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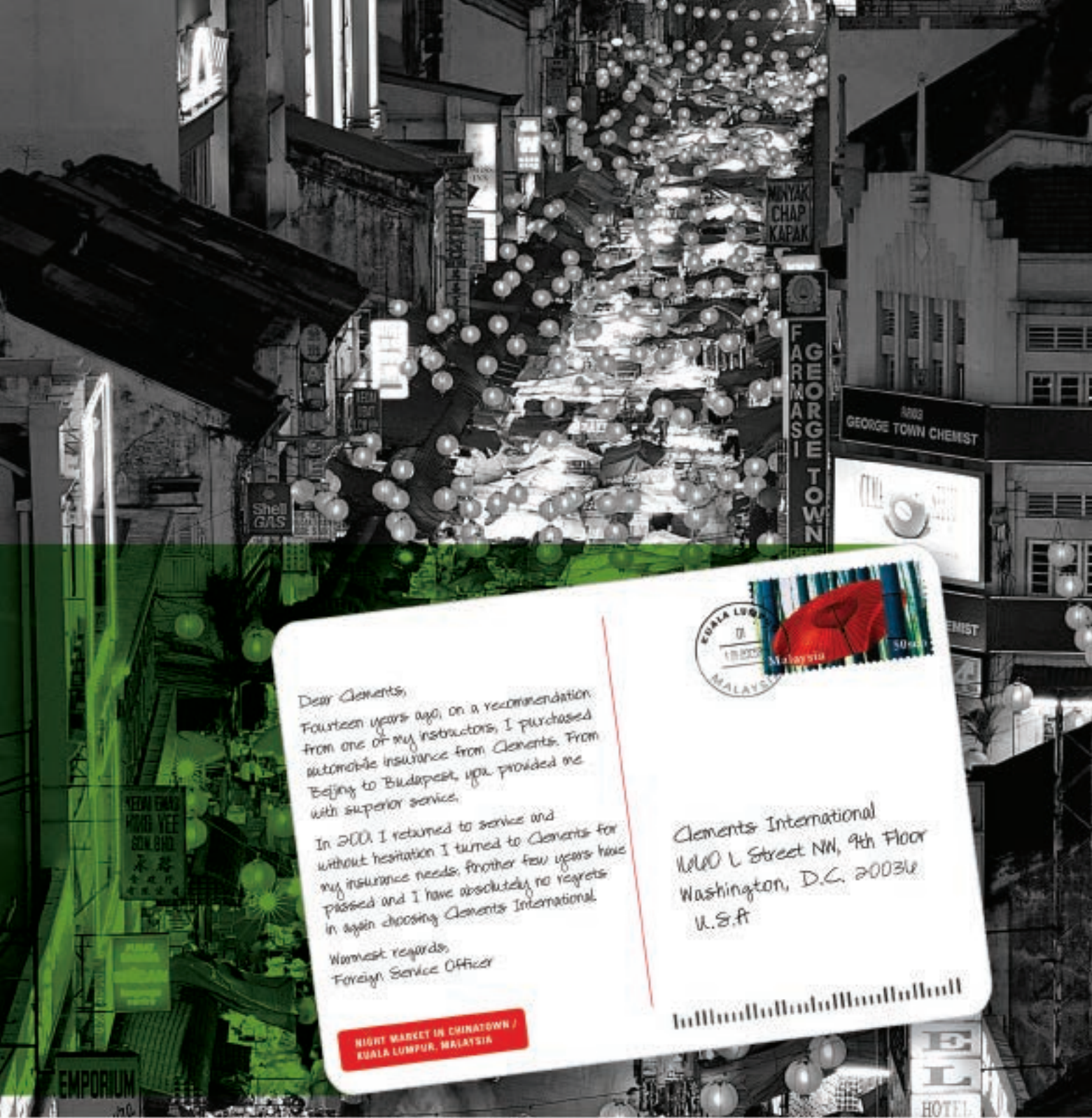


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# PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL VIEWS

*The More Things Change, the Better They Get*

BY JOHN LIMBERT

They do for AFSA, at least.

In August 1975 outgoing AFSA President Tom Boyatt wrote his farewell column for the *Journal*.



Much of what he wrote then is still true – only some names have changed. He wrote, for example, “The Washington environment [for the Foreign Service] is not friendly. Most of us, concerned with policy and operation problems overseas, assume that the Washington scene is reasonably benign. Not true.” He then described how the “Ribbon-Clerk Conspiracy” of budgeters from OMB, CSC (now OPM), GAO and the department itself so often interprets law and writes regulations at the professional and personal expense of Foreign Service people.

None of that has changed in 30 years. What has changed regularly are the people of AFSA. The current Governing Board and officers will leave office in a few weeks. A few members will remain on the board for another term, but most will go to other work and assignments. As people in the Middle East often say in these circumstances, “Please forgive us the bad things we did.”

This change is as it should be. AFSA is blessed with a dedicated and talented professional staff. It has been an honor to work with Executive

*What makes AFSA strong is no secret. It is the same qualities that make the Foreign Service strong.*

Director Susan Reardon, *Journal* Editor Steve Honley, General Counsel Sharon Papp, Legislative Affairs Director Ken Nakamura, Communications Director Tom Switzer, and many others who bring so much skill and experience to our organization. This group will stay with AFSA. Like our skilled FSN and Civil Service colleagues, they do the crucial work that makes the organization run.

It has also been an honor to work with such an exciting group of colleagues on the Governing Board, including Vice Presidents Louise Crane, Bill Carter, Chuck Ford, Laura Scandurra and George Jones. They and the other board members have brought collective centuries of experience to our work. The perceptions of our non-State board members have been especially crucial to our success.

I also thank those members, active-duty and retired, who generously volunteer to serve on our committees. I mention, in particular, Chairman Hollis Summers and all members of the Editorial Board; Andrew Winter, Tom Boyatt and their colleagues on the Finance Committee; and Bruce Laingen and the other members of the Awards Committee. Their generosity has been invaluable.

What makes AFSA strong is no secret. It is the same qualities that make the Foreign Service strong. There is the community spirit that motivates our volunteers; the talents and integrity of our permanent staff; and the pride in profession of our officers and board members, both active-duty and retired.

At AFSA, like at any post, personnel change frequently. Even at the “perfect post” employees and their families must depart. Similarly, as much as possible, our board members and officers should serve their two years with AFSA and move on. Their value to AFSA comes from contact with posts and bureaus and their problems. We are fortunate, for example, that incoming president Tony Holmes is a chief of mission at an isolated hardship post (Ouagadougou). He will bring to AFSA fresh experience with the realities of our Foreign Service world.

One last thought. Our organization, lacking any leadership caste, is only as good as we are. We will succeed as long as our members support us. If you disagree with how we are leading the association, then speak up. If you are in Washington, be a Governing Board member or officer; if you're overseas, be an AFSA rep. Wherever you are, write for the *Journal*; contact your president or your constituency vice president. If you disagree with a committee's decision, then serve on that committee. We need you. You make the difference. ■

*John Limbert is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*



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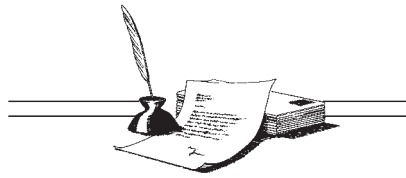
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# LETTERS

## Regimes Change

Ed McWilliams is wrong. In his May 2005 Speaking Out column opposing United States military assistance for Indonesia, he confuses the “sins of the father” with renewed efforts to reform and strengthen civilian control of the armed forces, improve professionalism and make progress on redressing past abuses.

An initial review of U.S.-Indonesian defense relations issued by the U.S.-Indonesia Society in December 2004, which will be buttressed by full studies coming out this summer, shows that it is imperative that the U.S. administration and Congress act now to bolster the democratic and reformist government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (colloquially known as SBY). IMET and other forms of assistance in critical areas, such as maritime security and counterterrorism, should be increased in order to achieve the changes McWilliams wants to see.

Further boycotting the Indonesian armed forces would only negate the progress already made in eliminating the armed forces’ constitutional role in national governance, placing the military justice system under the Supreme Court, and implementing the law to divest civilian-type businesses of military control. Cooperating with the government of President SBY offers the best hope in more than a generation to move toward the objective of creating a more professional and modernized military force under capable civilian authority that is respectful of human rights and fully accountable to

the democratically elected government and ultimately to the people.

My views are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States-Indonesia Society or of its board of trustees.

*Alphonse F. La Porta  
President, United States-  
Indonesia Society  
Ambassador, retired  
Washington, D.C.*

## Commerce for Today

Charles Ford presented an excellent summary of the current state of affairs, as well as the critical issues facing the Commercial Service, in his April article, “Commercial Diplomacy — The Next Wave.”

I came to the Commercial Service after considerable time in the private sector, which hopefully helps me to see things from outside the Washington context. To me, the challenge is to improve how the U.S. government advances and protects U.S. commercial interests, as seen and experienced by our U.S. business clients. The recent State-Commerce coordination/planning agreement is a positive and important step in the right direction, but a move destined to be inadequate unless there is genuine senior leadership commitment.

Coordination of macro with transactional trade responsibilities is essential to make our commercial diplomacy focused and effective. The lines between domestic and international business have blurred. For a first-hand perspective, talk with business-

people about challenges they face competing and developing their businesses, both small and large. While the American “can-do” spirit shines in moments of adversity, the people with the most at risk are the countless employees and companies competing in today’s world of business.

Most would agree that there has never been a better time to abandon the stovepipe model. In the end, the employees and the companies we serve, who are waging business in a tough global environment, care little which agency was the provider of support that helped them to sign a contract; they rely on the content and effectiveness of the actions we collectively deliver.

Today’s hyperspeed global economy will quickly outpace any nuts-and-bolts approach to invigorating our commercial diplomacy. At this moment, we need to be fully prepared to confront the trade challenges of the 21st century, not the 1990s. We are being outspent, and in several instances outmaneuvered, by many competitor nations advancing their own commercial objectives with strategies more in tune with the increasingly global economy.

This reality should resonate well with Commerce’s accomplished private sector-bred senior leadership. Their next steps can either shape profound advantages for U.S. companies or solidify the status quo.

*Nicholas Randal Kuchova  
Commercial Attaché  
Embassy Madrid*



**Darfur: We Must Do More**

The ineffectiveness of U.S. actions and policies was already apparent last December when my Speaking Out column, "The Lessons of Darfur," appeared. As I noted then, the Sudanese army and police had surrounded refugee camps in the wartorn region of Darfur and denied access to humanitarian groups. Seven months later, the situation is no better, yet there has been virtual media silence about this 800-deaths-a-day disaster.

Despite one hard-won "agreement" and a momentary halt to direct army killings, we've seen yet more killings and deaths from starvation and conflict-caused disease. The added African Union monitors and troops have been powerless, unwilling to act or overwhelmed by the task. The U.S. and the United Nations have protested, but to no avail, for Khartoum knew those were empty gestures.

Today it is even clearer that what is needed is an immediate international intervention force to put a stop to the killing and to provide safety for the aid workers and civilians. Unfortunately, American leadership has been less than effective and its pronouncements less than honest about how efficacious its past measures were. They took us on a path that did not stop the killing and was not likely to do so.

We need a stronger, more courageous — if riskier — approach. Clearly the A.U. cannot solve this problem alone, given its lack of logistics capabilities and past statements of support for the Khartoum regime. Perhaps the re-elected Tony Blair and President Bush (a necessary player) could make a difference. Earlier, Blair tried to help, and contrary to the gratuitous media attacks on him, he remains the sole strong voice in Europe and globally. His election victory may allow him to offer more help for Darfur. But we here in the U.S.

must also make our voices clear.

All of this argues again for advance U.S. planning and capability to support a United Nations "blue helmet" force. Every day that goes by is a moral indictment of us all.

*Harry C. Blaney III*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Washington, D.C.*

**Raising FS Kids**

It was with great interest that I read the December 2004 article, "Still Haven't Found What We Are Looking For," by Mikkela Thompson. As the wife of a Foreign Service officer and mother of a young child, I am trying to learn as much as possible about the effects of this lifestyle on children. This way of life is new to me.

I'm a fourth-generation Florida native and lived in the same house all of my life until I went to college. I want to learn as much as I can to help our son through the inevitable transitions of diplomatic life. Articles like Thompson's are an invaluable resource for parents like me.

*Stephanie Rowlands*  
*FS Spouse*  
*Guatemala City*

**Oversight for the MCA/MCC**

The April articles by Elizabeth Spiro Clark and Aaron M. Chassy were interesting, both for what they contained as well as for what they left unsaid regarding oversight of, and accountability for, the Millennium Challenge Account foreign assistance initiative and the Millennium Challenge Corporation that oversees it. On the U.S. side, for example, it remains unclear whether, or how, the programs and operations of the MCA/MCC will be subject to the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. Will the billions of dollars in non-project assistance to be disbursed by the MCC be audited by an

in-house Inspector General, or will such reviews become the responsibility of another IG (e.g., Treasury, State, USAID), or no IG at all?

Presumably, Congress' own oversight arm, the Government Accountability Office, will be able to perform such reviews. IG and GAO reviews of this type of foreign aid (known in the past as budgetary assistance, economic support funds, etc.) are hardly novel undertakings, especially in the experience of audit staffs at the GAO and USAID. Yet the reader is left to speculate on this crucial point that the authors would appear to have either overlooked or considered not worth mentioning. This seems odd given the make-or-break importance that has been attributed to corruption, identified as the most critical among the 16 criteria to be used in granting MCA assistance, as Mr. Chassy notes.

Similarly, one is left to wonder what role, if any, recipient countries' oversight arms are to play in ensuring the success of this initiative. Ms. Clark would appear to take at face value the assertion made by a former Bolivian presidential candidate that "eradicating drugs had been the sole target of U.S. assistance" to that country. Indeed, drug eradication has been a paramount concern there, because it has been deemed a matter of "vital" interest to the U.S. government. But even the most cursory review of the history of USAID's diversified economic and humanitarian assistance to that perennially strife-torn Andean nation would debunk the claim that drug eradication has been Washington's sole concern. To assert further that because its anti-drug strategy has unfortunately gone awry from time to time, "a backslide in democracy and economic growth" has resulted, is to ignore nearly two centuries of Bolivia's tumultuous history that might aptly be summarized as "two steps forward,





one step [if not leap] back.” Finally, to conclude that Washington’s missteps in the war on drugs make Bolivia the perfect MCA country, is to accept the kind of tortured logic that only a Bolivian político is capable of following.

All that said, and despite the country’s seemingly endless economic crises, periodic social upheavals and pervasive corruption — so pervasive, in fact, that during the mid-1990s our embassy in La Paz publicly announced that the U.S. visa of a former Bolivian president had been revoked because of his involvement in drug trafficking while in office — Bolivia could yet prove to be an eligible MCA recipient. Why? Because in the institution of the Contraloría General de la República (Bolivia’s GAO), the U.S. can look to one of the more highly developed oversight agencies in Latin America to help ensure the integrity and effectiveness of MCA assistance.

*Fred Kalhammer*  
*USAID FSO & Supervisory*  
*Auditor, retired*  
*Stateline, Nev.*

### A Younger Career Minister

I read with great interest the well-deserved complimentary obituary of Martin Joseph Hillenbrand in the April *Foreign Service Journal*. However, I do take issue with one statement — that he was “the youngest Foreign Service officer ever to attain” the rank of career minister. Ambassador Hillenbrand was made a career minister in July 1962 — the same time that my husband William M. Rountree was also made a career minister. I believe Amb. Hillenbrand was born in 1915; Amb. Rountree was born in 1917. The dates speak for themselves.

