. But keeping AFSA membership in retirement is not automatic: we urge all retiring members to proactively visit www.afsa.org, email member@afsa.org or call (202) 338-4045, ext. 520, to “re-up” your AFSA memberships. For the cost of a couple Starbucks a month, don’t let retirement separate you from your FS legacy and network!

There are many ways to stay involved. Volunteer for an AFSA committee or run for the Governing Board. We’ll be launching an online AFSA social network community in 2015 and will need moderators. Please fill out your AFSA retiree profile. The link is on the AFSA website. Outside the Washington, D.C., region, AFSA-affiliated retiree associations exist. Join up. Finally, consider donating to the AFSA scholarship fund or leaving a generous bequest in your will or estate. From one generation to the next... ●



AFSA VPs and other board members prepare for AFSA's annual Advocacy Day in February 2014.

AFSA BY THE NUMB3RS

6,034

Facebook Likes (as of 12/31/14)

9

Members Assisted in
Having Their Security
Clearances Reinstated

29

Positions on the AFSA
Governing Board

14

Orientation
Luncheons for
Incoming FS
Classes

2

Film
Screenings
at AFSA

450+

Retirees Counseled

3,808

Page Views of *Serving
at Embassy Kabul* - the
FSJ's Most Viewed
Article Online

232,800

Unique Visits to the AFSA Website

3

Exemplary
Performance
Award
Recipients

1,445

Subscribers to AFSA's Daily
Media Digest (as of 12/31/14)

90

Post Reps Certified

4

Constructive
Dissent Award
Recipients

537

New Cases Opened by
Labor Management Staff

7

AFSA Committees

28

FS High School
Seniors Who
Received Merit
Awards Ranging
from \$750 to \$2,500

27,474

YouTube Views (as of 12/31/14)

270

Colleagues Recommended
by Selection Boards Who
Received Their Meritorious
Service Increases (MSIs)

61

Commemorative Coins Sold

17

Authors at
First Ever
AFSA Book
Market Event

16,345

Total AFSA Members (as of 12/31/14)

23

In-House Events

450

Entries Received
(from 47 States and 6
Countries) for AFSA's
High School Essay
Contest

52

FS College Undergraduates
Who Received Scholarship
Aid Awards Ranging from
\$2,000 to \$5,000

650

Cases Worked by Labor Management Staff

1,021

Rides on New FSI
Capitol Bikeshare
Station Since Its
Launch by AFSA
in 2014

246

Names on the AFSA Memorial Plaque (as of 12/31/14)

10

Sinclair
Language
Award
Recipients

1,383

Twitter Followers (as of 12/31/14)

66

Books Featured in the
November *FSJ* "In Their
Own Write" Article

806

New Members

5

Retiree
Themed
Events

44

Foreign
Service
Medallions
Sold

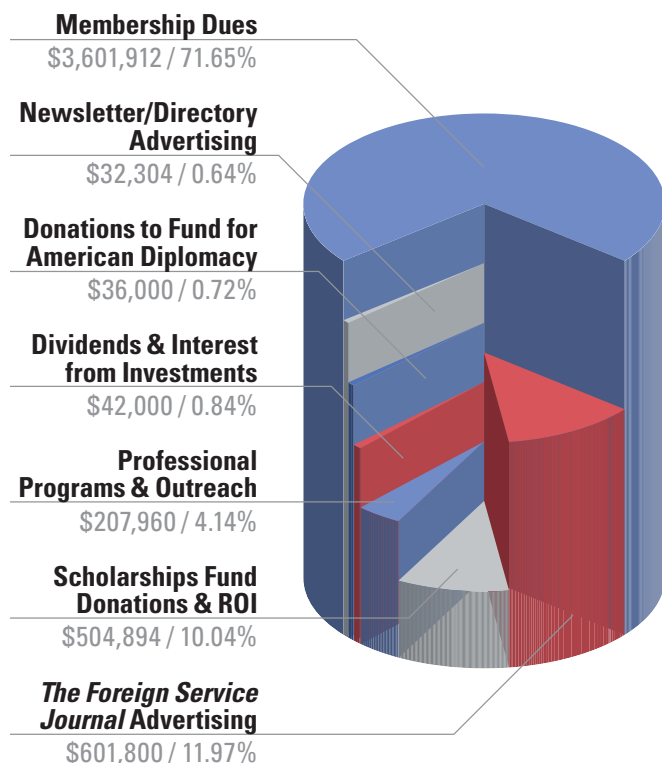
Working on Behalf of Members

Finance and Accounting:

Steady Stewardship

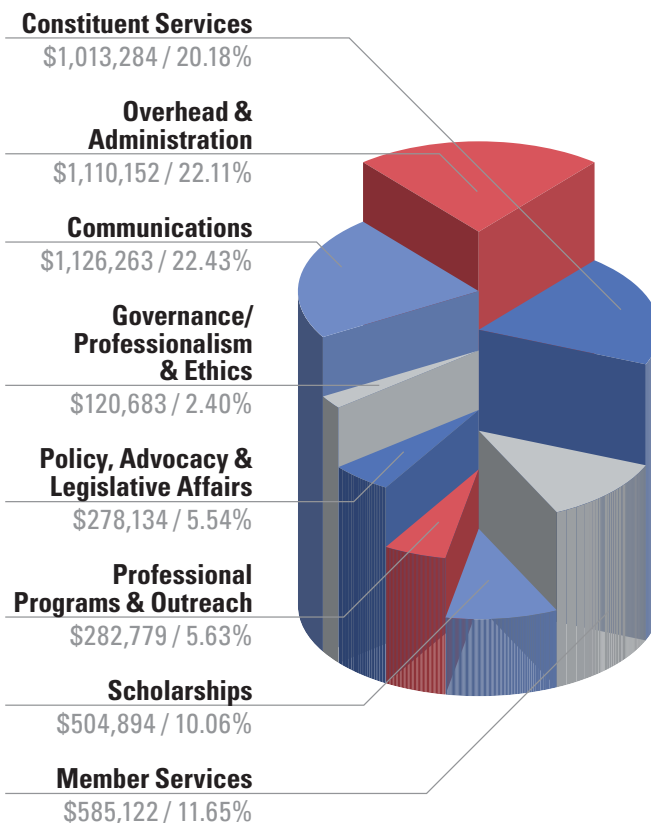
A FSA continues to focus on managing our financial resources and assets with care and long-term strategic goals in mind. Wise stewardship over time has borne fruit in that we are better positioned to advance goals and meet objectives that are in the direct interests of AFSA members. In 2014, AFSA again achieved the highest marks from an outside auditing firm for our overall financial management. This represented the fifth year in a row we have achieved this type of assessment. Our annual budget in 2014 was balanced and strategic, and this will remain an organizational value. ●

Revenue Budget 2014*



**Includes income from AFSA operations, the Fund for American Diplomacy, and the Scholarships Fund*

Expenses Budget 2014



Finance and Accounting Staff: (from left) Assistant Controller Cory Nishi, Director of Finance Femi Oshobukola, Controller Kalpna Srimal, Advertising and Circulation Manager Ed Miltenberger.