*Suzanne M. Rountree*  
*Atlantic Beach, Fla.*

### The Yalta Myth

The month of May brought not only flowers, but the rebirth of an historical fallacy concerning the Yalta Conference that I had tried to combat while posted in West Germany some 45 years ago. I refer to the belief that the country’s division had been a deliberate “stab in the back.”

During his May visit to Latvia, President Bush resurrected this historic myth, first promoted by his postwar Republican forebears, that the Yalta Conference was responsible for the division of Europe. Even more irresponsibly, he linked it to the appeasement of Hitler at Munich. This was quickly followed by similar sentiments in the *Washington Post* from both the president of Georgia and columnist Anne Applebaum, whose airy dismissal of the facts on the ground at the time of the Yalta Conference was particularly egregious. I hope the *FSJ* will now permit me to enter the fray one more time.

It is worth noting that this revisionist thesis was forthrightly dismissed years ago by none other than the conservatives’ own icon, Ronald Reagan, who recognized clearly that Hitler and Stalin, not Yalta, were responsible for the postwar division of Europe.

The war and postwar trauma of Eastern Europe began with the division of Poland in 1939 and ended with the sweep of Soviet armies through Eastern Europe to Vienna and Berlin in a war that Hitler began. Stalin’s subversion of the Yalta agreements on Poland and the Balkans simply crowned what Hitler’s aggression had wrought.

When Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met at Yalta in February 1945, Soviet forces were within 50 miles of Berlin. Allied forces, just recovering from the trauma of the last German counteroffensive, had not yet breach-

ed the Rhine. In Poland and the Balkans, communist-dominated governments already were establishing themselves in the wake of the Red Army and of successful communist resistance movements. The Yalta agreements sought to moderate this trend through provisions for tripartite action in all liberated areas with the aim of securing “internal peace,” economic relief and forming “governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements and ... [the] earliest possible free elections.”

In Poland, where the Soviet-created Lublin regime was already in power, a new provisional government was to be organized to include “democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad in exile.” Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Averell Harriman and British Ambassador to Moscow Archibald Clark-Kerr were to meet in Moscow “in the first instance” to establish this government of national unity. Thereafter, “free and unfettered elections ... on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot” were to be held “as soon as possible.”

This was, of course, never to be. In the wake of Hitler’s retreat, Stalin and his Eastern European henchmen consolidated their power under the umbrella of a Red Army presence, whose forced rollback by the Western allies was both militarily and politically unthinkable in the midst of wartime requirements and hopes for postwar cooperation.

We must look to the follies of European history, not to the Yalta Conference, for the causes of Eastern Europe’s postwar miseries and the 45 years it took to give concrete expression to the paths laid out at Yalta.

*Gunther K. Rosinus*  
*Senior Foreign Service*  
*Officer, retired*  
*Potomac, Md. ■*



# CYBERNOTES

## Call for Commission to Investigate Abuse of Terrorist Suspects

A bipartisan group of diplomats, lawyers and former legislators has called on Congress and the president to establish an independent bipartisan body, modeled on the Sept. 11 commission, to investigate the issue of the abuse of terrorist suspects.

Thomas Pickering, a former under secretary of State and ambassador; Floyd Abrams, a lawyer who specializes in First Amendment cases; and Bob Barr, a former Republican representative from Georgia who deals with civil liberties issues for the American Conservative Union, explained the move in the June 7 *Washington Post*. The three are members of the bipartisan Liberty and Security Initiative of the Constitution Project, a nonprofit based at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute ([www.constitutionproject.org/lis](http://www.constitutionproject.org/lis)).

With other members of the initiative, they believe the American public deserves answers to the many questions that have arisen over the past year in connection with the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal and allegations of abuse at America's Guantanamo Bay detention facility. "No investigation completed to date has included recommendations on how mistreatment at detention facilities might be avoided," Abrams, Barr and Pickering point out.

"Establishing an independent, bipartisan commission would also be beneficial for U.S. relationships abroad," they add, advocating that such a commission be created urgently "to provide a credible investigation

and a plan for corrective action, and to show the world that the United States takes seriously its obligations to uphold the rule of law."

The Constitution Project seeks consensus solutions to difficult legal and constitutional issues. The Project has seven initiatives in diverse areas, such as the death penalty, war powers and sentencing. The Liberty and Security Initiative was created following the events of Sept. 11, 2001, to educate policy-makers, the media and the public about the importance of preserving civil liberties, even as we battle new forms of terrorism.

## Experts Say U.S. Budget Misses the Big Picture on Security

*A Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2006* is the title of a detailed report issued by a task force of 14 military and foreign affairs experts assembled by *Foreign Policy In Focus* and the Center for Defense Information (<http://www.fpif.org/papers/0505usb.html>). The report outlines an integrated approach to security budgeting that balances military and nonmilitary security tools.

The administration's 2006 budget proposal for security, including for the military, international affairs and homeland security, would allocate seven times as much to military programs as to all other security spending combined. Taking into account operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the ratio is nine-to-one.

Marcus Corbin, a senior analyst at CDI, and Miriam Pemberton, the Peace and Security editor at the Institute for Policy Studies' *Foreign*

*Policy In Focus*, co-authored the report and co-chaired the task force that endorsed it. "Policy-makers, experts and business leaders from across the political spectrum have called for a more balanced approach to terrorism and global security," states Pemberton. "The *Unified Security Budget* provides the road map and budget specifics on how we make that happen."

The proposal was the subject of a discussion May 16 at the Center for American Progress. The transcript is available at <http://www.americanprogress.org> (enter "Unified Security Budget" in the search function). The Center for American Progress is advocating a new national security strategy, and its report, *Integrated Power*, which includes the call for a unified national security budget, can be accessed online at <http://www.americanprogress.org/site/pp.asp?c=biJRj8OVF&b=742277>.

## Hungary's Ambassador to the U.S. Rocks

Andras Simonyi is an amateur musician with a doctorate in political science. He is also the Hungarian ambassador to the United States. On June 7, Simonyi and his rock band, The Coalition of the Willing, played a tribute concert for wounded members of the military at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington ([http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2005/20050608\\_1644.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2005/20050608_1644.html)).

The concert was just a small token of the band's appreciation for the troops fighting in the war on terrorism, Simonyi told reporter Steven Donald Smith. "Hungary was one of the first





# CYBERNOTES

**T**he U.S. continues to suffer terrible embarrassment and a blow to our reputation ... because of reports concerning abuses of prisoners in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo.

— Former President Jimmy Carter, at a human rights conference at The Carter Center in Atlanta, June 8, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=828159>.

countries to support the real coalition of the willing,” said Simonyi. “We have to be grateful for the men and women who are on the ground fighting.”

The event was organized by the United Service Organizations of Metropolitan Washington.

A lifelong lover of music, especially rock ‘n’ roll, Simonyi grew up in communist Hungary. He credits rock music — which he listened to on forbidden radio stations such as Radio Free Europe and Radio Luxembourg — with helping to bring about the end of communism in Europe. “Rock ‘n’ roll was our bridge to the free world,” Simonyi says.

Simonyi played guitar in several Hungarian blues and rock bands, including Locomotive GT, one of the best-known groups of the time. In 1999, as Hungary’s ambassador to NATO, he teamed up with his American counterpart, drummer Alexander “Sandy” Vershbow, who is now U.S. ambassador to Russia, to form the band Combined Joint Task Force.

Simonyi helped form The Coalition of the Willing shortly after arriving in Washington in 2002. Vershbow plays with the band whenever he’s in town. Regular band members include guitarist Lincoln Bloomfield, a former assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs; Daniel Poneman, special assistant to the president from 1993 through 1996, who is now a principal at the Scowcroft Group; and Jeff “Skunk” Baxter, formerly of Steely Dan and the Doobie Brothers. At the Walter Reed concert, Bob McNally was on drums and Jim Ehinger played the keyboard.

## Visa Reform: Academic, Science Groups Push for More Improvement

Led by the Association of American Universities and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a group of 40 academic, science and engineering associations on May 18 issued six recommendations for reducing or eliminating barriers to issuing visas to international students, scholars

and researchers put in place following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks ([www.aau.edu/homeland/05VisaStatementPR.pdf](http://www.aau.edu/homeland/05VisaStatementPR.pdf)). “While intended to correct weaknesses exposed by the attacks,” the group states, “the changes proved to be significant barriers for legitimate travelers and created a misperception that these visitors were no longer welcome here.”

Noting that progress had been made on visa reform during the past year (the same groups issued a series of recommendations a year ago, a number of which have been implemented), the group states: “Considerable barriers remain that continue to fuel the misperception that our country does not welcome these international visitors, who contribute immensely to our nation’s economy, national security, and higher education and scientific enterprises.”

Indeed, a February Government Accountability Office report on the Visas Mantis program — the security review procedure involving multiple U.S. government agencies that is used when an applicant requires a Security Advisory Opinion — reported that

## 50 Years Ago...

There’s a saying in the theater that “everyone wants to play Hamlet,” which might as well be parodied in the Foreign Service as “everyone wants to do political reporting in Western Europe.” However, no one can play Hamlet as Shakespeare intended unless he has had a long theatrical career of acting less difficult roles and slowly acquiring the experience and maturity ... to play the truly “great” roles. In this process, he finds that there are many other great roles besides Hamlet.

— Nancy L. Snider, “Assignment to Arahaz,” *FSJ*, July 1955.





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### Site of the Month: [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)

There are a number of free dictionaries and thesauruses available online, but you'll only find one free directory for the origins and development of words: the *Online Etymology Dictionary* ([www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)).

As its name implies, the *Online Etymology Dictionary* does not provide definitions; rather, the site is a blueprint of the ever-rolling wheels and mechanics of the modern English language. Here we find the historical development of a word, including its earliest known use in written records, the changes in form or meaning it has undergone through the years, and its cognates, which are often revealing of its ancestral form.

The *Online Etymology Dictionary* is brought to you by Doug Harper, a linguist and author who compiled the index and refers to himself as "only mildly interesting and occasionally useful." Harper began his compilation in 2001, when he realized that, at the time, there was no other free etymology dictionary available on the Web. His sources include the accredited *Oxford English Dictionary* and countless dictionaries and glossaries in French, German and Greek. Even Sanskrit and Old Persian sources have been consulted.

From medieval vocabulary to technical terms to contemporary American slang, the *Online Etymology Dictionary* can be a valuable tool for writers and readers in any field. Moreover, it is just plain fun to poke around in. If nothing else, you might learn some interesting trivia: for instance, "A-OK" began as astronaut slang; "bimbo" originally applied only to men; and people in 1672 were just as, "um," inarticulate as they are today. Oh, and if anyone ever says you are "nice," don't take it as a compliment.

— Brooke Deal, Editorial Intern

processing time for Visas Mantis cases averaged 67 days as of February 2004, but by November 2004 had been reduced to an average of only 15 days ([www.gao.gov/new3.items/d05198.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new3.items/d05198.pdf)). Still, the report notes, further refinements are needed. In particular, the GAO recommends development of a formal time frame for fully connecting all necessary agencies to the computer system used to track and process Mantis cases, and calls for more direct interaction and training by State officials for consular officers at key posts on the Visas Mantis program.

The coalition's concerns go beyond the Visas Mantis program. Their recommendations include extending the validity of security clearances for international scholars and scientists from the current two-year limit to the duration of their academic appointment, allowing international students and

researchers to renew their visas in the United States, and renegotiating visa reciprocity agreements with key sending countries, such as China, to extend the duration of visas each country grants citizens of the other and to permit multiple entries on a single visa.

The group also calls for amending inflexible requirements — such as the need to demonstrate the intent and ability to return home after studies — that lead to frequent student visa denials, and for development of a national strategy to promote academic and scientific exchange and encourage international students, scholars, scientists and engineers to pursue higher education and research opportunities in the U.S.

The AAU Web site contains extensive, updated information on visa reform issues (<http://www.aau.edu/homeland/students.cfm>). ■





# SPEAKING OUT

## *Making Better Use of Eligible Family Members*

BY SCOTT DANAHER

The Department of State has sought to facilitate operations across its embassies through a number of innovations, including creation of the Eligible Family Member category (6 FAM 111.3-1).

In truth, the concept of “EFM” is an umbrella that covers a range of circumstances, varying across the many federal agencies represented at overseas posts. Some EFMs enjoy annual salaries and generous benefit packages (including service toward pensions and step increases). Others, who might be working side-by-side with the first group, are paid by the hour, on a “you-get-paid-if-you work, you-get-nothing-if-you-don’t” basis, with no benefits or pension rights. This article sees the world largely through the eyes of the latter group, most of whom are employed by U.S. government agencies other than the Department of State. In a perfect world, these EFMs would be covered by the same regulations and enjoy the same rights as those employed by the State Department.

The benefits of EFMs are clear to the agencies that enjoy a ready supply of motivated and skilled, yet relatively inexpensive, help that can qualify for the all-important security clearance. The budget savings the EFM program generates are significant, as well, though there is reason to doubt that they are being maximized.

The benefits of such employment to the individual Eligible Family Member are also clear, albeit less lavish. The dependents (a term now out of favor, but still all too accurate) of U.S. government personnel serving

*The State Department  
should shake off its  
myopia and create a  
win-win environment for  
EFMs and itself alike.*



abroad have relatively few options for gainful employment in most countries. Thus, the creation of new opportunities to work should be welcome, especially in missions that represent a society where the majority of households have two breadwinners. But family members’ appreciation is tempered by the fact that they are vulnerable to exploitation.

### **Supply vs. Demand**

The root of the problem is that at most posts, an excessive supply of human widgets eligible to hold clearances faces an all-too-finite demand for their services. Unsurprisingly, the hiring agencies treat EFMs as a disposable appendage to the U.S. direct-hire employee. The pay is minimal for all EFMs not hired under State’s Family Member Appointment standard (<http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/FLO/employment/workspouse.html>), and their benefits package is non-existent (for example, it lacks pension rights and the ability to receive cash awards). In addition, such employees tend to be “reborn” professionally with every reassignment of the direct-hire employee. And once EFMs are

no longer needed, non-State agencies essentially shred their personnel files, frequently leaving no formal record of all they contributed to their employing agency. Clearly, these agencies little note nor long remember an EFM whose U.S. direct-hire sponsor has moved on, burying any hopes of professional progress.

Yet, how could a present-day embassy function if EFMs did not contribute to its day-to-day activities? Imagine how much lower the quality of life for the direct-hire employees would be if there were no:

- Consular Associates;
- Community Liaison Office;
- Local Guard Coordinator;
- Housing Coordinator;
- Rover Escorts on call 24/7 to allow FSNs (maintenance, the char force, etc.) to work in classified access areas;
- Office Management Specialists;
- Rover OMSs on call 24/7 to allow direct-hire OMSs to take sick leave or annual leave, or to cover during staffing gaps, which are especially common in Third World postings;
- Army and Fleet Post Office system clerks; and
- Part-time nurses.

How much would these agencies have to pay to hire contractors to do what EFMs do now? Then add to the calculus the fact that EFMs hired outside the FMA standard are paid at the lowest grade in the corresponding salary scales, rarely seeing promotions.