Advocacy: Addressing the Issues

At AFSA, we have a holistic approach to advocacy and make use of the best practices in public policy, direct lobbying, grassroots mobilization, networking, marketing and communications. We educate and influence both government officials and the American public on the vital contribution members of the Foreign Service make to national security, economic development and job creation and on what they require to do their jobs effectively.

In 2014, AFSA's advocacy department continued to raise awareness about the issues that affect Foreign Service members and their families. Because the political climate on Capitol Hill made it very hard for legislation to be approved, AFSA concentrated on educational initiatives. Aware that not all issues affecting our members are federal in nature, we also did the legwork to launch a state outreach project in 2015.



Advocacy Staff: (from left) Policy Advisor Janice Weiner, Director of Advocacy Javier Cuebas, Senior Legislative Assistant David Murimi.

90th Anniversary

AFSA worked with then-Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) to introduce Senate Resolution 369, designating Foreign Service Day and recognizing the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service of the United States and honoring those in the Foreign Service who have given their lives in the line of duty. In the House, Committee on Foreign Affairs member Representative Juan Vargas (D-Calif.) introduced Resolution 582 in support of

Foreign Service Day and in recognition of the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service.

AFSA also hosted a congressional reception for the 90th anniversary. Senator Tim Scott (R-S.C.), Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) and Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) addressed attendees.

New Strategic Partnerships

To address the unique situation of congressional gridlock in 2014, AFSA launched new partnerships with the business and military communities and raised its profile on Capitol Hill through direct lobbying and grassroots mobilization.

AFSA held its first Advocacy Day in February. Twenty-five Governing Board and professional staff members visited 17 Senate and House offices from both sides of the aisle to present AFSA's priority issues: overseas comparability pay, overseas security, and career development and professional capacity.

Aiming to help the more than 1,800 Foreign Service members whose tenure and nominations were delayed due to no fault of their own, AFSA made a strong case in Congress, which helped to secure their confirmation and attestation.

To address the ambassadorial logjam, AFSA visited with Senate leadership, hosted a roundtable discussion with business leaders on the importance of chiefs of mission, secured letters of support from the business and military communities, and mobilized members and supporters to urge their senators to promote an expedited confirmation process for career nominees.

Outreach

AFSA revamped its outreach efforts and hosted or provided support for a series of networking events in the District of Columbia aimed at connecting foreign affairs agencies personnel with congressional staff and young professionals interested in diplomacy. The effort resulted in exponential growth in the number of requests for partnerships, speakers, and issue and area experts.

Community Work

AFSA expanded its local presence this year with community service initiatives like the Foreign Service Park Clean-Up Day in May, which we expect to make an annual event.

Awareness and Branding

As we have done for the past two years, the advocacy department helped magnify the impact of AFSA programs such as the National High School Essay Contest, scholarships, the Memorial Plaque Ceremony and awards by informing the winners' and honorees' congressional offices and soliciting their support.

State/Local Action

In recognition of the 90th anniversary, the Virginia General Assembly adopted a resolution honoring the men and women of the Foreign Service.

International Affairs Budget

In addition to our traditional efforts to ensure adequate funding for the foreign affairs agencies and pay equity for our members, AFSA also actively advocated full funding of the Foreign Affairs Security Training Center at Ft. Pickett, Virginia.

Personnel Security

AFSA continued to monitor congressional efforts to improve personnel security and educated members and staff about the importance of balancing risk and diplomacy and about the vital connection between personnel security and language and situa-



AFSA's Matthew Sumrak attended the AFGE Shared Prosperity Rally on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, February 2014.

tion-relevant training. We also advocated the provision of additional resources for much-needed language training.

In July, we hosted Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), a member of the House Select Committee on Benghazi, for an off-the-record roundtable discussion with recent returnees from high-threat posts. Schiff subsequently cited AFSA during the committee's opening session. AFSA staff also held introductory meetings with other members of that committee.

Diversity and Equality

AFSA worked diligently with both parties in Congress to secure strong language in support of diversity outreach, recruitment and retention efforts by State and USAID in the Senate version of the State Department authorization bill. Although the legislation was not introduced, we are committed to continue promoting such language during the 114th Congress.

In addition, AFSA sought to bring attention to the negative consequences for both individuals and agencies of the State



State VP Matthew Asada and USAID VP Sharon Wayne met with Aaron Allen, legislative assistant for Congressman Juan Vargas (D-Calif.) on February 2014.

Department's current rules on assignment restrictions that affect diverse groups. AFSA also co-hosted several events with the Congressional Black Associates, including a panel discussion on "Diversity in the Foreign Service." The event brought together distinguished active-duty and retired professionals to discuss the past and present of diversity in the foreign affairs agencies.

Consumer Affairs

In response to requests from our members and in collaboration with Labor Management staff, AFSA initiated a formal dialogue with U.S. telecommunications carriers and other companies to secure the same benefits currently granted to members of the military and other federal employees. We have made similar efforts in the areas of air travel, health, real estate and taxes.

Family/Dependent Issues

AFSA continued to advocate more and better services and opportunities for Foreign Service family members. We worked with Rep. Alan Grayson (D-Fla.) to introduce H.R. 5206, a bill to allow Foreign Service and other executive agency employees to specifically designate beneficiaries of their death benefits. The bill passed out of the House Committee of Foreign Affairs in November, and we expect it to be reintroduced at some point during the 114th Congress. We support H.R. 517, Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act, introduced by Representative Carolyn B. Maloney (D-N.Y.). This bill would provide four weeks of paid parental leave to federal employees for the birth, adoption or fostering of a child.

AFSA-PAC

AFSA has also tremendously benefited from the AFSA-PAC which was created in 2002 and is separate registered entity from AFSA. The AFSA-PAC supports members of Congress whose policies are aligned with a stronger Foreign Service. ●

AFSA Awards: Recognizing the Best

Each year since 1968, AFSA has honored those in the Foreign Service community who have demonstrated intellectual courage, exemplary performance and outstanding service.

Winners of AFSA's Constructive Dissent, Exemplary Performance and Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Awards are recognized each June at a ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State.

Charles Stuart "Stu" Kennedy received this year's Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award in recognition of a distinguished Foreign Service career and a lifetime of public service. Kennedy retired from the Foreign Service in 1985 with the rank of Minister Counselor. He created the Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection while serving as managing director of The George Washington University's Foreign Service History Center. The program moved to the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training in 1988, where Kennedy continues to serve as its director. The ADST Oral History Collection now includes more than 1,800 entries, which are all posted on the Library of Congress website (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy>). It is fitting that during its 90th anniversary year, AFSA recognized Kennedy for his invaluable contribution to keeping the stories of the Foreign Service alive.

Recognizing Dissent

AFSA offers four awards for constructive dissent to Foreign Service members who work constructively within the system to change policy and performance for the better. Such dissent may be made in any nonpublic channel, including meetings, emails to superiors, memoranda, telegrams or via the State Department's formal Dissent Channel. These awards are unique within the federal government.

These awards are not necessarily given each year, but only when a deserving candidate is identified. In 2014, following a robust publicity campaign of AFSA.net email messages, cables and *Foreign Service Journal* articles, AFSA received nominations in all categories. And, for the first time since 2006, we bestowed all four awards.

The **W. Averell Harriman Award** for entry-level Foreign Service officers was given to William O'Bryan, who convinced Mission Saudi Arabia to start attending trials of human rights activists, giving the mission a window into the Saudi legal system that did not previously exist.

David Holmes received the **William R. Rivkin Award** for mid-level officers. Holmes argued that the division of authority between the Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and

Pakistan and the Bureau of Central and South Asian Affairs was hindering U.S. diplomatic priorities.

The **F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award** for Foreign Service Specialists was awarded to Nick Pietrowicz, who raised important concerns about the need to balance human rights and respect for the rule of law in U.S. programs that provide counterterrorism assistance to other countries.

Ambassador Jonathan Addleton, a USAID FSO, was awarded the **Christian A. Herter Award** for a senior Foreign Service officer. Addleton's belief that the State Department's complex system



Awards and Plaques Committee: (from left) Perri Green, Kit Norland, Daniel Martinez, Eva Groening, Amb. Ed Marks, Robert Silverman, Amb. John Limbert, Janice Bay, Amb. Ed Peck, Ruth Hall, Allison Lee, Adam Center, Anthony Fernandes. (Not pictured: Joseph Bristol.)

for reviewing requests by Foreign Service personnel to speak and write is overly risk-averse and inhibits rapid responses led him to urge a systematic review of the department's public affairs policy.

Recognizing Outstanding Performance

AFSA gave three awards for exemplary performance in 2014. These awards highlight the professionalism and spirit of service and volunteerism found within the Foreign Service community.

The **Avis Bohlen Award** for an eligible family member of a Foreign Service employee went to Kari Osborne for her volunteer work in Mexico City.

Mary Kay Cunningham won the **M. Juanita Guess Award** for a community liaison office coordinator for creating a supportive and positive environment while serving as CLO in Kabul.

The **Nelson B. Delavan Award** for a Foreign Service office management specialist was given to Carol K. Backman, who used her exemplary computer skills to great effect at Embassy Ankara.

Sinclair Awards

AFSA is also proud to recognize Foreign Service employees for



AFSA Awardees, Elected Officials, and Staff: (Left-Right) **Front Row:** Amb. Jonathan Addleton, Charles Stuart "Stu" Kennedy, Mary Kay Cunningham, David Holmes. **Back Row:** Clair Coleman, AFSA Staff Attorney Raeka Safai, USAID VP Sharon Wayne, AFSA Director Ian Houston, AFSA President Bob Silverman, Secretary of State John Kerry, State VP Matthew Asada, William "Ed" O'Bryan, Awards Coordinator Perri Green.

dedication and hard work in the study of foreign languages. The **Matilda W. Sinclair Language Award** recognizes outstanding accomplishment in the study of Category III or IV languages and their associated cultures. This year AFSA refined the languages that qualify, moving from the term "hard languages" to Category III or IV languages. This year we had 18 nominations, a record number brought about through close work between FSI and AFSA. Ten Foreign Service members received the award—\$1,000 and a certificate of recognition signed by the AFSA president and the chair of the AFSA Awards and Plaque Committee.

This year's recipients were: Miriam R. Asnes (Arabic), Sonnet A. Frisbee (Czech), Paul F. Narain (Greek), Jacob M. Rocca (Hebrew), Timothy Shriver (Hungarian), Robert Silberstein (Lithuanian), Alan J. Smith (Russian), Adam T. Stevens (Vietnamese), Matthew Wilson (Bulgarian) and Bryan G. Wockley (Persian/Dari/Afghan).

Kennan Writing Award

Each year, AFSA participates in graduation ceremonies at the National War College at Fort Lesley J. McNair in southwest Washington, D.C., to honor the State Department graduate whose final paper is chosen as the best essay on strategy or policy. The 2014 winner of the **George F. Kennan Strategic Writing Award** was Mark Libby. Libby's paper explores the United Kingdom's and France's small but significant nuclear arsenals and the implications for U.S. secu-

urity priorities, from non-proliferation to reform of the NATO alliance.

Libby received a \$250 award from AFSA President Robert Silverman and Commandant Brigadier General Tom Cosentino.

AFSA Memorial Plaque

The AFSA Memorial Plaques honor colleagues who have given their lives while serving the American people abroad. The first plaque was unveiled in the C Street lobby of the Department of State in 1933.

This year AFSA added one name to the plaques: Antoinette "Toni" Beaumont Tomasek, a USAID FSO and community health specialist who died from injuries sustained in a car accident while returning from an inspection and delivery of medicine to a health clinic in Haiti. Tomasek, who died on June

29, 2013, is survived by her husband, Adam Tomasek, and two young children. Tomasek's name brings the total inscribed on the marble plaques to 246.

Following the ceremony, AFSA, Embassy Port-au-Prince and State coordinated a video teleconference for Ms. Tomasek's family with Ambassador Pamela White and staff members of the embassy in Haiti. ●



Family members of Antoinette "Toni" Tomasek look on at the AFSA Memorial Plaque in the State Department's C Street lobby.



Communications Staff: (from left) *FSJ* Senior Editor Susan Maitra, *AFSA News* and Associate Editor Debra Blome, *FSJ* Editor-in-Chief Shawn Dorman, Online Communications Specialist Jeff Lau, Editorial/Publications Specialist Brittany DeLong, Director of New Media Ásgeir Sigfússon, Director of Communications Kristen Fernekes.

Communications: Telling Our Story

This year the communications department made a number of significant changes to better engage and inform our members and raise the profile of the Foreign Service among legislators, the foreign affairs agencies, the American public and those considering careers in diplomacy or development.

The Foreign Service Journal & FS Books

In early 2014, Shawn Dorman took over as editor of *The Foreign Service Journal* and publications manager, bringing together the Foreign Service books program and the association's flagship publication as part of the communications reorganization that began in late 2013. A former FSO, Dorman had previously served as associate editor of the *Journal* and editor of *AFSA News* and had pioneered AFSA's books program, producing the bestselling *Inside a U.S. Embassy*.

Publications capabilities were further enhanced with the addition of an editorial and book publishing specialist, Brittany DeLong, as well as a new associate editor, Debra Blome, with primary responsibility for *AFSA News*. As the association's official record and platform for its constituency vice presidents, *AFSA News* reflected the increased density of AFSA projects and activities in 2014.

The *Journal* continued to break new ground during the year. The magazine marked the 90th anniversary year in May

with a special edition containing an AFSA timeline, a commemoration of the Rogers Act and a collection of member's stories sharing their proudest moments in the Foreign Service.