Any EFM’s prospects are indeed bleak. Good jobs are few and far between overseas, particularly at



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small posts, and perhaps non-existent at Special Embassy Program posts – exactly the places where they are most needed due to the lack of alternative employers. Even where the supply does not outstrip demand, they frequently have to endure prolonged waits while yet another agency completes its own (often redundant) independent security clearance process, with zero consideration for prior clearances granted. (One EFM had five separate clearances granted over 10 years by four different U.S. government agencies, the last involving a nine-month wait in unpaid professional limbo.) And the final insult: some posts have a policy of not hiring qualified EFMs when the tour of their sponsor has less than 12 months to go. So much for the “needs of the Service.”

**Undervalued and Underappreciated**

Of all the U.S. government agencies present abroad, the Department of State (which consistently benefits the most from the services of EFMs) should know, and do, better. The Bureau of Human Resources’ Recruitment Division is the office responsible for staffing the core of the “diplomatic platform.” HR, however, systematically undervalues Eligible Family Members’ proven capabilities and documented experience when it selects from the universe of applicants for career positions. In fact, it is unclear whether HR — populated perhaps by too many Civil Service staff who have had little direct exposure to what working abroad entails — has established selection criteria that reflect the actual needs of State management abroad. Instead, its hiring criteria seem to focus on a set of skills more oriented towards a 1970s view of what, for instance, a secretary should do, than on what an FSO actually needs from an Office Manage-

ment Specialist today.

Case in point: the recruitment page on State’s Web site (<http://www.careers.state.gov/specialist/opportunities/officemgt.html>) talks about an OMS applicant’s need to be familiar with “... databases, spreadsheets and word processing.” When was the last time an Information Management Officer allowed an OMS to create a database on a computer linked to the Intranet, or any FSO asked an OMS to do so? And why couldn’t the Foreign Service Institute teach this skill to a candidate if it is really so mission-critical?

In fact, while there ought to be a premium for evidence of proven ability to function successfully amid all the stresses of life abroad, one OMS applicant was disqualified at the first stage of testing for not being able to initiate a macro in MS-Word — something that any IMO would prohibit for security reasons, if it weren’t already inhibited on any State computer.

Let’s make the generous assumption that HR has analyzed correctly what an embassy needs. How does it then select from among its many applicants? Specifically, does it understand the unique potential embodied in EFMs? Sadly, the answer is “no.”

When an EFM applies to become a Foreign Service OMS, HR actually *discounts* their work as cleared rovers, who are available to work “24/7” but might not actually be employed 40 hours a week. It also gives no credit for the months spent in suspense awaiting required security clearances (even though these clearances actually facilitate DS’s own process).

HR also fails to grasp the obvious economic benefits that EFMs offer, perversely preferring to bet substantial sums — the costs associated with recruitment (clearances, training, initial posting) and retention — on applicants who have neither lived abroad nor dealt with culture shock;

## SPEAKING OUT



have never faced civil turmoil or terrorist bombings that represented mortal threats to themselves and their families; have never experienced an evacuation or drawdown of dependents; and have never proven that they can function — even thrive — in a foreign environment. Instead, HR prefers to bet the farm on starry-eyed hopefuls who, as likely as not, have no clue about how hard, limiting, threatening and unfair life can be overseas (and are thus far more susceptible to washing out early). Where are the cost efficiencies in choosing the unknown over the known? Why ignore the obvious morale benefit inherent in hiring the spouses of existing FSOs, creating tandems and reducing the total costs of maintaining FS households abroad?

### What the Program Could Be

The State Department should shake off its myopia and create a win-win environment. One small step would be to value honestly and objectively the work experience of an EFM when he/she applies for permanent department employment. It should also count all those months of waiting for a security clearance toward work experience (and develop effective ways to utilize existing clearances for newly-hired EFMs).

In addition, State (and its sister agencies) should count time spent on “24/7” call as a rover OMS or escort as “full-time” employment, rather than relying on some abstract assessment of how much time it would have equaled if the EFM had “really worked,” say as a temp in a placement service in Tallahassee. State could even provide added weight in its hiring decision matrix to qualifying work experience acquired abroad, since it provides a better predictor for success in an FS career than equivalent work experience stateside.

Other good ideas for cost mini-

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## *SPEAKING OUT*



mization and morale maximization are limited only by one's imagination:

- Standardize the clearance process across agencies abroad, allowing an individual to bring their clearance with them from job to job, and (more importantly) from post to post, providing for regular updates.

- Standardize the hiring mechanisms across agencies abroad to follow the department's Family Member Associate standard, so that all EFMs can enjoy a benefits package that grows and are not forced to start from scratch with every move.

- Standardize DS clearance policies across missions, to end the current patchwork arrangement where some posts allow liberal use of temporary at-post clearances, pending receipt of central DS clearances, while others refuse to hire EFMs until the full clearance process is completed (placing them in limbo for months at a time).

In the final analysis, taking even some of these steps would save the department significant money.

The Secretary's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative provides a welcome filling of persistent staffing gaps throughout the system. A complementary initiative might be crafted to maximize the value gained from encouraging a corps of dedicated EFMs, while also allowing the U.S. government to benefit even more from their contributions. Such recent innovations as hiring EFMs as Consular Associates and FMAs help; but more can — and should — be done. The costs would be little, while the potential benefits are great. ■

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*Scott Danaher entered the Foreign Service in 1979 and has served in Latin America, Africa and Asia. He is currently deputy director of the Narcotics Affairs Section in Embassy La Paz.*

# FSI SETTLES INTO ARLINGTON HALL



**I** THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE IS CHARGED WITH PROVIDING FORMAL INSTRUCTION TO ALL EMPLOYEES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENCIES. HOW WELL IS IT DOING?

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BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

In celebrating the October 1993 opening of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center at Arlington Hall, FSI's new home, the *Foreign Service Journal* recalled the brief history of diplomatic training. Until the early 20th century, it noted, new consuls went abroad with no other advice than to “take snuff often and slowly, sit with your back to the light, speak the truth, and the rest you will learn by observing your colleagues.”

In fact, the first “school for diplomats” did not open until 1909 — more than a century after the founding of the Department of State. There, according to the *New York Times*, “Young men who would be ambassadors [had] nothing

to do but absorb the lectures and look happy.” In the 1920s a training school instructed new officers, but there was no provision for advanced training until the Foreign Service Act of 1946 formally mandated the establishment of such a facility.

Today, nearly six decades later, all members of the Foreign Service at all levels, along with their Civil Service colleagues and Foreign Service Nationals, are expected to hone their professional skills and acquire new ones throughout their careers. While a good deal of that learning happens on the job and on the employee’s own time, of course, the Foreign Service Institute is charged with designing and providing formal instruction to all employees of foreign affairs agencies.

More than a decade after FSI’s move to Arlington Hall, we look back at how the institution has evolved and examine how well it is fulfilling its mission today. To assist in this endeavor, we sent an AFSANET message to members inviting them to share their own experiences with FSI and Foreign Service training. (See p. 32 for a compilation of those responses.)

### **FSI’s Early Years**

The original Foreign Service Institute, founded in 1947, was in the Mayfair Building at 2115 C Street NW, near the new War Building, which was about to become the center of State Department operations. The facility included four schools: Basic Officer Training, Advanced Officer Training, Management and Administrative Training and Language Training.

From the beginning, FSI sought to utilize state-of-the-art technology to facilitate learning. Thus, under its first director, Dr. Henry Smith Jr., the School of Language Training incorporated intensive methods of language instruction that only the armed forces used at the time. Smith acquired \$10,000 worth of basic manu-

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*Steven Alan Honley, a Foreign Service officer from 1985 to 1997, is the editor of the Journal. During his time in the Service, he studied three languages (Spanish, French and Russian) and took several professional and area studies courses at the Foreign Service Institute, both at the Shultz Training Center and FSI’s old home in Rosslyn.*

***From the beginning,  
FSI sought to utilize  
state-of-the-art technology  
to facilitate learning.***

als and phonograph records from the U.S. Army, and invested \$30,000 more in record players, SoundScriber tape recording machines and other equipment.

Those initial efforts were not sustained, however. The 1954 Wriston Report assessing the State Department’s management severely criticized the insufficient amount of support and resources devoted to the fledgling Foreign Service Institute. The following year, the Mayfair Building underwent a complete renovation, and the training program was revitalized as well, with old courses revamped and a combination of new, shorter courses and longer specialized training added. For the first time, courses were open to wives. The new program included three periods of concentrated, full-time training — for new officers, for those in mid-career, and for senior officers. There was constant emphasis on increasing language skills. Debate continued, however, over training needs — the amount and timing of training, who should be trained and how best to do it all.

Meanwhile, the training program shifted from one temporary location to another, eventually migrating from Washington, D.C., to two State Department annex buildings in Arlington, Va.: SA-3 and SA-15. In 1986, even as plans were under way to move FSI to its current site at Arlington Hall, professional training once again got a new look, with new classes and a new curriculum that moved away from the traditional lecture-based format. For instance, in “ConGen Rosslyn” (still going strong today), future consular officers play-acted as an American in a foreign jail and an official who has come to visit.

The new approaches to training were welcome, but as former FSI Director Brandon Grove acknowledged in a 1993 interview (see p. 22), there was a more fundamental problem: “The training conditions at FSI Rosslyn [were] just awful. An environment does not determine what you can do, but it conditions the way you do it and how you feel about your work.” He then predicted: “Training provided at Arlington Hall will transform the Foreign Service.”

### **The Big Move**

One major attraction of the new site was that Arlington Hall was designed to be a campus. Originally



the home of Arlington Hall Junior College, an all-female school founded in the 1920s, the 72-acre plot later served as a U.S. Army installation. In fact, four structures dating from the early history of the site as a junior college — the yellow-brick Old Main building, the girls' gymnasium and two historic Sears Roebuck pre-fabricated cottages near Route 50 — have been renovated and incorporated into the current training center.

The collegiate feeling carries over in other ways, as well. Because the buildings are connected, there's a kind of shirtsleeves environment. Even in the dead of winter students can go anywhere without bundling up.

Nor was that Arlington Hall's only selling point. As FSI's course catalog notes, historians have deemed the site noteworthy "for its local architectural importance and nationally significant role in American military intelligence operations." At the beginning of World War II, the Roosevelt administration took over the school (then defunct due to financial problems) for the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, which would later break the Japanese army's so-called Purple Code.

In October 1989, the Defense Department moved its people elsewhere and transferred the facility to State. The hard part had just begun, however. Because of massive asbestos removal and other structural issues, it ultimately cost \$81 million to build the center. State almost lost the funding in 1989 and again in 1991 as the closing days of the Cold War increased budget-cutting pressure. Only a close partnership among the architects, FSI, State's Bureau of Administration, the General Services Administration, the Office of Management and Budget and key congressional staffers kept the process on track.

At the same time, State was also negotiating with neighborhood citizens' groups, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Virginia Historical Association and bicycle enthusiasts. Fortunately, Grove recalls, support from a graduate of the original Arlington Hall turned the tide. "On a cold winter night in 1989, a wonderful woman, Louise Hale, got up at a formal public session ... and said she thought [building the NFATC] was an absolutely wonderful idea, and that ended any criticism."

The National Foreign Affairs Training Center opened in October 1993. In a May 2002 ceremony, the training center was renamed in honor of George P. Shultz, Secretary of State from 1982 to 1989, who was instrumental in its establishment. Introducing him on that occasion, Secretary of State Colin Powell observed: "We

have always known George to be a man keenly focused on the future, especially on preparing the rising generation for service to the country. ... It is not we who honor George Shultz by naming this center after him; rather, it is George Shultz who honors us and all who will pass through these halls by lending his name to this facility."

Although most FSI training takes place at the Shultz Center, there are several other training locations. The Warrenton Training Center houses much of the information management training. FSI also uses classrooms at three other State Department annexes, as well as Main State, for various courses. It conducts overseas training in language field schools in Tunis and Taipei, among other locations. Regional centers in Frankfurt, Vienna and Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., provide both regional and post-specific training to overseas personnel. In addition, FSI is expanding its distance-learning offerings.

## **From Famine to Feast**

The move to the current campus was unquestionably a major step forward for FSI. But it coincided with serious budget cutbacks for State, a significant drop in Foreign Service recruitment and a corresponding increase in pressure on personnel to reduce or even forgo time in training throughout the 1990s. As former FSI Director Lawrence Taylor noted at the time, "The State Department has a practical problem, because we have not staffed ourselves with a personnel float sufficient to allow a sizable percentage of our people to plan for regular training, especially on any long-term basis."

The advent of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative in 2001 largely repaired the damage from that period, but it has led to the opposite problem: unprecedented demand for all of FSI's courses. In the past year, over 40,000 students (a record enrollment) took more than 425 classroom courses, including some 60 languages.

FSI has coped in various ways with the unprecedented demand for space and resources: making more efficient use of space, giving greater attention to classroom allocation, introducing a shift schedule for many languages, and encouraging the various schools within FSI to be as creative as possible in designing courses. Going to shifts, in particular, has enabled FSI to maximize the number of students in incentive languages such as Arabic and Chinese. But as anyone who has tried to get on one of the late afternoon shuttles back to Rosslyn and Main State, eat lunch in the cafeteria between noon and 1 p.m.

or find a quiet area to study can attest, overcrowding and noise remain real problems.

Louisa O'Neil, who was an FSI student from January to June 2004, comments that "it seemed odd indeed that the facilities for conversing, studying, thinking and reading were virtually non-existent. ... During the winter, the cafeteria was the only place available for studying or group study sessions, yet televisions constantly blared." Still, she emphasizes, "the students, teachers and administrators do the best they can in an extremely crowded, stressful environment."

### **FSI's Training Philosophy**

Director Katherine Peterson (see interview, p. 41) describes FSI's priorities as "developing leadership and management programs; supporting the Secretary's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative with orientation, tradecraft and language training; enhancing consular/border security training; increasing critical language training; and, expanding and enhancing our public diplomacy training." The institute also offers area studies, information technology training, overseas security instruction, and courses aiding employees and their families in transition to and from overseas assignments.

An important element of FSI's approach is the belief that Foreign Service training should both develop the particular skills needed at each level of an officer's career and provide a foundation for an officer to move into areas of increased responsibility. As the *Training Continuum for Foreign Service Generalists* observes: "An officer's early career is focused more on operational issues. At more senior levels, broader strategic, leadership and management responsibilities are the norm. Most early training is focused on tradecraft courses designed to teach employees basic knowledge, skills and abilities — the tools — to do the work in a particular cone or assignment. The tradecraft courses, in combination with the basic A-100 orientation course, lay the foundation for further studies and experience. Because management and leadership skills are so important to officers at every level, leadership and management modules are embedded in tradecraft courses for all grade levels."

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As newly-tenured personnel assume positions of increasing influence and greater leadership and managerial responsibility, the *Training Continuum* encourages officers to "focus on training opportunities that will build on their experience on the job and that will broaden and deepen their understanding and capabilities in leadership and management." Generalists are encouraged to consider the special training (and assignment) opportunities available outside the department, such as one-year assignments to the Armed Forces Command and Staff Colleges, the Corporate Placement Program, the Princeton Woodrow Wilson School Program and the public policy fellowship program at Princeton, and the Pearson Program.

Still, the *Continuum* acknowledges that no single guide, however comprehensive, can serve all employees in all situations. It therefore encourages officers to "take an informed, active role in making decisions about the training they need to achieve their career aspirations."