In November, AFSA capitalized on the popularity of the *Journal's* annual "In Their Own Write," featuring recent books by members of the Foreign Service community, by hosting its first "Book Market." Seventeen FS authors gathered at AFSA headquarters for an afternoon of meeting, greeting and book-selling.

This year *Journal* content was made much more accessible—and shareable—on AFSA's website, allowing individual articles to be distributed to target audiences. Innovative outreach through social media and other online and offline channels has expanded the *Journal's* exposure and readership.

Another vital outreach tool continues to be *Inside a U.S. Embassy*, published by FS Books. During 2014 more than 5,000 copies of the book were sold or distributed for outreach and education events, including print and digital versions. Use of the book continues in the military and federal agencies, with several hundred books purchased by the State Department's Bureau of Political Military Affairs for use by political advisers to the military.

In addition, several hundred copies were purchased by other U.S. government agencies and divisions of the U.S. military. The State Department outreach and recruitment division continues to share the book widely with Foreign Service prospects. The book has been adopted for more than 60 college courses and is currently on the shelves in 708 libraries, including 182 outside the United States.

The manuscript for the next AFSA book, a history of the association, was completed in 2014 by former FSO and author Harry Kopp. The book will be published by FS Books in 2015.



The Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board: (from left) Richard McKee, James DeHart, John G. Rendeiro, Jr., Tracy Whittington, Beth Payne, Amb. Gordon Brown, Maria Livingston, Steve Buck, Clayton Bond. (Not pictured: Ruth Hall, Duncan Walker, Chuck Fee.)



AFSA President Bob Silverman and State VP Matthew Asada, along with members of the Chief of Mission working group, take questions from reporters during a press teleconference in February 2014.

Outreach Events and Media Coverage

The communications team has sought to increase and diversify events held at AFSA. This year we held 23 events—ranging from author talks and movie screenings to World Cup viewing parties—at our Washington headquarters (nearly double the number of events held in 2013). Our aim is to produce events and gatherings that are both informative and welcoming to all of our members.

This year has been excellent for media coverage of AFSA. We are proud that the “Voice of the Foreign Service” has been cited more than 1,500 times in stories in nearly every major U.S. media outlet and many outlets overseas. Much of the media attention focused on AFSA’s “Chief-of-Mission Guidelines,” released in early

2014, and the issue of the ongoing backlog of ambassadorial nominees in the Senate.

AFSA used the opportunity presented by public discussion of ambassadorial appointments to build important new relationships that we expect will have a long-term, positive impact for our members as we move forward on this and many other important issues by building AFSA brand awareness and enhancing understanding of the crucial work done by the women and men of the Foreign Service.

We expanded our use of social media in 2014, posting new kinds of content, attempting different kinds of engagement and doing more to push out provocative content aimed at increasing feedback and discussion. AFSA sees social media as yet another way to engage with our members—and the public at large—and we welcome comments, questions and retweets. The “AFSA Daily Media Digest,” an online compendium of



Author Ron Capps signs books following his Book Notes presentation at AFSA Headquarters in July 2014.



Authors from the *FSJ*'s annual “In Their Own Write” issue participate in AFSA’s first Book Market in November 2014.

the day’s news stories, opinion pieces and blog posts about issues affecting the Foreign Service continued to grow apace in 2014. We also added a fourth social media channel: the photo-sharing website Flickr. This lets us share even more photographs from AFSA events, Capitol Hill visits and our members in action.

We continue to see encouraging results from this social media outreach. Our Facebook audience increased by more than 28 percent this year. The number of Twitter followers rose by 101 percent and YouTube views were up an outstanding 126 percent. All of this growth is organic, as we do not actively promote our social

media presence through paid advertising or targeted promotions. Our separate Facebook pages for *The Foreign Service Journal* and *Inside a U.S. Embassy* are also doing well, and we continue to use them to engage with a defined audience. By the end of the year, member subscriptions for the “Daily Media Digest” topped 1,400. If you are an AFSA member and are not yet receiving the digest but want to, send a message to mediadigest@afsa.org, and we’ll add you to the list!



Filmmaker Orwa Nyrabia discusses his documentary “Return to Homs” at AFSA in April 2014.

The AFSA website (www.afsa.org) remains our best online outreach tool. In 2014, more unique visitors than ever before used the site; since the current site launched in 2011, the number of users has grown by 67 percent. The number of visitors to the *FSJ* section of the AFSA website grew by a whopping 189 percent after *FSJ* articles became available online in a more user-friendly format in November 2013. The section of the site where we track ambassadorial appointments also jumped by more than 100 percent from 2013, mostly thanks to AFSA’s increasingly visible advocacy on the issue.

The most popular sections of the website in 2014 were the national high school essay contest, the ambassador tracker, Foreign Service blogs, *The Foreign Service Journal* and AFSA scholarships.

In the last quarter of 2014, the communications team undertook the ambitious task of refreshing the website—the first major update since 2011. Although the process of cleaning up an inventory of more than 600 pages on the site has been time-consuming, we expect the result to be faster loading times, easier-to-find information and an improved user experience overall.

In 2015, we look forward to bringing a newly reorganized website to our members, with even more functionality for streamlined ways to join AFSA, renew membership, make donations, update member profiles, purchase items such as the Foreign Service commemorative coin and engage with colleagues. ●

Labor Management: Looking Out For Members

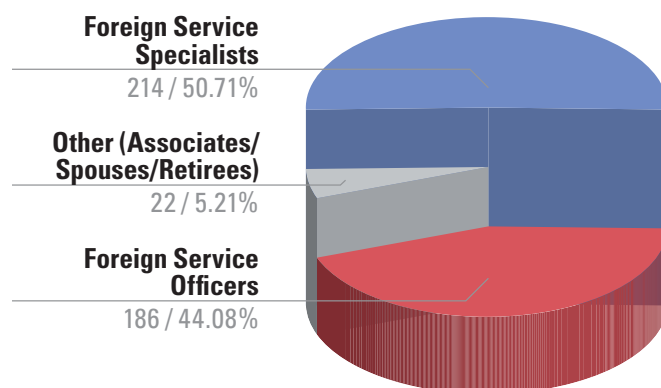
AFSA’s 2014 survey showed that members greatly value the individual services provided by the labor management (LM) office. This is true even for those members who have never requested assistance from our staff of five attorneys, three labor