Along these lines, the new *FSI Language Continuum*, unveiled in January, is not simply about formal training: it is a strategic document, designed to help officers plan a career-long approach to language learning and use. It presents an integrated view of language-learning options that includes a new approach to post language programs, innovative distance learning programs and expanded use of overseas field schools. For instance, FSI is working to increase immersion training and make focused media skills training available at institutions overseas, beginning with a pilot program at FSI/Tunis.

### **A Road Map to Diplomatic Leadership**

"In the past, talented professionals could rise to senior positions in the Department of State with little or no formal training in areas other than language," FSI's current *Leadership and Management Training Continuum* notes. "That is no longer the case. Our global challenges and our resource management issues have become too complex, and our people and national interests have become too vulnerable to accommodate haphazard professional development."

The department's current emphasis on leadership and

## F O C U S

management training is closely associated with Sec. Powell, who frequently cited the importance of training for his own military career. However, the Leadership and Management School was actually founded in 1999, two years before Powell arrived in Foggy Bottom. The school's first dean, Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal, and cur-

### Ben Comes to FSI

In August 1994, the year after FSI took up its new quarters, it got a patron saint: a 1,500-pound, six-foot-high bronze statue of Benjamin Franklin, America's first diplomatic agent. AFSA originally donated the statue on Foreign Service Day in 1982 to mark the State Department's 200th anniversary. But the statue, which has a companion in the front courtyard of Embassy Paris, was tucked away in obscurity outside the department's C Street entrance.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said, "It is my hope that this figure will provide inspiration in this new location as successive generations of new American diplomats pass before it."

rent dean, Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, have overseen the creation of a full range of leadership and management training for all State Department employees, including specialists and Civil Service personnel. The program encourages instruction at frequent intervals in formal training environments, in line with the belief that employees should not wait until they have "manager" or "leader" written in their job description to begin developing talents in these areas.

The core leadership training series consists of mandatory basic, intermediate and advanced courses leadership for employees at the GS-13/FS-3, GS-14/FS-2 and GS-15/FS-1 grade levels, as well as the Senior Executive Threshold Seminar for people newly promoted to the Senior Civil and Foreign Services. Those courses are complemented by over 25 electives that focus on specific skills. In addition, coverage of leadership and management principles is embedded in the various professional tradecraft courses.

U.S. Ambassador to Laos Patricia M. Haslach, a member of the Senior Foreign Service, describes herself as "a

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## “We Must Not Lose Our Spirit Now”

*Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from an October 1993 FSJ interview with two former directors of the Foreign Service Institute, on the occasion of the new National Foreign Affairs Training Center's dedication. Ambassador Brandon Grove Jr. was director from 1988 to 1992, when plans were made for the facility and most of the construction was completed. Lawrence P. Taylor succeeded Grove, and saw the construction through to its completion and official 1993 opening. Journal Editor Anne Stevenson-Yang conducted the interview.*

**FSJ:** *What do you call the National Foreign Affairs Training Center? NFATC does not make a very friendly acronym.*

**Grove:** Well, the name is more than a frivolous concern. It was George Shultz who selected the words, “National Foreign Affairs Training Center,” and that’s the name that appears in legislation. The reason Shultz wanted the name was to emphasize that it wasn’t just the Foreign Service that would be receiving training: it was people from more than 40 agencies, and the Civil Service from our own department, together. The new campus would not be there today if it were not for Secretary Shultz, who was its inspiration and who regarded it as a monument to his stewardship. Our predecessors Steve Low and Charlie Bray worked with him to make it a reality.

**Taylor:** The name is very important, but it doesn’t seem to have the zip to it that allows people to use it naturally in conversation. ... If a name doesn’t take hold, it’s going to be called “the new FSI” in the vernacular.

**FSJ:** *How was Arlington Hall chosen?*

**Grove:** The new site is literally a campus. It was built in the early 1920s as a girls’ school called Arlington Hall. In the 1940s, at the beginning of World War II, the Roosevelt administration took over the then-defunct campus — there had been financial problems — and installed an Army communications detachment. ... In October 1989, the Department of State was able to take over 72 acres when the Defense Department decided to move its people elsewhere. ...

The departing Army took with them a decorative World War II cannon, and left behind a ghost named Mary. Mary, a student at Arlington Hall, had been repeatedly sighted in the upper stairwell of a wing of the main building that we have now torn down. She’d had

an unhappy and indiscreet love affair and roamed the halls in a white gown just about where we [located] the Overseas Briefing Center.”

**FSJ:** *Is there any feeling that this campus is going to be too far away and too isolated?*

**Taylor:** There is no issue that has bedeviled FSI staff more than questions about transportation. As an institution, we have tried to prep well for the move, by creating town meetings and committees, newsletters, and giving people opportunities to ask questions, get answers and participate. It’s about a 15-minute drive from the State Department. There will be a shuttle-bus service that may well be quicker than the present service to and from Rosslyn. However, there is no easy walk to a Metro. The other side of that coin is that there will be extensive parking space, and there is a day-care center in the planning stages. In the end, transportation will be worked out. For some, it may take a bit longer, but it’s still a heck of a lot better once you get there.

**FSJ:** *What is the relationship among the various agencies and the new NFATC?*

**Taylor:** FSI already trains people from 44 or 45 different agencies, and we have a vision of it as [being] for the entire U.S. government foreign-affairs community. That’s going to have to proceed step by step, but ... we should consider strategically moving toward foreign-affairs integration.

**Grove:** I think an effect of the new campus will be to make people feel happy to be there and feel good about training assignments. The biggest problem in training is the unwillingness of supervisors to release those in need of it. No corporation, and certainly not our military, would function with the State Department’s attitude toward training. We need to link training to assignments. The new campus will represent a forward look at training needs in an environment specifically designed for training: that will have an encouraging effect on employees, and supervisors as well.

**Taylor:** We have a culture in the Foreign Service that is anti-training. People pride themselves on getting out of training, because they believe it somehow would be bad for their career. To overcome this, we need to use the move to make people think differently about career paths, assignments, and the way training fits in, not just into a job but into a career. ... One partial answer is increasingly to take training to the workplace.

**FSJ:** *Would you talk for a moment about the facilities that will be available to students at the new campus?*

**Taylor:** We cannot always bring students to the schoolhouse, even though we may have the greatest schoolhouse in town. So the training center has to be a sort of spark plug. Technology can take training to the workplace, through interactive video, which we should be building toward in four, five or six years. No matter how good our training, a portion of it isn't used until many months later, when a person runs into the first task or responsibility associated with that training, so we need to think about "just-in-time" training, which puts the information on a person's desk right when they need it. That opens whole new vistas of training categories of people we've just left out for cost reasons — like Foreign Service Nationals.

**Grove:** The best possible effort has been made to set up electric and electronic capabilities in the construction process that you might not be able to use fully for some time to come, but ultimately will use. There is a satellite dish. We have will have a capacity to establish an interactive relationship with any post in the world, much like Worldnet. If the General Services staff of an embassy are having particular problems, or need training in something new, a televised connection can be set up between them and the right people in the department and FSI to provide training. That's yet another way that technology, as we will use it at Arlington Hall, is going to change the entire character, not just portions of the content, of training.

**FSJ:** *Apart from technology, how can a new location substantially alter the nature of training?*

**Grove:** The new campus provides the environment and the physical facilities to do this. As the Cold War drew to an end, everyone at FSI realized that tremendous change was upon us and that we would have to do virtually everything in training differently. Funding of the campus at precisely this time and its emergence brick by brick was serendipitous. The economic dimension in our training clearly needed to be strengthened. There would be new languages to teach. Management and executive leadership would have greater emphasis than we had been able to provide. A sense of profound change drove our interest in Arlington Hall. You thought of doing things differently at the new campus and realized that the move was not a matter of transporting tacky furniture from

Roslyn to a new building: it was getting a new mind-set.

**Taylor:** Training should be a building block for our efforts to strengthen American diplomacy and American leadership in the post-Cold War world. We are using the move to the NFATC as a metaphor for making associated qualitative changes in our training in advancing U.S. competitiveness, for example, developing a technology strategy, integrating global issues and developing a new system of language instruction. The NFATC will contribute to innovative training for the country teams of the future. The campus will also afford opportunities for training partnerships with the private sector, with nongovernmental organizations, and with academia, all of which are more important actors in foreign affairs than in the past.

*My view is that the  
Foreign Service in the  
future will really be a  
leadership profession.*

— *Lawrence P. Taylor*

**FSJ:** *If there is one aspect of training that you hoped would be emphasized at the new facility, what would that be?*

**Grove:** I attach great importance to language training and to continuing to draw upon the best possible technologies for training people in the 63 languages that we now teach at FSI. Of course, married to language training are area studies. ... [Also] we don't do nearly as well as we should in

reaching large numbers of senior executives in the Civil Service and Foreign Service for leadership and executive training. Far too often, we have people in very responsible jobs who are poor leaders and don't need to be. That just has to change.

**Taylor:** My view is that the Foreign Service in the future will really be a leadership profession. In this complicated, interagency environment, the ability to mobilize resources and people on behalf of a common agenda, to set priorities, to move forward and realize our objectives, is more and more a leadership game. If we begin with an employee when he comes into the system, it will pay back over a career of 30 or 40 years. Leadership is person-dependent. Everyone, in his or her own way, can exercise positive leadership.

**Grove:** This is the most complex time since 1945 to the early 1950s. It calls for the same kind of creativity. A Foreign Service and a Civil Service with real spirit, knowledge and commitment have served this country well, even though using the inadequate facilities in which our previous training has been located. Arlington Hall has got to foster the same urgency, the same selfless commitment, the same quest for quality in our professionals that we have had in earlier times. We must not lose our spirit now. ■

frequent user and fan of the new leadership and management courses at FSI — such as ‘Managing and Testifying before Congress,’ ‘Appearing Effective in the Media,’ ‘Senior Executive Threshold Training’ (the first class), and the ‘Chief of Mission Course.’” Says Amb. Haslach: “All the courses were to the point and on the mark. I was also impressed with the on-site training in crisis management that FSI provides to posts. The country team and I participated in a two-day Crisis Management Exercise, which better prepared the embassy for fire, natural disasters and terrorist attacks. This training proved invaluable when we had an incident at post.”

From 1957 to 2004, a major component of the department’s leadership training program was the nine-month Senior Seminar, the U.S. government’s highest level of executive training in foreign affairs. Hundreds of ambassadors, generals, admirals and top-ranking officials of foreign affairs agencies are among its alumni, but FSI discontinued the course last year, citing the small number of people (just 15 State Department employees a year) who could take the training and the expense involved. This was a highly unpopular decision among many senior FSOs (see “Speaking Out: A Tribute to the Senior Seminar” by William Stedman in the July-August 2004 *Foreign Service Journal*).

In its place, FSI has incorporated many elements of the Senior Seminar into a new program called Senior Policy Seminars. This approach offers similar instruction but in small modules — usually one or two days devoted to a specific topic. These courses not only reach many more senior FSOs at a time, but also make the information available to mid-level personnel.

### **The School of Language Studies: Room for Improvement**

For many Foreign Service personnel, language study produces their most vivid memories of FSI, if for no other reason than the amount of time and energy they invest. We received more responses dealing with that aspect of training than all others combined.

Many students give the program high marks. Walter Shepherd, a USAID FSO currently serving in La Paz, comments that he has had good experiences at FSI all three times he has attended: “They designed a special Spanish refresher program for me on the third occasion I was there. My courses focused a lot on development and food aid terms I would need to know as a Food for Peace

officer in Bolivia. I was a very satisfied customer and felt FSI had prepared me well for the posting.”

Several State new hires who have gone through training in Romance languages within the past couple of years also e-mailed us to praise the quality of instruction they received. And while she was highly critical of FSI in some regards, one mid-level Arabic student says, “I had some teachers who had taught for many years, took their work seriously and had developed a method/style of teaching that worked for them.”

The quality of instruction seems to vary considerably depending on the language and the teacher. In particular, we received numerous detailed complaints about the Arabic, French and Russian programs, revolving around several issues that may well be more generally applicable:

**Lack of quality control.** After the relative lull of the 1990s, the combination of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and the increased emphasis on Arabic and other incentive languages following the 9/11 attacks has forced FSI to scramble to hire sufficient staff to meet the skyrocketing demand. As State was competing with other government agencies and the private sector for a finite supply of qualified teachers, it is understandable — perhaps even unavoidable — that the overall quality of Arabic-language instruction would be adversely affected, at least at first. FSI hires many language instructors on a contract basis so the least competent can be weeded out. (Currently, about half of the staff are contractors.)

Nonetheless, while teacher evaluation is a subjective exercise to some extent, many students are convinced that they are not being well served. One student, speaking on background, reports: “I had one teacher who was newly recruited, confessed that she hated to speak Arabic and did not seem to particularly like teaching.”

Several other students note that even though all FSI classes are supposed to be “immersion” (i.e., conducted in the foreign language), some of the instructors consistently use English — even when the students ask them to stick to their native tongue.

There seems to be widespread agreement (among students, at least) that FSI’s longstanding requirement that all language instructors be native speakers all too often comes at the expense of teaching ability and fluency in English. Similarly, while using native speakers to teach has the advantage of exposing students to a wide variety of accents and dialects, it can also be detrimental. One employee of a non-State foreign affairs agency was



extremely disappointed by his experience as a French student headed for a Canadian post. After FSI training in “standard international French,” he said, he was not prepared at all for the substantially different pronunciation and vocabulary of Canadian French.

Many students would like to have a mechanism to evaluate individual instructors at the end of each rotation when the students’ memories are fresh. While some sections of the School of Language Studies periodically solicit informal feedback, the only official questionnaire is not disseminated until the end of training, and it only contains one specific question about teaching: “Please comment on the instruction, including the instructor preparation and how efficiently your time was used.” Though in-house monitoring of instructors in the classroom is FSI policy, many respondents claimed it does not take place.

Responding to such concerns, FSI Director Peterson says there are no plans to hire non-native speakers as lan-

***Area studies is widely regarded as the weak link of FSI training.***

guage faculty, even on a trial basis. However, she stresses that “we have our own orientation for all new (and ongoing) teachers, including pedagogical training to make sure that they understand effective teaching methods and what we’re trying to get across.

And every other Wednesday afternoon, there is a wide-ranging program of in-service staff training and development.”

**Rote instruction.** The Russian Language Department, with nearly 100 students a year heading to many countries, is one of the largest at FSI. Officers at all ranks have criticized the Russian program for failing to give them the tools they need to do their job. For example, in early 2003, a highly critical cable from Moscow expressed concerns about the degree of preparation of junior officers arriving from Russian training at FSI. Some reforms have been implemented as a result, but the basic issues reportedly persist.

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One graduate of the program attributes the problem to the fact that the creators of the materials and curriculum were from the former Soviet Union, where education is based on rote memorization, with little focus on practical use and virtually no tolerance for different learning styles. Program alumni tell of instructors who handed out helpful photocopied supplements while begging the students not to tell anyone, lest they be disciplined for deviating from the established system.

As one officer describes the Russian program's standard approach, "There is an almost complete absence of the interactive, back-and-forth dialogues that have identified FSI's traditionally successful programs. Students are expected to memorize a long series of paragraphs on various subjects, then tie them together in some hopeful cohesive way for use in the language tests."

He concludes: "Most students would prefer a more dynamic and flexible program ... to meet individual instructor and student styles. But typically, the program administrators refuse to move students around after their initial level has been assessed."

**Uneven teaching standards.** Too much "free-form" class time is also a problem. Many Arabic-language students report they never receive a syllabus, and that some of their instructors either do not have or do not follow a lesson plan. "Across the board, what I found was that there was no consistency in approach, and no particular standard curriculum for spoken Arabic past the first few weeks of alphabet study," one says.

Some Arabic-language teachers reportedly plow through the textbook regardless of whether the class has mastered the material, while others spend much of each session engaged in free conversation (typically with the one or two students in each group who are most advanced, leaving the others out in the cold). At the same time, some of the more goal-oriented students express frustration about not knowing what skills they are expected to acquire in each class, let alone the timetable for upcoming units.

One FSO comments: "We were left to the whims of each language teacher, each with different backgrounds and qualifications (some with no more qualification than that they spoke Arabic as a native language), and more important, each with a different idea about what is important for the student to learn about the language. So we left the institute with no systematic approach to teaching about grammar, no systematic approach to the vocabulary

set, and no real sense of what the goal of instruction was, other than to expose the learner to a very mixed bag of high-level professional vocabulary. For a language as complex and different as Arabic, this approach is neither appropriate nor efficient, and after nine months of study, an average learner can still barely master everyday, utilitarian language use. No wonder it takes two years to get to a 3/3 level. I have to ask what Middlebury College could do with someone after two years of intensive study."

**Taking "test" too literally?** One French-language student probably speaks for many when he recalls his final exam, "The test was high-stress — I felt the testers were trying to find out what I didn't know, not what I did know." He also points out that his 16-week test score was 2+/2+ (5 being a native speaker) in speaking/reading, as was his final score after 30 weeks of instruction. Yet he scored a 2+/3 at the 26-week mark. He wonders: "If it is the professional opinion of FSI that I made no progress in spoken French in three months, why didn't anyone give me any written comments on why?"

A related theme is that FSI language instruction seems to be geared more to achieving a target test score — typically 3/3 for world languages, 2/2 for "incentive" languages — than actually enabling students to use the language in the field. While some instructors go out of their way to obtain or even formulate supplemental vocabulary lists for their students, or direct them to commercial sources for such materials, all too often students are left to their own devices.

Part of the problem, speculates one FSO who taught English as a second language for many years, may be the belief that the Foreign Service's requirements are so specific and unique that the curriculum and methodology have to be custom-made for FSI. Yet even if one accepts this premise, the institute does not seem to have the internal capacity to produce state-of-the-art training materials, much less to stay ahead of the curve in the area of language instruction. As this FSO notes, "While basic knowledge about how people acquire foreign languages has not changed much, today's language teachers at the best institutions have available to them much better texts and methodologies." So why doesn't FSI?

A corollary, says one recent graduate of the Arabic program, is the belief that FSI can "shortcut the language-learning process" and move a student to higher-function vocabulary and complex political concepts without [first] bringing the student through basic language acquisition

and everyday use. “But,” he says, “I think most linguists would argue that this is a faulty assumption that produces students who can pass the reading/writing tests [only] because they can pick out high-level vocabulary.”

Along the same lines, stories of students arriving with extensive prior experience in a foreign language, only to be assessed as barely competent simply because they had not learned according to the method the particular FSI faculty preferred, are legion.

The French department, in particular, has long been notorious for trying to “break” such students, and for being inflexible in designing and implementing its curriculum.

One student recalls: “After telling me my language-learning style, FSI then proceeded to ignore it, instead insisting that I adapt to the FSI French department’s ‘one-size-fits-all’ teaching methods. This was greatly

***The responses to our survey suggest that it may be time for FSI to consider revamping its conceptual approach in some respects.***

frustrating.” The same student concludes: “I feel I learned French in spite of, rather than because of, the Basic Course. The textbook was very poorly written — for instance, its emphasis on role-playing without first providing a basic grounding in the language is a waste of time.”

**Poor management.** Several current students commented that the language laboratory is not fully staffed and the equipment and audiovisual materials are not always

kept operational or up-to-date. And many students in languages taught in shifts due to high volume report they frequently do not find out until the first day of each six- to eight-week rotation whether they are staying on the same schedule or moving to another shift. Besides making it unnecessarily difficult to adjust their sleep schedule, day-care arrangements or transportation, the lack of advance

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notice means many students find themselves with several hours to kill on the first day of each new rotation. Furthermore, the fact that this keeps happening suggests that there are either systemic communication problems within the School of Language Studies or that the efficient use of time and the convenience of students are not the school's top priorities — neither of which is exactly encouraging to students already apprehensive about attaining their target proficiency.

Child care is another serious management issue at FSI. The day-care center closes at 4:30 p.m. every day, even though many classes go past that time — forcing parents to make special arrangements or leave class early. In response to complaints, FSI points out that lengthening the facility's hours would increase costs for all customers.

**Time for outside help?** Numerous respondents flatly asserted that FSI's language program needs to consider some major reforms: contracting out some of the curriculum development, testing and teacher training work to academic institutions or others with expertise; separating the testing from the teaching; and developing some universal standards on what language competencies are required.

Other suggestions include pursuit of post-based language study. One FSO with experience in such a program, which was outside of FSI, points out that learning is faster “on site” and it is often cheaper to have someone study at post rather than on per diem in the D.C. area.

As one USAID officer who went through Arabic training says, the current set-up “amounts to a huge waste of time and money for the Foreign Service. If we add the cost of housing and salary of the students, this training amounts to a very expensive program. We should do it, no doubt about it. But we should do it much, much better.”

### **The School of Professional Studies: Living Up to Its Name**

We did not receive many responses about FSI's orientation program or the School of Professional and Area Studies tradecraft courses, but most of the comments were positive. One recent entrant did flag the problem of raised expectations for new generalists:

“Throughout A-100, new FSOs are told we're diplomats now. We have speech coaches and writing coaches and are sent to some excellent management training. We are given months of training in language and occupational skills, and told that most of us are going out to be managers.” Then the officers arrive at post, where they dis-

cover “the visa mills where officers are expected to ‘efficiently’ process visas at the rate of 15-20 per hour — and during that three to four minutes per applicant, examine documents while conducting a conversation and checking through countless hits in the namecheck system.

“The conflict between raised expectations and realities at post is causing ripples of discontent throughout the junior officer ranks as they discuss the situation in Web-based chat groups outside official channels. Many are describing themselves as the highest-paid factory workers in the world. When the second-tour bid list came out and most of us realized we hadn't served our time but were expected to do another tour of visa interviews, many people began to rethink the decision to enter the Foreign Service.”

**ConGen Rosslyn.** Still affectionately known by its original name even though it has moved to its new home, the classic consular course for new hires has changed in other ways, too. It is now six weeks long and includes site visits to other agencies. Based on the anecdotal evidence gathered in response to our request for input via AFSANET, it is one of FSI's more popular offerings.

A first-tour officer now in Mexico says: “The new facial-recognition segment was fascinating and very useful. The field trips to other agencies were informative, especially the visit with DHS inspectors at Dulles airport.” His only criticism was that “the [non-immigrant visa] section was near the end and only lasted a few days. Almost all of us were going to be doing extensive NIV work (that was 75 percent of my consular tour). . . . We did practice interviewing, but I would've liked more practice, especially with the ‘gray area’ applicants (not easily refusable or issuable) that so many visa applicants here seem to be.”

Another new hire notes, “Spanish training focused on preparing me to make short thematic presentations, when what I really needed as a consular officer headed for a visa mill was training in conducting interviews in Spanish. I didn't learn the vocational vocabulary I needed in Spanish, and the ConGen practice interviews were in English, under optimum conditions — quiet background, top-of-the-line amplification equipment, etc. What a shock when I got to the real world.”

**GSO Training.** One new hire says the basic course's nickname among teachers as well as students is “Death by PowerPoint,” and some of his colleagues describe the full course as “eight weeks of material crammed into 11 weeks.” Yet while he agrees it could be condensed, he

found the training useful. He also notes the challenge of running a course that includes people with considerable “real world” experience alongside recent college graduates, especially when the focus is on management. He liked the fact that “a variety of teachers/experts were used and the coordinators made a great effort to use information from the field. There were a couple of site visits (Office of Building Operations; fire training; etc.) and the schedule encouraged and included time for consultations with colleagues throughout the department.”

### Area Studies: FSI’s Poor Relation?

There seems to be a disconnect between the rhetoric and reality of area studies training. “The nature of Foreign Service work requires a solid knowledge of the social, political, cultural, economic, religious and government policy dimensions of the foreign countries and regions to which officers are assigned,” the FSI *Training Continuum* asserts. “Area studies should be considered

essential training for an officer prior to every assignment to a country, region, geographic bureau or functional bureau position with a geographic portfolio where the officer has not previously served.” It goes on to note that area studies are especially important for officers traveling to their first assignments.

The mid-level section of the same guide states that “Knowledge of the countries and regions of assignment continues to be important and area studies training should always be considered.” Senior-level officers are reminded that area studies “continues to be important for achieving greater knowledge of the countries or areas with which a senior officer will be concerned in the course of an assignment.”

Yet most of the comments we received indicate that many students do not view area studies as essential, or even useful. This is particularly true of the segments integrated into language training (typically one afternoon every two weeks). In part, this is because area studies

## Lessons Learned from Long-Term Training at FSI

By Stetson Sanders

**Don’t be a local hire.** I was one of a handful of students in my A-100 class who were local hires and therefore did not qualify for per diem. That didn’t seem like a big problem — until I realized after Flag Day that I would be in training at FSI for approximately 50 weeks. Though the intention of the regulations (6 FAM 153.3), and presumably Congress, is clearly to have people who are working in Washington compensated for the higher cost of living here (either through “locality pay” or per diem/lodging), it’s hard for me to believe that every year a handful of new officers in every class are cut out of receiving either. None of us join the Service for large salaries, but this is an inequity which is patently wrong, short-sighted, unjustified, and probably relatively easy to solve. In GSO training we heard great emphasis placed on establishing “equality in conditions and morale” at post (among agencies, singles and married officers, etc.); it seems to me the glaring disparity in pay between local hires and others is equally relevant to morale here in D.C., though felt by a small minority.

**Buy a car.** People who don’t own a car are at a severe disadvantage in commuting to FSI. The shuttle service offered from Rosslyn, while punctual and reliable, is insufficient, and often there are 40-minute gaps in the schedule without any transportation option. Any time there is a group using the shuttle

(such as a new A-100 class, a large group from Main State, etc.), there is often not enough room for everyone to get on and many are forced to wait. The public buses are less reliable and more sporadic. The department says it encourages public ridership, but FSI has a \$1/day parking fee — a charge so low it acts as an incentive for students to drive.

**Be prepared to motivate yourself.** The flexible schedules and limited classroom time for language training were quite a shock for some of us who have been out of the university setting for a long time; it took us a while to learn to use the downtime productively and efficiently.

**Be flexible and patient.** There is a shortage of space at FSI to accommodate its growing mandate and increased student body. While the long-term plans to address that seem well thought out, it’s clear that the next several years will require patience and accommodation from people. I know language students, for instance, who had to be in class by 7:40 a.m. and didn’t leave until 5 p.m. Language teachers sometimes complain that they couldn’t prepare materials because they share a computer with other teachers.

*Stetson Sanders, a member of the 121st A-100 class, is at FSI preparing for his August assignment to Dushanbe.*

courses are necessarily organized along regional lines, so an officer going to a small country will probably only hear passing mention of its particular issues. Even though hearing about neighboring countries can help clarify the situation in one's own posting, sitting through long lectures (which seems to be the prevailing format) may not be the best use of officers' time. In fact, several FSOs admitted they use area studies to do homework for language classes, review flash cards, or complete administrative tasks.

Attitudes are somewhat more positive toward the "intensive" two-week area studies courses. Louisa O'Neil, now serving in the economic section in Mexico City, comments: "I learned more about Mexico during those classes than in six months of living in country. The guest lecturers illuminated aspects of the country's political, economic and cultural life that mere reading would not cover."

Generally, though, as one new hire comments: "Area studies is widely regarded as the weak link of FSI training. Despite the fact that people with impressive résumés fill the area studies coordinator positions, students are in near-complete agreement that the program is nearly useless."

According, for instance, to a mid-level officer serving in Canada: "FSI could provide me with absolutely no area-studies preparation for my assignment in French-speaking Canada — or, for that matter, even English-speaking Canada — that I can recall, with the exception of one session with a recognized American expert on Canadian political affairs. Even the library at FSI had only about six books on Canada, all old and out of date. The FSI area studies program is too small, and yet tries — and fails — to cover the whole world."

There also have been allegations of political bias in the selection of guest speakers and written materials for some of the courses. For example, a retired USIA officer who periodically lectures at FSI asserts that speakers and written materials highly critical of Israel are prevalent in the Middle East Area Studies program.

Several FSOs recommend outsourcing the program, either to private firms that prepare American businesspeople for overseas assignments or to universities that specialize in area studies programs. "Professors at local universities could establish an independent reading program with a syllabus and weekly phone chats, and finish off with an intensive three- to five-day seminar on campus, either for individuals or groups," one suggests. But others advise caution at the idea of contracting out area studies, and point out that the program can be highly effective when a coor-

dinator with a solid academic background brings in outside speakers selectively from academia, government and the corporate sector.

This issue has the active attention of management. "FSI hasn't changed its basic approach to area studies in 50 years, beyond some tweaking at the edges," FSI Director Peterson acknowledges. "So we're conducting a major review to see how we can improve the program to make it more relevant and useful for students in the 21st century."

### **Distance Learning: A Classroom without Walls**

FSI is committed to making learning as accessible as possible, both to overseas personnel (including Foreign Service Nationals) and those based in Washington. As its course catalog proclaims, "Distance learning has allowed us to expand our reach — a classroom without walls." FSI offers custom-developed distance learning courses, primarily in languages and administrative management, in a variety of formats. The distance learning options are: text-based, with instruction provided by mail; online, via Intranet or Internet; CD-ROM; or blended, a combination of delivery methods. (For more details, see p. 62: "E-Learning for Diplomats" by Kishan Rana.)

### **The Overseas Briefing Center**

The OBC provides all U.S. government employees and their families en route to, or considering, an overseas assignment the chance to browse through abundant materials on overseas posts and expatriate life. The materials include country briefing boxes containing post-specific information, cultural guides and cross-cultural reference books, as well as a returnee file of local contacts.

The center operates as a drop-in facility, open Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., as well as on select Saturdays and Wednesday evenings. It also provides "electronic post boxes," which can be accessed by sending an e-mail to: [FSIOBCInfoCenter@state.gov](mailto:FSIOBCInfoCenter@state.gov).

Incidentally, while Eligible Family Members are able to enroll in language training and other FSI courses on a space-available basis, the Overseas Briefing Center is the only FSI facility that Members of Household are allowed to use.

### **The Need for Flexibility**

FSI's move to Arlington Hall 12 years ago has proven to be one of the smartest investments the State Department ever made. But it is not resting on its lau-



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rels: this past March, it engaged an architectural and engineering firm to design a much-needed addition to the Shultz Center campus that is scheduled for completion at the end of 2007.

In that same spirit, the responses to our survey suggest that it may be time for FSI to consider revamping its conceptual approach in some respects, as well:

- Rather than waiting until the end of training (or the emergence of major individual problems) to solicit student feedback, FSI should seek more regular input from its customers throughout their training, and provide more regular feedback on student performance in long-term courses.