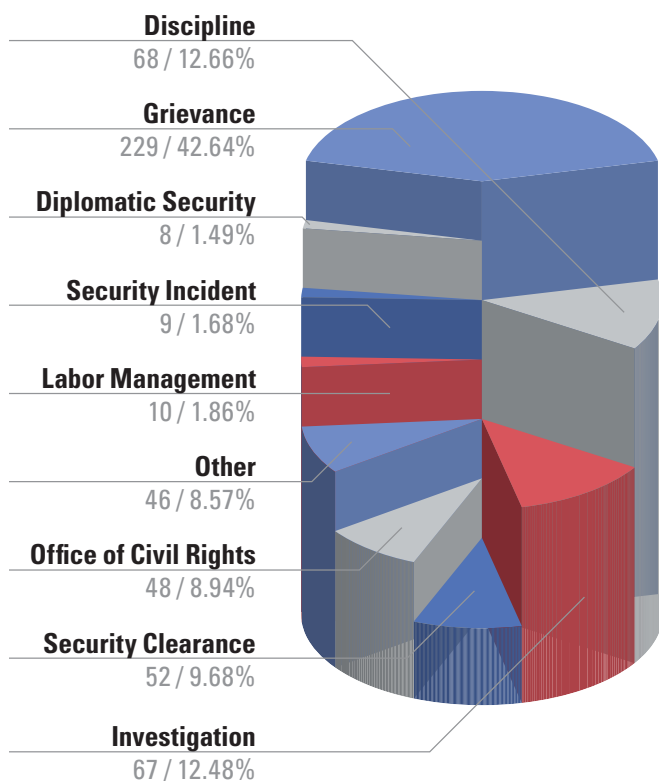
Labor Management Staff: (from left) **Front Row:** USAID Staff Assistant Chioma Dike, Senior Staff Attorney Neera Parikh, Executive Assistant and Office Manager Lindsey Botts, General Counsel Sharon Papp, Staff Attorney Raeka Safai. **Back Row:** Senior LM Advisor James Yorke, LM Counselor Colleen Fallon-Lenaghan, Staff Attorney Andrew Large, Deputy General Counsel Zlatana Badrich, USAID Senior LM Advisor Douglas Broome, LM Assistant Jason Snyder.

management specialists and two administrative support persons. We know, in fact, that many members view the Labor Management services as an insurance policy—we are there if you need us, although you hope you never will. In 2014, LM implemented a

Client Types



Types of Case Assistance



new case-tracking module as part of the enhanced membership customer relationships database. This allows AFSA's general counsel to evaluate and track the numbers and types of cases and issues the LM staff is handling.

AFSA also created a new position (labor management assistant) to perform case intake and help keep track of all of the cases, and welcomed Jason Snyder to the position in 2014. In addition, Colleen Fallon-Lenaghan rejoined the LM office as the labor management counselor. She was previously a staff attorney with AFSA from 1992 to 1998, and we are delighted to have her back.

In 2014, the LM staff represented members in 537 cases. Grievances (e.g., EERs, discipline cases, denial of tenure and low rankings) made up the largest category of cases, followed by discipline cases (i.e., proposals for separation for cause, suspensions without pay, letters of reprimand), Diplomatic Security and OIG investigations and security clearance cases (e.g., warning letters, probation letters, suspensions, revocation and denial of clearances cases). A breakdown of case types can be seen in the chart above.

Foreign Service officers represented 44 percent of cases, specialists represented 51 percent, and associate members, spouses and retirees made up the remaining 5 percent, as seen on "Client Types" chart on page 19. Diplomatic Security agents accounted for the largest percentage of total cases (21 percent).



Committee on Elections: (from left) Mort Dworken, Jenna Bucha Jones, Amb. Robert "Bill" Farrand, Andrea Strano, Russell Knight. (Not pictured: Ian Houston, Sharon Papp, Janet Hedrick.)

The majority of cases involved FS-4s (36 percent), followed by FS-3s (22 percent) and FS-2s (16 percent). The LM staff also filed five implementation disputes alleging that the Department of State violated the parties' collective bargaining agreements (see State VP report for more) and a cohort grievance relating to Overseas Comparability Pay.

In addition to representing employees in grievances and discipline cases, the LM staff—primarily Labor Management Specialist James Yorke—assisted employees with issues relating to assignments, allowances, medical clearances, per diem and salary or annuity overpayment. The staff also assisted more than a dozen employees—mostly Asian-Americans—with issues relating to DS assignment preclusions and restrictions.

In several noteworthy Grievance Board cases this year, AFSA successfully challenged the Department of State's lengthy delays in proposing disciplinary action against several employees and its efforts to discipline employees for allegedly creating the appearance of prostitution. In addition, in one case, the Grievance Board recommended that the Secretary of State immediately tenure an employee since the agency had committed numerous violations relating to the employee's EERs and tenure boards.

The LM staff also provided counsel to a number of foreign-born spouses of Foreign Service employees who were denied a security clearance (or told they would be denied, and then asked if they wanted to withdraw their application) because they had only recently become U.S. citizens or because they had foreign relatives. In one of these cases, AFSA successfully represented the Asian-American spouse of an AFSA member before the Security Appeals Panel, which overturned an initial security clearance denial. After the individual was granted a clearance, he joined the State Department as a Foreign Service specialist. In other cases, nine employees AFSA assisted in 2014 had their security clearance reinstated. ●

Member Services: Busier Than Ever

Member Inquiries

AFSA implemented a new association management software (AMS) system in January that gives staff more flexibility in updating member information, recording contacts and tracking inquiries. The new AMS also allows members to create personal profiles, change their addresses online, register for upcoming events, renew their memberships, search the online directory and donate. We believe the investment in technology will allow us to serve our members by better tracking membership concerns and aligning our limited resources accordingly.

In 2014, the member services department assisted more than 1,200 active-duty, retired and associate members on issues ranging from membership and dues inquiries to AFSA benefits, insurance, post representative concerns and more. AFSA retiree counselors provided guidance and assistance to more than 300 members on such issues as annuities, dealing with the State Department, divorce, the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan and Medicare, social security, retirement planning, survivor questions and WAE issues.

Survey of Members and Non-Members

In late summer, AFSA conducted an extensive survey of members' interests, priority concerns and association engagement. To ensure anonymity and unbiased questions, AFSA contracted with Capital Development Strategies to conduct the survey.

We were extremely pleased with the response: nearly 3,500 people (active-duty, retired and associate members, as well as non-members) took the survey in the three weeks it was open. We received enough diverse responses to get a representative snapshot of our membership's opinions. In general, the survey showed high levels of member satisfaction on a broad range of services, products and member benefits.

AFSA will use these results to inform us as we plan for the coming year and to direct resources to issues our members want AFSA to address, including advocacy for full overseas comparability pay, employee benefits, legislative issues, professionalism and ethics, working conditions, and family and dependent issues. In addition, the survey results indicated that members want to hear more about what AFSA is doing to advocate on their behalf. AFSA



Members mingle at a reception for retiring Foreign Service and Civil Service members following the Job Search Program at FSI, August 2014.

will continue to inform members of advocacy efforts with agency managements, on Capitol Hill and with the American public.