- FSI does many things well, but the time may have come to explore the feasibility of contracting out more functions — e.g., curriculum development, testing and teacher training work — to academic institutions, other federal agencies or the private sector. This is particularly true of instruction in foreign languages and area studies.

- There are valid reasons for FSI's traditional practice

of hiring only native speakers to teach languages. But given the unprecedented demand for language instruction, both in terms of quality and quantity, there are also good reasons to reach out to the many non-native speakers whose pedagogical skills are equal or even superior. Just as the language faculty already includes teachers from many different countries, a mix of native and non-native speakers may serve students best.

- Language and professional development courses should try to connect their curricula more closely to the demands of actual work at overseas missions, particularly in consular sections.

One of FSI's great strengths over the past 60 years has been its willingness to modify its courses and develop new offerings to meet the changing needs of the Foreign Service and its students. That flexibility has never been more needed than now, for as the director general's new Career Development Program emphasizes, the importance of Foreign Service training has never been greater. ■

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# FSI: COMMENTS FROM THE FIELD



MEMBERS SHARE KUDOS AND  
CRITIQUES OF FSI TRAINING.

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BY SUSAN MAITRA

*s part of our research into the state of FS training today, the Journal sent out an AFSANET to members requesting their views. We received a much greater response than anticipated, but many observations were for background only. The following is a sampling of statements authorized for publication.*

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

## **A Very Satisfied Customer**

I have been in FSI three different times: from December 1984 to August 1985 for Spanish and Area Studies (about 36 weeks total); from February 1991 to August 1991 for French and Area Studies (about 28 weeks total); and, from July 2001 to September 2001 for Spanish and Area Studies (about 12 weeks in total).

I found the FSI instructors to be very good on all three occasions. In particular, they designed a special Spanish refresher program for me on the third occasion I was there. My courses focused a lot on development and food aid terms I would need to know as a food for peace officer in Bolivia.

I was a very satisfied customer and felt FSI had well prepared me for the posting.

*Walter Shepherd  
USAID/Bolivia*

## **Training vs. Children**

I have been in training two times since joining the Foreign Service in January 2002 — first from January to October 2002, when I took A-100, Spanish, ConGen, EEO training and the Security Overseas Seminar. The second time was for only four days, in September 2004, to take the advanced consular name-checking course.

I found the 2004 experience to be extremely stressful because I had an eight-month-old baby and, although I contacted the child-care center at FSI in May 2004, they were already booked through March 2005. (Diplotots at Main State was also full.) I then had to scramble to find someone to care for my infant.

It is very difficult to find short-term child care in the D.C. area, something the State Department does not readily address. (I have friends who have had similar

problems.) And, as I was a breast-feeding mother, I could not leave my son with a family member in another city. I was very disappointed that the FSI child-care center could not (more like would not) accommodate my son for four days. As it happened, the mother-in-law of one of my A-100 classmates very kindly agreed to look after Ilan, thank goodness!

Furthermore, I found out only in August 2004 that the course had been extended to five days (when I checked the Intranet I saw the fifth day added to the course information), even though there was no mention of it on my orders and I did not receive notice directly from FSI when the change was made. As I was already leaving my son with a stranger for four days, I was too stressed to add another day. Therefore, I opted out of the fifth day of training, even though I was warned by the coordinator that this would negatively affect my chances of promotion in the future.

I did not request additional FSI training, either, because of this problem.

If the State Department requests that employees take short-term training, they should be able to accommodate child-care needs either at Main State or at FSI during the training — without exception. State should expand their child-care program and hold open places for children of employees on short-term training. There is really no other option in the D.C. area for short-term child care, so employees should be able to depend on the State Department in this kind of situation. State should not make employees choose between their children and training.

*Elisa Greene*

*Consulate General Tijuana*



### **Like Night and Day**

I took FSI training from April to June 2003. This included the “Crash & Bang” security course for high-threat posts, a two-week area studies course, a mid-level leadership course, the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* class and a couple of one-day computer courses. In early 2004, I returned to FSI for a 10-week public diplomacy training course and six weeks of “brush-up”

***If the State Department requests that employees take short-term training, they should be able to accommodate child-care needs — without exception.***

language training.

When I compare those experiences with the pre-Powell training, it was like day and night. From 1995 to 2000, I think I had four days of training — the mandatory EEO course and a two-day multi-lateral diplomacy class. I would have loved to take some other courses during that time, but it was completely unthinkable to propose such a thing to your supervisor.

Anything that took you out of the office was viewed very negatively — you were a slacker. And the courses were badly taught, boring and of limited usefulness in any case. In 2000 I went overseas to a new assignment in a new geographic region without area studies. I spent several hundred dollars of my own money buying books and reading up on my own time.

In 2003 and 2004, the contrast with the past was striking. The courses were well-designed, with a good variety of teaching methods for various sessions — lectures, Q&As, field trips, videos, role playing, brainstorming, etc. The range of topics covered was excellent. The FSO course coordinator and contract instructors were very good. I felt I learned a lot in each class, often things I should have known years ago. I found the department also much more open to training that was not “directly related” to the assignment you were going to, but would make you a more valuable employee, manager, etc.

The old public diplomacy training used to be five or seven days, because USIA used an on-the-job-training model. A few years ago it was revamped to three weeks; then, in 2003 I think, was increased to 10 weeks, improving with each expansion. All the students were new officers or mid-level officers doing out-of-cone tours. The training was extremely helpful in giving us a thorough grounding and preparation to enable us to do our jobs well.

Despite all the improvements, some aspects of training policy are still retrograde. I was in assignment limbo for two months, waiting for the bureaucratic wheels to align and someone to dot all the i's and cross the t's. The job I was waiting for was language-designated, and I needed some brush-up. However, department policy is not to assign anyone to language training until the assignment has been made. Anyone with



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common sense could have seen that a language refresher would have been the best use of my time, but no go. I ended up paying for private classes out of my own pocket — a couple of thousand dollars — rather than waste the time.

My other suggestion to improve FSI training is to adopt a more realistic view of how much time a class takes. The instructors cram as much as possible into as few days as possible. We are given so much (really good) reading material, but no time to read it, much less discuss it. It is unrealistic to expect us to read during the evenings, when almost everyone is frantically trying to finish the million admin errands they need to do before departing for post. Plus, I work enough unpaid overtime at post; I am not willing to spend my few precious free hours doing “homework.” And any free hour during class time is spent running over to the department instead of reading.

*Elaine Samson  
Embassy San Jose*

### **My Experience in Hebrew at FSI**

I have always considered language training one of the major perks of joining the Foreign Service. When, on Flag Day in the summer of 1999, I learned I would have nine months of Hebrew, I was thrilled. I'd studied several languages in the past and had always enjoyed the process. I learned French and Italian while in college, and taught French in graduate school. Afterward, I worked for over a decade as a French literary translator, as well as a translator and editor at the United Nations.

However, even before the first day of class, I could sense there was something troubling about FSI's teaching of Hebrew. During a preliminary hour-long meeting with our teachers, we raced through the Hebrew alphabet. It turned out to be the last time we reviewed it. From the first week of class we were attempting to create conversation and read articles — learning specifically for the exam, basically, which was nine months away.

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As the weeks went by, my classmates and I realized there was to be no book, no grammar, no verb lists, no categorizing of verb types, no vocabulary lists, no curriculum, no review sessions. I craved focus, structure and order, and was not alone in my frustration. Several of my classmates were experienced and gifted language learners — one spoke five languages, another had sailed through Russian with flying colors. We all realized we had a problem. One by one we went to speak to the then-dean of language studies, and one by one we were coolly dismissed: every student had a different learning style, so maybe this one didn't suit us, but there was no problem with the program.

When we arrived at post (having received the requisite 2/2s, 3/3s or better, but still not comfortable in the

*The students report arriving at post comfortable in the language and, as a result, able to function more effectively at their jobs.*

language), we found that generations of Hebrew-learners had suffered similarly; complaints had been lodged, but no one had made a dent in correcting what ailed the program. Then Under Secretary for Management Grant Green visited Embassy Tel Aviv; his interest in our story prompted several of us to organize a petition. Assisted by our admin counselor, and backed up by a cable from our ambassador, our complaint finally reached the right people. It took this bombshell, along with AFSA's 2002 recognition of the effort with the Harriman Award for constructive dissent by a junior officer, to produce change.

I spoke to some recent graduates of the current Hebrew training, who describe a program transformed. They spoke of coordinated textbooks, a reader, a cur-

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riculum, feedback, and in the final weeks of study, the opportunity for some to learn at an “ulpan”— the intensive Hebrew courses set up throughout Israel for new immigrants. While bickering among the teachers continues, eating up significant amounts of class time, the students report arriving at post comfortable in the language and, as a result, able to function more effectively at their jobs.

I am sad that it took so much effort to produce a response and an especially disheartened that student complaints were dismissed for so long. But I am pleased that the dissent eventually brought change. This is what taxpayers and the Foreign Service deserve from FSI.

*Carol Volk*  
*Economic Bureau*  
*Washington, D.C.*



### **My Two Cents on Area Studies**

I am a JO, a member of the 120th A-100 class, and I have a comment to make about the two-week area studies (Near East/North Africa) that I attended. Unfortunately, there was next to nothing on Turkey or Iran. Dr. Bechtold did a wonderful job teaching and coordinating the course, but I really felt I should have been in another class because of that omission.

I believe that course encompasses far too many countries and should be divided up. I guess had I been in the language program, I would have gotten more on Turkey, so I know that the information is there — it just needs to be in the two-week course. That’s my two cents.

*Linda Fenton*  
*Embassy Ankara*



### **Nursing a Career & Family: Winds of Change**

The other day a simple sign on a bathroom stall brought me up short. Nursing station, the sign read. This was no plush bathroom at Neiman Marcus, mind you, but a bathroom at the Foreign Service Institute, the training entity for the conservative U.S. Department of State.

Suddenly, it was 1981 again. The occasion: the dreaded oral exams for admission into the Foreign Service. I had left my nine-month-old son at home, trusting he could do without his mother’s milk for 24

hours. It turned out that I was perhaps more distracted without my baby than had I brought him. Every time I had a 15-minute break in that grueling full day’s examination, I was in the bathroom trying to express milk from my inexplicably engorged breasts, rather than mentally composing myself for the next segment.

Two years later, I had finally made it into the Foreign Service, and was commuting between Rosslyn, Va., site of the orientation training for new FSOs, and Madison, N.J., where then-husband Duane, 3-year-old Carl, and barely-1-year-old Peter were keeping the home fires burning. On this particular day, examiners had just finished testing my rusty Russian language skills, and I had 15 minutes to prepare for the exam for my even rustier French. Only I wasn’t getting my linguistic ducks in a row: I was half laughing and half crying in a bathroom stall over a serious case of *déjà vu* and the pain of engorged breasts.

Fast forward to 1990. I was an old hand at motherhood and at the Foreign Service. Son John, independent at age 1, was now nursing almost solely for comfort. I figured my family could rough it without me while my work took me to Moscow for a week. Unbelievably, it happened again, and worse than ever.

My case history could once have served as a convincing argument against women in the Foreign Service — for their own good, of course. It wasn’t until 1972 that female FSOs were allowed to remain in the Service after marriage. The law changed more easily than the culture, and I doubt many of my colleagues — male or female — would have felt any sympathy at the difficulties I experienced nurturing career and family simultaneously. Seeing that sign in the bathroom at FSI, however, almost two decades later, I felt the winds of change, or a tiny breeze of it. The culture has matured. The word nursing is in the State Department lexicon. It is acknowledged in at least some corners of that institution that when the lights go off in the office, people do indeed still have a life.

*Elizabeth L. Cobb*  
*Embassy Kiev*



### **Doing Their Best in a Tough Environment**

I attended FSI from January to June 2004. Coming from an academic background, I wasn’t surprised at the



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size of the classes, but I found the cramped public areas difficult. The areas (really closets) provided for Internet research, reading, studying, etc., were crowded and noisy. As all the students are adults, it seemed odd, indeed, that the facilities for conversing, studying, thinking and reading were virtually non-existent. Once the weather improved, people congregated on the lawn, but without sufficient benches or chairs, that, too, was problematic during wet days.

The cafeteria staff, in my view, were unnecessarily surly and, after a couple of tries, I gave up on the high-fat, high-carb offerings. During the winter, it was the only place available for studying or group-study sessions, yet televisions constantly blared.

***The mood throughout the school radiated tension, nervousness on the part of students, and haste. So many people cramped together gave me a poor introduction to the Foreign Service.***

The mood throughout the school radiated tension, nervousness on the part of students, and haste. So many people cramped together gave me a poor introduction to the Foreign Service. Further, looking at the staircases and narrow exit doorways, I worried. With so many people in such a stressful state of mind, what might happen if there were to be an emergency? People do not learn effectively under stress.

Fortunately, the area studies class (Stephen Chaplin was coordinator) offered a bright light in a week of near-constant tension. I learned more about Mexico during those classes than in six months of living in country. The guest lecturers illuminated aspects of the country's political, economic

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and cultural life that mere reading wouldn't cover.

In sum, the students, teachers and administrators do the best they can in an extremely crowded, stressful environment. Still, I wish the atmosphere in the school were more humane and relaxed, and hope that plans for larger classrooms might be in the offing.

*Louisa W. Peat O'Neil  
Embassy Mexico City*



### **Overcoming Butterflies**

I have taken many courses at FSI over a 30-year Foreign Service career but the best one was a course in public speaking that I took many years ago. At the first session, each participant had to get up and introduce himself. At the second session, we had to introduce another member of the class. And so it went, with each session requiring a more demanding "speech," until the final session when we had to speak on something controversial. I spoke on why we should recognize Communist China, which was heresy at the time, and the instructor complimented me on my courage in choosing such a controversial subject. Before taking that course I would get butterflies in my belly whenever I had to get up and speak, but now I rise and shine, and without the butterflies.

What I missed at FSI was a course on negotiating, something that all FSOs have to do at some time in their work. It should be a part of every officer's training.

*Yale Richmond  
FSO, retired  
Washington, D.C.*



### **The Case for Outside Examiners**

As a former language educator, language student at FSI, observer of other FSI language programs, and FSI examinee in four languages, I have been struck by one overriding fact: the unevenness of FSI's language offerings.

Some unevenness is to be expected, of course, in an institute that provides instruction in such a wide range

*The single most distressing example of unevenness, however, occurs in the one area that is supposed to level the playing field across all languages: the scoring system.*

of languages, with their inherent differences in difficulty, and that must recruit instructors from such a wide variety of backgrounds. The single most distressing example of this variability, however, occurs in the one area that is supposed to level the playing field across all languages: the scoring system.

From personal experience, my own scores in various languages, which in some cases are very similar, do not correspond either to my own real facility or even how I tested on a given day. I have heard many similar stories. Sometimes the scores are too high, sometimes too low; sometimes students from FSI's own programs seem to be disadvantaged, and sometimes (seemingly more often) advantaged.

I would advocate one simple reform that, while not magically resolving all the issues out there, would go a long way toward both establishing a more reliable scoring system and introducing incentives for long-term improvements in instruction: scoring by outside examiners.

The current system of using FSI instructors to evaluate FSI students contains too many built-in conflicts of interest. The protocols for the testing themselves control these factors to some extent, but will never eliminate them. Using outside examiners would immediately introduce a distance between examiner and examinee, and thereby a degree of objectivity, that would improve both the reliability of scores and people's perception of that reliability. One of the biggest complaints heard from language-designated posts is that an FSI score does not always predict what an individual will actually be able to do on the ground.