Member Events

AFSA hosted 14 lunches for incoming Foreign Service specialists and generalists from all foreign affairs agencies. These events gave us an opportunity to welcome 547 new AFSA members and provide them with a brief history of AFSA, its services and advocacy efforts on behalf of all Foreign Service employees. Governing Board and staff members appreciate serving as speakers and hosts and welcoming new members. Participants enjoy these celebratory events marking the end of their orientation and find value in



Former Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell addresses attendees of AFSA's 90th Anniversary Gala Dinner held in the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room in May 2014.

AFSA membership, reflected by the fact that nearly 80 percent of all incoming FS members joined AFSA.

AFSA held three events in our Federal Benefits Speaker Series in 2014. In May we welcomed back Paula Jakub, chief executive officer and executive vice president of the American Foreign Service Protective Association, for the very popular discussion on "The Coordination of Medicare and FEHB." We followed up with two other seminars: "Long-Term Care and Survivor Annuities" and "Estate Planning, Wills and Trusts." These members-only events were well attended and provided the audiences with ample time for questions and answers. All seminars were recorded and are available online at www.afsa.org/video.

As we do each year, AFSA co-hosted the Job Search Program (JSP) reception with DACOR. These receptions were held in the elegant Wood Lobby at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center in March, August and October. Retirees view AFSA as a valuable partner in their transition, and the majority of the JSP participants joined AFSA as retiree members.

AFSA also hosted several happy hours throughout the year, drawing more than 150 members and guests at each for socializing and networking.

On May 22, AFSA hosted a gala dinner in the State Department's Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Foreign Service. Speakers included Secretary of State John Kerry, Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), former Senator Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), former Secretary of State Colin Powell, and NBC's Andrea Mitchell as the emcee. Among the 215 attendees were current and retired members of

the Foreign Service and management officials from all Foreign Service agencies.

To see the video of the dinner, please visit our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/AFSAtube); the photo gallery can be viewed on AFSA's Flickr page www.flickr.com/americanforeignservice; and the transcript of Secretary Kerry's speech can be found at www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/05/226496.htm. The dinner marked a proud moment in the history of AFSA and the Foreign Service.

Post Representatives

Post representatives are active-duty Foreign Service employees who volunteer their time to assist fellow employees with management-related problems and professional concerns. They represent both the collective and individual interests of members at post in dealing with post management and serve as a liaison with AFSA headquarters, passing on the views of its members in all the Foreign Affairs agencies. In 2014

AFSA certified 86 new post representatives, bringing the total to 154 post reps around the world (148 from State, four from USAID and two from FCS). In April, AFSA President Bob Silverman and State VP Matthew Asada held a webinar for current post reps, reviewing their role in labor management relations, as well as AFSA priority issues, recent concerns at post and future enhancements to the post rep program.



Membership Services Staff: (from left) Office Manager and Administrative Assistant Ana Lopez, Retiree Counselor and Legislative Assistant Matt Sumrak, Member Services Director Janet Hedrick, Retiree Counselor Todd Thurwachter, Membership Services Part-Time Employee Isabelle Hazel. (Not pictured: Deputy Director of Member Services, Benefits and Events Kristy Pomes, Membership Services Assistant Margaux Henderson.)

New Staff

In January, AFSA welcomed new Retiree Counselor Todd Thurwachter. A Wisconsin native, Thurwachter is a retired FCS officer who served in Japan, China and Germany. He brings a strong client-service orientation, gained from counseling and assisting thousands of U.S. exporters over the years. As a Foreign Service retiree himself, he has a personal understanding of the challenges faced by retirees. He enjoys supporting, counseling and advocating for AFSA's retired members and is keen on developing new areas to add membership value for retirees.

AFSA Newsletter

The *AFSA Newsletter*, a regular bimonthly publication, delivers the important and relevant content our members have come to rely on in retirement and when transitioning into retirement. This year we improved the look and style of the newsletter, moving to a new electronic version that is more user-friendly and

easily accessible. Retiree members will also continue to receive a hard copy of the *AFSA Newsletter* in the mail.



U.S. Foreign Service Commemorative Coin introduced in 2014.

sharing it with their foreign affairs contacts, family and friends. The silver-finish, 1.75-inch diameter coin has the Great Seal on one side and the AFSA logo and slogan on the other.

Members may also enjoy displaying their affiliation by proudly wearing the AFSA lapel pin. The .75-inch hard enamel gold finish pin with logo design recessed and color-filled blue can be securely fastened to a lapel or scarf.

In addition, the AFSA Medallion recognizes the careers and contributions of Foreign Service personnel and their spouses and partners. You can purchase these items through AFSA's new online store: ams.afsa.org/eweb/.

AFSA Memorial Tribute

Finally, we are pleased to have begun development of a permanent online memorial tribute site to honor colleagues who have died. The memorial tribute site will allow members to search for names of the deceased, leave a brief comment in the guestbook



Jeannie Singleton speaks on federal long term care and survivor annuities at one of AFSA's federal benefits events in July 2014.

and make a donation in the deceased's name. Family members may take comfort in knowing that their loved ones are not forgotten by their friends and colleagues. The memorial tribute site will include a brief bio, the member's picture, and links to online obituaries when known. The site will be accessible to AFSA members in early 2015 and available by logging into the AFSA website: www.ams.afsa.org/eweb/. This is a new initiative, and we expect the number of tributes and photographs to increase over time as members contribute content and information. ●



Professionalism and Ethics Committee: (from left) Jennifer Becker, Susan Johnson, Robert Dry, Eva Groening, David Brownstein. (Not pictured: Alec Augustine-Marceil, Anne Bodine, Tanya Cole, Angela Dickey, Amb. Charles Ray.)



Scholarship and Youth Staff: (from left) Scholarship Senior Associate Jonathan Crawford, Scholarship Director Lori Dec, Special Awards and Outreach Coordinator Perri Green.

Scholarships & Youth: Looking to the Next Generation

2014 Scholarship Program

Since its beginnings in 1926, AFSA's scholarship program has grown exponentially. This year it provided nearly a quarter of a million dollars (\$247,800) in merit awards and financial-need scholarships to 82 children of AFSA members.

AFSA grants two kinds of awards. Academic and art merit scholarships are awarded to high school seniors on the basis of academic or artistic achievement. In 2014, 28 students were chosen from 105 applicants for these awards, the top prizes being \$2,500.

AFSA scholarships are not funded by any AFSA membership dues. The program is funded by donations from individuals and organizations, CFC pledges, contributions from the Scholarship Fund's Annual Appeal, and by a 5 percent annual withdrawal on the average value over the last five years of the program's endowment (currently valued at \$6 million).

The financial aid scholarship program bestows scholarships on college undergraduates based on financial need. Individual financial aid awards ranged from \$3,000 to \$5,000 in 2014, a 25-percent increase in award size over the previous year. Fifty-four college students (chosen from 110 applications) received these awards in 2014.

The financial aid scholarships can be "bundled," so that larger dollar awards can be granted to the neediest undergraduates. An applicant can receive, for example, up to three scholarships in one aid package.

This year, the insurance company Embassy Risk Management sponsored an academic merit award for the first time, and we hope

it will be renewed annually. This brings the total of named merit awards, sponsored by individuals or organizations, to nine.