Furthermore, having a more objective examination program will force both instructors and students to focus on actual language acquisition. Instructors will want their students to succeed, because other native speakers will be judging the outcome of their teaching; and students will want to succeed, because they know that they will not be able to rely on known quantities to give them the benefit of the doubt at the test.

These incentives will encourage language programs to adopt strategies that work for both teachers and students.

## F O C U S

If the State Department is going to pay us to learn languages, then we should be expected to use those languages — but only if those expectations are realistic. And realistic expectations must be based on reliable ratings. Although no scoring system will ever be perfect, we should at least remove any inherent conflicts of interest. And that means using outside examiners.

*David L. Gehrenbeck, Ph.D.  
Consulate General Melbourne*

### **Value and Respect for Training: There's Still a Way to Go**

This does not relate specifically to FSI, but rather to long-term training in general. A tectonic shift was alleged

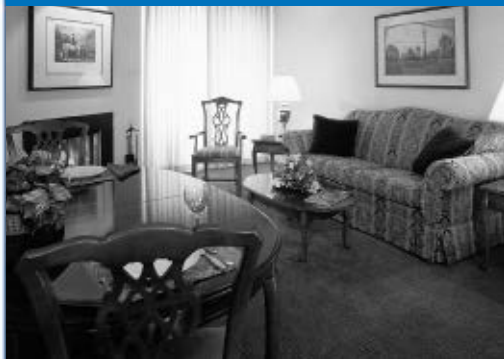
***A tectonic shift was alleged to have occurred during the Powell term as Secretary of State in terms of the amount of training available and the value and respect it was accorded.***

to have occurred during the Powell term as Secretary of State in terms of the amount of training available and the value and respect it was accorded. I cannot speak to the amount, but it is my sense that the “value and respect” still has a long way to go. Why do I say that?

I was ranked for promotion from FS-2 to -1 when the panels met in the summer of 2001. As it happened, I was the last on the list of ranked candidates and the numbers promoted were fewer than those selected for promotion — ergo, I was not promoted. This was before the new rule (which I heartily commend, by the way) in which all those selected for promotion, but not actually promoted, automatically get a Meritorious Step Increase. Since I did not, there was no way for the panels in 2002 to know that in 2001 I had been selected for promotion.

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## F O C U S

Flash forward to summer 2002. I was not on the list of those selected for promotion — i.e., I was mid-ranked. What had I done in the intervening year? I had been one of only two FSOs selected to spend a year as a John L. Weinberg Fellow at Princeton University, where I got my master's degree in public policy. In the normal eight for-credit courses I had received the following grades: 6 As and 2 A-minuses. I had also, quite exceptionally, taken an additional two courses as audits, in order to take as much advantage of the experience as possible. I had hosted brown-bag events for Princeton students to discuss and promote the State Department as a career option. I had taught a seminar in a local middle school. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11 I had served as a panelist at a packed-house discussion of terrorism — along with

***I have absolutely no regrets about attending the university, but it was decidedly not career-enhancing.***

a colleague from the CIA and two Princeton professors. I had received a stellar evaluation for my personnel file from the dean of the school. In short (he said modestly), I had performed exceptionally well. Yet I was no longer on the list for promotion. It is on this basis that I have serious doubts about the degree to which our system values and

respects training.

I would add that it was a wonderful experience and I have absolutely no regrets about attending the university, but it was decidedly not career-enhancing.

(Epilogue: The promotion panels do value working in the field. The following year, as principal officer in Calcutta, I was promoted to FS-1.)

*George N. Sibley*

*Consulate General Calcutta* ■

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# AT FSI'S HELM: AN INTERVIEW WITH KATHY PETERSON

FSI DIRECTOR KATHERINE PETERSON DISCUSSES  
THE CHALLENGES OF ACCOMMODATING RECORD  
ENROLLMENT OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

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BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

**A**mbassador Katherine H. Peterson became director of the Foreign Service Institute on June 18, 2001, just as the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative sharply increased the demand for FSI's services. As she winds up four years in the position, it seemed an opportune time to discuss developments during her tenure, so *Journal* editor Steve Honley interviewed her on April 20.

Katherine Peterson, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, joined the Department of State in 1976, following nearly three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). She began her Foreign Service career in the Bureau of African Affairs as a regional affairs officer, staff assistant to the assistant secretary, desk officer and information/press officer. She has also headed the non-immigrant visa section in Kingston and the American Citizen Services section in Tijuana.

In Washington, she has served as deputy coordinator of the Orientation Division that trains new Foreign Service officers at the Foreign Service Institute, as Latin American Division chief in Overseas Citizen Services, as chief of the Junior Officer Division in the Office of Career Development and Assignments, and as managing director

of Overseas Citizen Services in the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

From August 1993 to August 1996, she served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Windhoek. She was then selected for senior training and attended the National War College at Fort McNair. From August 1998 to June 2001, Ms. Peterson was U.S. ambassador to Lesotho.

**FSJ:** *You've been the director of the Foreign Service Institute since 2001. What would you cite as the main accomplishments of the past four years?*

**KP:** Our main accomplishment of the past four years has been shifting the culture of much of the department from being training-averse to considering it part of basic career development. I think coping with the sheer numbers of students from the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and mandatory leadership and management training was our biggest challenge, especially in terms of space allocation, both of designated classrooms and open spaces. When FSI moved into this facility 12 years ago, in some ways it felt like we were rattling around. As you know, that was an era when we were downsizing and not bringing in very many people, so there was even talk of renting some of the space out. That's definitely not the case any longer!

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We're in the advanced design stage for a significant expansion of the facilities at the Shultz Center.

**FSJ:** *Walking through the building today, I saw a lot of terminals in the hallways.*

**KP:** Yes, we've added quite a number, although not nearly enough, I must say. That's one wholly legitimate complaint, but we're working on it.

The cafeteria, as designed, isn't quite big enough for everyone when we have full enrollment. And because we're not within walking distance of any restaurants, there aren't a lot of alternatives. Students can brown-bag, of course — there are kitchenettes dispersed through all the buildings — but that isn't necessarily practical for students on TDY.

We've really encouraged creativity on the part of the individual schools in addressing these capacity issues. For instance, the dean of the language school went to his folks and said, "OK, we have 200 classrooms available, which isn't enough to meet the demand we expect. How are we going to do it?" We don't tell them how to do it, but we say: This is the outcome we're seeking, this is how many students we need to accommodate in each course, and we let the staff take it from there. And they've come up with some really great ideas to maximize the use of each classroom. For example, many language courses are now offered in morning and afternoon shifts between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Finally, we're using State annexes for some courses. We've found some space in SA-44, and are currently renovating SA-15, part of the "old FSI" site in Rosslyn — the building in which you had A-100, Steve. When I first learned about that, by the way, I had some real flashbacks, but it's actually going to be very nice. We also have some space at Main State.

**FSJ:** *Former Secretary of State Colin Powell placed a great deal of emphasis on professional training, in general, and on leadership/management skills, in particular. How, concretely, has that emphasis been reflected in FSI's*

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*Steven Alan Honley is the editor of the Journal.*

*course offerings, particularly in the Leadership and Management School?*

**KP:** Let me begin by noting that over the past several years, we've revamped our entire approach to professional training, beginning with the orientation courses and continuing through the rest of the programs.

The Leadership and Management School was created in 1999. It was auspicious, I think, that [my predecessor] Ambassador Ruth Davis, had the foresight to do that even before Secretary Powell arrived and gave us a mandate, if you will, to focus on that real need. We've instituted mandatory leadership and management training for all State Department employees, during orientation, at the mid-level and at the senior

threshold. I should emphasize, by the way, that like other FSI training, these courses are not just intended for Foreign Service generalists, but also FS specialists and Civil Service employees, both from State and other agencies.

The one time of the year when we do restrict the mandatory classes primarily to Foreign Service employees is during the summer transfer season, since that's the only chance many of them have to take training. But for most of the year, enrollment is about half Foreign Service and half Civil Service. We find that having both in classes enhances the value for all the students, as they share different experiences and perspectives.

Director General [W. Robert] Pearson really wants to have strong Civil Service representation in all our courses, and he's exhorted all the assistant secretaries to offer their Civil Service employees opportunities to enroll. We're on track to meet our goal of getting nearly 8,000 people through the leadership courses by 2007, which is 12 percent above the original target of 7,000.

**FSJ:** *Is taking the mid-level leadership course required to be considered for promotion?*

**KP:** For the Foreign Service, yes. For Civil Service, taking the mid-level leadership and management training is considered mandatory as the Secretary and the Director General insist that they take it, but "promotion" is different in the Civil Service system, as you know.



*Kathy Peterson*



## F O C U S

I also want to say that the Leadership and Management School has done an absolutely fantastic job of meeting and exceeding the requirements. They have added additional courses to meet an increased demand for the mandatory courses, and are ahead of the number of employees we have agreed to train before the end of calendar year 2006.

**FSJ:** *Are there any plans to revive the Senior Seminar? If not, what will take its place?*

**KP:** There are no plans to revive the Senior Seminar. It made sense when it was the only training offered to senior officers, but it was an expensive program to run and only 15 State Department employees could participate each year. We determined that many more seniors need-

***“When FSI moved into this facility 12 years ago, in some ways it felt like we were rattling around. ...***

***That’s definitely not the case any longer!”***

— **Ambassador Katherine Peterson**

ed leadership training than could be accommodated by the Senior Seminar. Also, much of the substance of the course would be much more useful if acquired earlier in an employee’s career.

But we didn’t abolish the Senior Seminar until we’d set up the successor program, which began last year and is still expanding. What we’ve done is to take many elements of the Senior Seminar and incorporate them into a new program called the Senior Policy Seminars. This is

offering similar training to many more Senior Foreign Service officers in smaller bites, in smaller modules — usually one or two days devoted to a specific topic. For instance, I recently took a two-day course on testifying before Congress that got into the real nitty-gritty: what

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# ...IN ACTION



**William R. Rivkin Dissent Award: Geoffrey R. Pyatt  
Overcoming a Culture of Suspicion on India**

*Geoff Pyatt was honored with the Rivkin Award for his skillful work pushing against “the incrementalism and status-quo approach” of the U.S. policy toward India that had hindered progress on cooperation on controversial issues of nuclear proliferation and strategic collaboration. Pyatt is pictured here (center, in blue shirt) on a Himalayan trek with the boys of New Delhi Boy Scout Troop 60.*



**Avis Bohlen Award: Lisa Vershbow  
A Cultural Ambassador in Russia**

*Lisa Vershbow used her professional background as a jewelry designer and teacher to promote American contemporary art and craft in Russia and to reach out to the Russian community. Pictured here (with flowers) at the opening of the Amber Museum Exhibition in Kaliningrad, Russia, in July 2004.*



**Tex Harris Dissent Award: F. Scott Gallo  
A Fight to Protect People**

*Embassy Nairobi Regional Security Officer Scott Gallo refused to accept Washington’s instructions to move embassy personnel and families onto a new compound, because he believed it was unsafe to do so. Pictured here, Karin and Scott Gallo with members of the Masai tribe at Lake Natron in Tanzania, April 2004.*



**Delavan Award: Nancy Alain  
Bringing Order  
Out of Chaos in Baghdad**

*Nancy Alain was the first management section office management specialist assigned to Embassy Baghdad. An Air Force commander said it best:*

*“There are many in uniform who have never before worked with an embassy, and for them, Nancy is the State Department. You simply could not ask for a better representative.” She is pictured here with Iraqi Interim President Shaykh Ghazi M. Ajil al-Yawar.*



**AFSA Special Achievement Award:  
David Dlouhy  
Fixing a Broken System**

*David Dlouhy was brought in to fix the State Department’s Retirement Office. He is shown here introducing the new RNet Web site during Foreign Affairs Day May 6.*

## F O C U S

was expected of us, how to interact with members and staffers, how to prepare, and so forth. We even practiced writing testimony and delivering it, which was excellent. We've also created a pilot two-day course on how to be an effective deputy assistant secretary ("The DAS as Leader"), as well as courses on crisis leadership and dealing with the media.

And, of course, there's the crown jewel of the senior program, a mandatory two-and-a-half-week Senior Executive Threshold Seminar for newly-promoted OCs [Officer-Counselors] and Senior Executive Service employees. The purpose of the SETS course is to imprint on seniors the fact that this is not just any promotion, and the skills that got them to the senior threshold will not necessarily make them successful leaders and managers once they cross it. So far we've been able to get everyone who's been promoted into the Senior Executive

***"We've really encouraged creativity on the part of the individual schools in addressing these capacity issues."***

Service or Senior Foreign Service through the training.

**FSJ:** *How does the School of Language Studies recruit, hire and evaluate instructors? One common criticism of FSI's language courses is that the emphasis is on hiring native speakers rather than finding people who can teach.*

**KP:** We really try to hire folks who are not only native speakers but who have some teaching experience as well. We also do our own orientation for all new (and existing) teachers, including pedagogical training to make sure that they understand effective teaching methods and what we're trying to get across. And every other Wednesday afternoon, there is a wide-ranging program of in-service staff training and development.

About half our language instructors are contractors, so that we can adjust staffing levels to match fluctuating

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demands for particular languages. We do try to get feedback from the students about the teaching qualifications of their instructors.

**FSJ:** *So you're not considering moving to a mix of native and non-native speakers as faculty?*

**KP:** No.

**FSJ:** *Another complaint sometimes heard about FSI language instruction is that the program is geared toward "teaching to the test," i.e., getting students out to post on time with the designated proficiency whether or not they have actually attained it. Are there safeguards to ensure that what students learn at FSI is what they need in the field? And is there a system in place for evaluating current language programs, especially the length of courses?*

**KP:** The School of Language Studies dean and his senior staff thoroughly review each language program every year. We also conduct an annual survey of recent language graduates who are overseas regarding the relevance and applicability of their language training once they get on the job.

Last year, the language school initiated a survey of post management and supervisors to get their assessment of whether they were getting staff with the language skills needed to do the job expected of them. We then take those results and make the necessary adjustments to the language training. One example is the increased emphasis we are putting on active listening comprehension.

There are certainly some issues having to do with the length of many of our courses, not just in language instruction. With the luxury, if you will, of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, and especially since 9/11, we have been working with HR to give junior officers longer language training and more professional training early on.

We're finding that students really want as much training as they can get in the hard languages, especially the incentive languages. The instructors obviously know what score the student is supposed to achieve at the end of the course, and they want to help them reach that level. So, yes, to some extent we are "teaching to the test," because

***"We have been working with HR to give junior officers longer language training and more professional training early on."***

the score tells us whether the student has reached the requisite proficiency in the skills being tested. The bottom line is that the purpose of the training is to enable the employee to do a particular job in a particular country, and to acquire the proficiency needed for that. We try to teach and test for what the students need to know.

It is essential that employees acquire a professional vocabulary during their time at FSI. We are developing and using functional (consular, management, PD) modules in language training as well, and are making a particular effort to increase the amount of public diplomacy language training for all students — not just PD officers.

While we teach an educated professional form of the language, we realize that people need to be able to function in daily life and we try to provide those skills as well. Fortunately, many posts have language programs that bridge the gap between the professional level of language they learn at FSI and vocabulary they would use with shopkeepers, repair people, in restaurants, etc.