The scholarship program could not exist without the time and energy of our tireless volunteers. The AFSA Scholarship Committee includes representatives from all of the Foreign Service agencies except BBG and APHIS, and we are striving to find interested individuals to volunteer from those constituent groups. In addition to the standing committee, the scholarship program depends on volunteers to judge the merit awards. In 2014, 24 volunteers (both active-duty and retired AFSA members) each gave at least 15 hours of their time, and the seven AFSA Scholarship Committee members each gave at least 25 hours of their time to serve as judges in March and April to select the art and academic merit award winners.



2014 National High School Essay Contest winner Nitisha Baronia meets with Secretary of State John Kerry, September 2014.



Attendees enjoy AFSA's annual scholarship ceremony, part of the annual Foreign Affairs Day Ceremony in May 2014.

Merit award winners and their families who live in the Washington, D.C., area, along with local AFSA scholarship donors, judges, committee members, AFSA leadership and retirees attending Foreign Affairs Day attended a reception and ceremony in May to celebrate and honor the winners' achievements.

We especially thank Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn for returning as the chair of the AFSA Scholarship Committee in 2014.

National High School Essay Contest

The National High School Essay Contest, now in its 17th year, is one of AFSA's most successful outreach efforts. The contest invites high school students whose parents are *not* in the Foreign Service to think critically about the crucial role diplomacy plays in the world. In 2014, the Essay Contest was more popular than ever before. For the first time in its history, AFSA received entries from students in 47 states and six foreign countries—450 submissions in all.

To celebrate the Service's long history in its 90th anniversary year, we asked students to choose a significant diplomatic engagement from the past to write about. Students were required to identify the issue, outline the diplomatic steps taken to address it, highlight the role played by the Foreign Service and discuss why diplomacy mattered then and still does today.



Local AFSA Merit Awards winners were honored at AFSA on May 2, 2014. **Front row:** (left to right) Olivia Sullivan, Frank Keat, Maya Yu. **Back row:** Timothy Kostelancik, Grace Bachman, Phoenix Morrison.



Scholarship Committee: (from left) Lawrence Cohen, Lori Dec, Amb. Lange Schermerhorn, William Kutson, Jonathan Crawford. (Not pictured: Bess Zelle, Karen Brown, Maureen O'Neill, S. Katherine Farnsworth, Chanda Berk.)

Students could choose from the following topics: the post-World War II period and the Marshall Plan, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1978 Camp David Accords, the end of the Cold War, the Northern Ireland Peace Process and the Good Friday Agreement, and diplomacy through development (e.g., USAID, President's Malaria Initiative, President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief).

Winner Nitisha Baronia is from San Ramon, California. Baronia graduated from Dougherty Valley High School and is attending the University of California, Berkeley. Her winning essay, "The Marshall Plan: A Test of Our Progress," demonstrated a clear understanding of the historical impact of the Marshall Plan. She received a full-tuition scholarship for a Semester-at-Sea voyage, as well as a trip to Washington, D.C. On Sept. 29, Baronia and her family visited the nation's capital, met Secretary of State John Kerry and toured Capitol Hill and the State Department with AFSA staff.

Runner-up Angelia Ysobel G. Miranda from South Kent, Washington, is a home-schooled student. She won a full scholarship for tuition to the summer National Student Leadership Conference on International Diplomacy in Washington, D.C., and New York City. Miranda wrote "The 1978 Camp David Accords: From Divisive Wounds to Inclusive Words." ●

Get Involved: AFSA is its Membership

AFSFA relies on—and greatly appreciates—the input, feedback, and participation of members from all foreign affairs agencies. There are many ways that members of our community can get involved in the trade association and labor union that represents the interests of the Foreign Service.

- Run for AFSA's Governing Board and vote in elections to make your voice heard in decision-making on the issues that impact the Foreign Service.
- Volunteer for a committee or a judging panel.
- Become a Post Representative and be a voice for your colleagues in the field.
- Share your experiences with others as part of AFSA's Speakers Bureau.
- Donate to one of AFSA's five special funds: Fund for American Diplomacy, Scholarship Fund, Legislative Action Fund, Legal Defense Fund or political action committee.
- Submit an article or letter to the *Foreign Service Journal* or share your expertise with the *AFSA Newsletter*.

- Get in on the conversation virtually by following AFSA on Facebook or Twitter or visit our YouTube channel or Flickr site.
- Increase our advocacy efforts by writing to your representatives, visit a local Congressional or Senate office, or participate in a call to action.

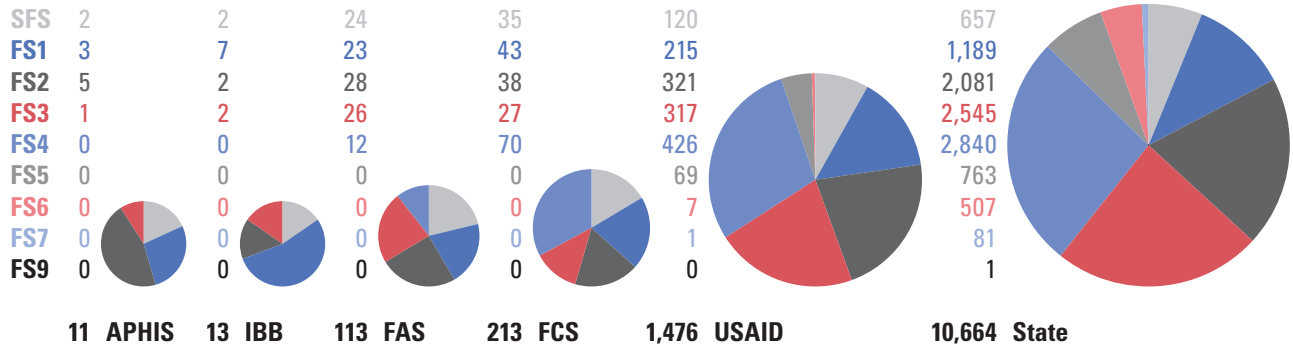
For more information go to www.afsa.org/getinvolved



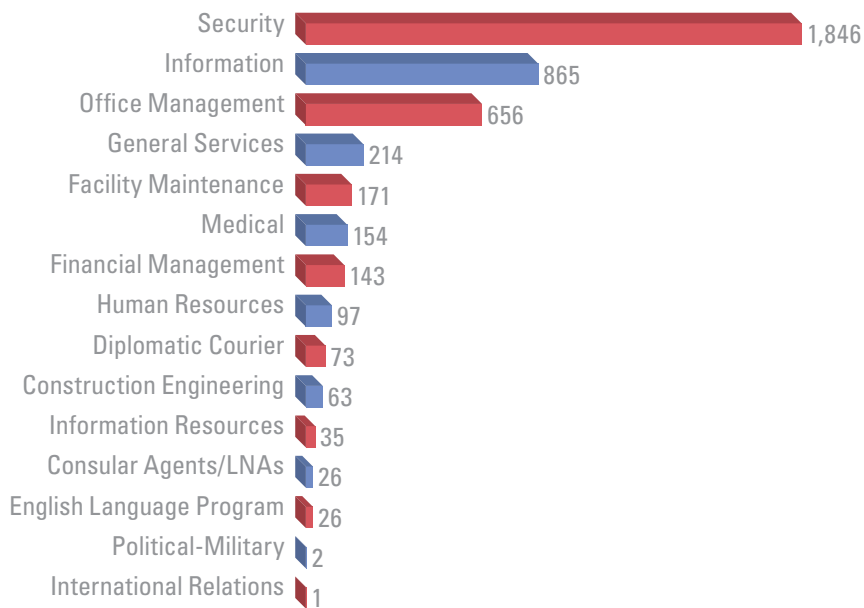
Retired FCS FSO Karen Zens and retired State FSO Mort Dworken served as AFSA Art Merit Award judges in 2014. Pictured here attending a March 2014 art panel student selection meeting, Zens and Dworken were just two of the 24 AFSA members who served as AFSA Merit Award judges in 2014.

Membership: A 2014 Snapshot

Active Duty Members by Agency and Grade

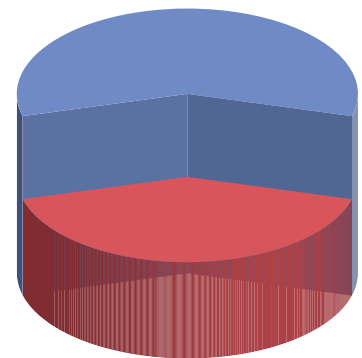


Specialist Skill Codes Among AFSA Members

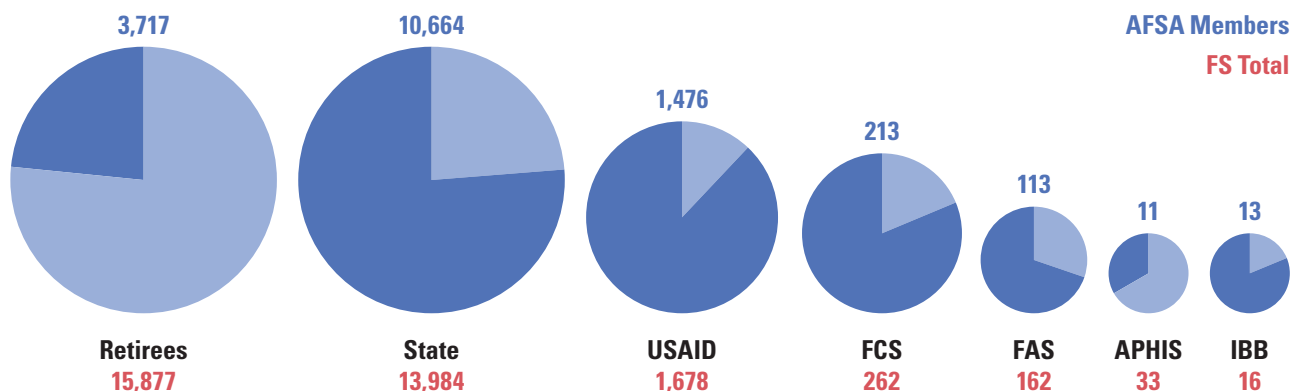


State Member Specialists and Generalists

Generalists 6,230
Specialists 4,434
10,664



Member Participation by Agency/Affiliation



AFSA Standing Committees

Awards and Plaques Committee

This committee oversees the AFSA memorial plaque and, with the AFSA Governing Board, recommends the winners of AFSA's awards for constructive dissent, exemplary performance, Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, the Mark Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy and the Sinclair Language Awards.

2014 Members: Amb. John Limbert (chair), Janice Bay, Joseph Bristol, Adam Center, Anthony Fernandes, Eva Groening, Ruth Hall, Allison Lee, Daniel Martinez, Amb. Edward Marks (AFSA Governing Board liaison), Patricia Norland, Amb. Edward Peck.

Finance, Audit and Management Committee

This committee works with the AFSA Governing Board to oversee the organization's budget process—and associated management issues—as well as the annual audit.

2014 Members: Amb. Charles Ford (chair), Matthew Asada, Sharon Wayne, Steve Morrison, David Mergen, Lawrence Cohen, Chuck Fee.

Scholarship Committee

This committee oversees the selection and awarding of AFSA's financial aid and merit scholarships and also is responsible for the stewardship of the AFSA Scholarship Fund.

2014 Members: Amb. Lange Schermerhorn (chair), Lora Berg (State rep), Chanda Berk (FAS rep), Karen Brown (DACOR liaison), S. Katherine Farnsworth (USAID rep), Bill Kutson (FCS rep), Maureen O'Neill (State rep), Mark Petry (FAS rep), Bess Zelle (State rep), Lawrence Cohen (AFSA Governing Board liaison).

Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board

The Editorial Board works with the *Journal* staff to develop the *Journal*'s editorial calendar and review submitted works for publication.

2014 Members: Jim DeHart (chair), Amb. Gordon Brown, Stephen Buck, Ruth Hall, Maria Livingston, Richard McKee, Beth Payne, John Rendiero Jr., Duncan Walker, Tracy Whittington, Clayton Bond (AFSA Governing Board Liaison).

Elections Committee

This committee oversees the biannual AFSA election process and works with AFSA staff to ensure the elections' integrity.

2014 Members: Amb. Robert "Bill" Farrand (chair), Jenna Bucha Jones, Mort Dworkin, Russell Knight, Andrea Strano, Ian Houston (AFSA staff), Sharon Papp (AFSA staff), Janet Hedrick (AFSA staff).

Committee on the Foreign Service Profession and Ethics

This committee is charged with increasing professionalism within the Foreign Service and creating a code of ethics for Foreign Service employees.

2014 Members: Robert Dry (chair, since 9/1/2014), Alec Augustine-Marceil, Jennifer Becker, Anne Bodine, David Brownstein, Tanya Cole, Eva Groening, Mary Jeffers, Susan Johnson, Amb. Charles Ray (chair, through 9/1/2014), Michael Ross, David Zwach, Angela Dickey (AFSA Governing Board liaison).

Governance Committee

This committee, composed of current Governing Board members and agency vice presidents, monitors governance and recommends standard operating procedures and practices.

2014 Members: Angela Dickey (chair), Ken Kero-Mentz, Amb. Charles Ford, F. Allen "Tex" Harris, Matthew Asada (State VP), Sharon Wayne (USAID VP), Steve Morrison (FCS VP), David Mergen (FAS VP), Larry Cohen (Retiree VP), Ian Houston (AFSA staff), Sharon Papp (AFSA staff), Patrick Bradley (AFSA staff)



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FAS Office: (202) 720-3650

AFSA Retiree Counselors: (202) 338-4045, ext 509

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