**FSJ:** *I understand that the Language School has instituted two shifts of classes in Arabic, an early morning and a mid-morning, to cope with the post-9/11 growth in demand. Are any other languages undergoing similar spikes in enrollment?*

**KP:** Yes, a few years ago we went to a shift schedule for a number of languages because we just don't have enough classrooms to go around. That's true not only of Arabic but Russian, Chinese and virtually all the others. As I mentioned, the actual schedule of how the classes are arranged during the day varies by language, so the Arabic schedule isn't necessarily the same as French or Thai.

**FSJ:** *Given the current scheduling of longer days for language study, why does the FSI-affiliated day-care center still close at 4:30?*

**KP:** First, we make every effort to schedule parents with children during the early shift of language training when the day-care center is open, if that is what they

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want. While 4:30 is the official closing time, individual students can make special arrangements with the center if necessary. I would note that in working with the day-care contractor, we're trying not only to accommodate students' needs but also to keep the rates reasonable. Keeping the center open another hour every day would increase the cost for all students.

**FSJ:** *Do most Eligible Family Members who want language training get it? What about Members of Household?*

**KP:** In my time here, I don't believe we've ever turned down an Eligible Family Member for language training. Unfortunately, the department's authority to provide language training to Eligible Family Members does not extend to MOHs.

**FSJ:** *So even though MOHs are eligible for employment at overseas missions, they still cannot take any FSI courses, even security training?*

**KP:** Right. Formal enrollment in FSI courses is limited to certain categories of individuals, such as employees of the department and other agencies. However, we do try to assist Members of Household and make information available; they are also welcome to use the Overseas Briefing Center, which offers many informal programs and provides access to useful information about life and security issues overseas.

**FSJ:** *I understand that FSI is currently seeking students' input on its area studies programs. What sorts of issues are being raised there? Would it be correct to characterize the changes contemplated as resulting from cuts in the amount of funding available for area studies?*

**KP:** No, the budget has nothing to do with it. Simply put, FSI hasn't changed its basic approach to area studies in 50 years, beyond some tweaking at the edges. So we're conducting a major review to see how we can improve the program to make it more relevant and useful for students in the 21st century.

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**FSJ:** So this is a methodology exercise, not a budget exercise.

**KP:** Right. Depending on the outcome of the review, we may recommend more resources for area studies.

**FSJ:** As you prepare to leave FSI, what do you see as the main challenges and opportunities facing your successor?

**KP:** The primary challenge for my successor will be to institutionalize and maintain the momentum we have developed over the last four years with regard to changing the department's culture. Specifically, it will be FSI's responsibility to translate Secretary Rice's "transformational diplomacy" into concrete training requirements; i.e. what new skills do the diplomats of the future need and how do we train for them? Director General Pearson's new Career Development Program has a heavy training component, particularly in terms of languages but also professional development courses, as well. We're already crunching numbers to see what additional resources will be required to respond to the increased demand for train-

ing, but clearly it will be a major challenge. We are also committed to supporting the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, and that will require a significant commitment to training. State employees need more knowledge and skills on a whole range of global issues, from trafficking in persons to HIV/AIDS to science and technology. Information technology is a rapidly changing environment that requires constant training and retraining of our employees, both IT professionals and end-users, to ensure that we are making the best use of these valuable tools. Strong leadership and management skills throughout the department are critical to meeting all these goals.

There is no question that training in the department is a growth industry. Secretary Rice is committed to it, and Congress is keen to have our employees well prepared professionally to deal with an increasingly complicated world. Continuing education and training are key elements in any profession, and diplomacy is no exception.

**FSJ:** Thank you very much, Amb. Peterson. ■

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# LANGUAGE LEARNING 101

**T**WHILE SOME PEOPLE FIND LANGUAGE LEARNING A JOY AND A FOREIGN SERVICE PERK, OTHERS WILL ALWAYS FIND IT A LONG, HARD SLOG.

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BY ROBIN HOLZHAUER

The sun begins to set, painting the desert sky a purple-pink of unmatched beauty. *This is the life*, you think, as you speed down the deserted roadway, ragtop down, on your way to the next big adventure. But suddenly you hear a ping and a pop, and the car slows and then stops. You check the trunk for the tools you thought you packed, but they're not there. Darkness is coming fast. The temperature drops and some sort of nocturnal creature lets loose a B horror movie howl.

You're alone. Frustrated. Worried. Maybe even scared. And you don't know what to do to get back your control.

Although a bit melodramatic, the feelings the lonely driver endures on the empty highway mirror the mind-set many people experience when traveling through language class — especially if it's their first time down this road. After years of success in school or a career, people face a challenge that seems insuperable. The tools of study that worked in the past do not help this time around. No one seems able to offer assistance.

Students feel unsure what to do, or how to do it, to get back to a cruising speed in learning. All of this not only takes a toll on the ego but can also have real career ramifications. As one former "hard language" student said, "I wasn't just worried about how this would affect my career. I needed this language to keep my job — I wasn't going to have a career if I didn't pull this off."

Learning something new, feeling as if you're not doing as well as your peers, and wondering how this will affect your job all contribute to transforming a student from a seasoned officer or spectacular spouse into a stress ball beyond recognition. What are the stress-ball symptoms? Small annoyances become large issues: you find yourself irritated by how your classmates breathe, the way the guard asks to see your ID, how your kids set the table for dinner. You pull away from groups because you don't want to discuss how you're feeling about class — something especially hard for those Myers-Briggs extroverts, who find comfort and solace in being around others. You lose interest in your

*Find out right away  
what kind of language  
learner you are.*

## F O C U S

next post and find it harder and harder to motivate yourself to study, thus creating a Catch-22 situation: as you study less, you do worse; as you do worse, you study less.

While some people find language learning a joy and a Foreign Service perk, others will always find it a long, hard slog. But there are ways of making it through and actually using and loving the language. Well, OK, liking the language.

---

*Robin Holzhauser has worked with the United States Information Agency and the Department of State since 1998 and completed tours in Russia and Kosovo and at the Naval War College. She currently coordinates public diplomacy training courses at the Foreign Service Institute. Upon being assigned to Russian-language training, she hoped to discover a latent talent for language learning. She didn't. However, following these tips made her second language-learning experience, in Albanian, less frustrating.*

### **Some Simple Rules**

First and foremost, realize that you are not alone. Although you hear stories of FSOs who get a 3/3 in French in just six weeks or sailed through Arabic without ever cracking a book, these people are rare. Most students work long and hard — they just don't talk about it much in our hypercompetitive State atmosphere.

Find out right away what kind of language learner you are and base all your study and as much classroom time as possible around that method. Does writing different word endings in different colors make the ideas stick? Then buy your teacher a set of markers. Does reading out loud make things sink in? Then start talking. And asking. If verbalizing things is your strong point, ask questions every day so you hear and internalize the answer. One student bought posterboard, wrote down everything she had trouble with, and taped the posters to her apartment walls. The act of writing out the rules and examples, combined with

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seeing them every day, everywhere she looked, solidified the concepts in her head. The learning consultant service at FSI offers a test to help you assess your learning style, and can also offer suggestions on what study techniques best match your style (see p. 52).

Get musical! How many times have you turned on the radio and listened to a song you last heard five or 10 years ago? You know all the lyrics, or at the very least the refrain. Anyone who grew up in the 1970s or 1980s can probably recite the preamble to the Constitution thanks to “School House Rock.” Music has a way of sticking with us, no matter what the words or concept. Find songs — and their lyrics — in the language you’re trying to learn, and listen again and again. Children’s songs sometimes work especially well: because they often tell a story or are designed to teach about a certain topic, the words are useful and simple and thus easier to learn. And get creative yourself. Make up your own song or poem to understand a concept or remember how to conjugate a verb. Find some rhymes

**Nine Simple Rules  
for Language Learning**

1. Realize you are not alone.
2. Discover your learning style.
3. Get musical.
4. Use mnemonics.
5. Find a study partner.
6. Make a tape.
7. Repeat it all. Repeat it all.
8. Take a breather.
9. Keep up your enthusiasm.

or make up a tune, and you’ll remember better.

Another helpful hint: use mnemonics. Do whatever you can to remember vocabulary words. In Russian,

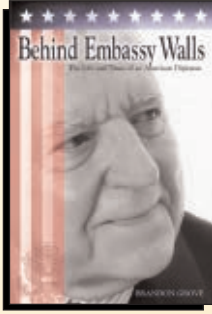
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the word for carrot is “markov.” If I forget every other Russian word I ever learned, I’ll remember markov, because when the teacher first introduced this word, she said to envision a carrot you’ve just pulled from the ground. It has those horizontal root-lines every few centimeters — as if they’re marking off the carrot. Mnemonics is your friend.

### **It Takes Two**

Speaking of friends, a study buddy can help give you motivation to do homework. Just like having an exercise partner helps you get out of bed and onto the treadmill, having a partner in language will obligate you to study. It forces you to say things out loud and allows you time to go over concepts you did not understand in class.

Not sure how to get your buddy sessions started? Use some of this time to make tapes of yourself speaking the language. After a few weeks or months, listen to the tapes. You’ll find that you have improved. You can now say the sentences more easily, with fewer or no mistakes, more fluently. It’s a good way to show yourself that you are making progress, and gives a much-needed ego boost when you feel especially deflated. In

***Feeling as if you’re not doing as well as your peers, and wondering how this will affect your job can transform a student into a stress ball beyond recognition.***

addition, if your self-esteem can handle it, give your instructors the tapes so they can hear what mistakes you made. They can then focus on the areas where you need more help.

Sometimes you’ll find that classes at FSI just aren’t enough. So go outside the walls. Find a computer CD or video series that speaks to you. Hire a tutor, but make sure you have a good connection with that person. If you don’t feel comfortable after two sessions, find someone new.

Volunteer with a group or organization that works with people who speak the language you’re trying to learn. There are many immigrants in the D.C. area. Find someone who’s willing to speak with you or volunteer a few hours a week at a place where people from that language group meet or receive government services. Hearing them speak and trying to communicate with them is like a mini-immersion trip.

Finally, repeat everything. Some educators often shun repetition as boring. But saying, writing or reading things over and over again can make them sink in. And repeat things you already know, or they may fade away. For example, you might learn how to ask “What

### **Optimize Your Learning Experience**

**T**he Learning Consultation Service considers itself a partner in your language training. Counselors in the Learning Consultation Service and learning consultants in the language sections work one-on-one with you to discover your learning style, work out new strategies for learning the language, and help you form and achieve goals for your time at the Foreign Service Institute.

Students fill out learning-style questionnaires to help identify their learning style, and also make appointments and meet with consultants. Meeting with a consultant can help you gain insight into factors that can influence your long-term success, such as motivation, memory, group

dynamics, planning and prioritizing and time management. Although the service cannot promise that the classroom will be tailored precisely to your needs (other classmates have different learning styles that also need to be addressed), it can help make learning a language less stressful and more rewarding.

Finding out more about the service or making an appointment is an e-mail or phone call away. The LCS can be reached through the global address system under: FSI, SLS Consultation (FSISLSConsultation@state.gov) or by calling (703) 302-7250. The offices are located at the Shultz Center in Building F, Suite 4511.

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time is it?" five different ways one day, and get them down pat, but if you don't use the phrases for two months, of course you'll forget. Don't add to your frustrations by having one of those "Aargh, I used to know that!" moments. Repeat the phrases every day until they come naturally.

You may even want to make up a brief story about yourself that you memorize. This way you can practice the fluency of the language as well as know you'll have something to say about yourself — in the host country language — at receptions and other gatherings. To get people familiar with the alphabet, many sign language instructors tell their students to finger spell things as they go about their daily life. Do the same things with your language. As you ride the bus or Metro, look at something and see if you know the foreign word for it. If

***On the personal side,  
you need to find ways to  
relax and keep up  
enthusiasm for your  
post of assignment.***

not, look it up. Say it. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat. And, what else? Oh, yeah. Repeat.

On the personal side, you need to find ways to relax and keep up enthusiasm for your post of assignment. The health magazines are right: exercise really is a good way to let go of stress. So is yoga, meditation or any hobby you enjoy. Take some time to work

out, play the guitar, garden, or assemble model airplanes. Go to an exhibit of artists from your country of assignment, rent a video about the country, or see if the embassy has any cultural programs you can attend. Being interested in the country will help you see some light when you feel you've entered a dark tunnel.

These tips won't make language learning easy, but they can make it easier, so you can get your engine turned over, and once again enjoy the open road. ■



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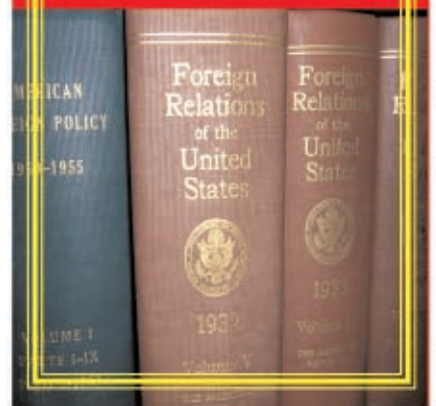


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# ON THE ROAD AGAIN! THE LIFE OF A CMT TRAINER

**F** THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE'S CMT DIVISION HAS A MANDATE TO TRAIN ALL OF OUR OVERSEAS POSTS IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT.

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BY AMELIA BELL KNIGHT

Following the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Congress gave the Department of State a new mandate — to train all of our overseas posts in crisis management. Soon after the bombings, the Crisis Management Training Division of FSI's Leadership and Management School was looking for instructors to fulfill this requirement.

The position description and qualifications for these trainers went far beyond an ability to teach. To be effective, crisis management trainers have to be familiar with the policies, practices and people of the Foreign Service. They have to understand the U.S. military, especially its role in worldwide emergency response such as evacuation of American citizens overseas. They must have an understanding of the complexities of life at our overseas posts and how various federal agencies, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps, work together overseas.

During short visits with packed training schedules, they have to establish good rapport with local staff, many of whom are not fluent in English. Trainers must have absolutely no fear of flying; be unflappable in the face of lost luggage, delayed or canceled trips, and bun-

gled hotel reservations; possess lots of energy; be extremely flexible; and, ideally, have a cast-iron stomach. They should be good creative writers and possess strong communications skills. They should have lots of training experience, especially for emergency and crisis situations. And they should hold (or be able to get quickly) a Top Secret security clearance.

The requirements were daunting, but curiosity overcame me. As an anthropologist, I already had a love of other countries, delight in world travel, and no fear of hardship. I had worked for USAID and in several embassies. I knew how our posts operate, and already had the security clearance and the cast-iron stomach. I knew this job was for me. So in September 2000, I joined the Crisis Management Training team.

The other crisis management trainers were generous mentors, getting me ready to head out on my own. I pored over the huge *Emergency Planning Handbook*; consulted with all of the Department of State's crisis response offices, from the Operations Center to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security; read emergency action plans from posts all over the world; and finally packed my bags for my first trip as a crisis management trainer.

### **Anatomy of Crisis Management Training**

Crisis management training at overseas posts is basically a two-day event in four parts: first, a 30-minute inbrief with the ambassador, deputy chief of mission and regional security officer; second, a three-hour overview training session, primarily for selected local staff to review fundamental Department of State crisis management tools, policies and principles; third, a four-hour tabletop crisis management exercise for the Emergency Action Committee; and, fourth, a 30-minute outbrief with the ambassador, DCM and RSO.

Variations on this training format can be arranged. For example, at one of my posts, the CME was coordinated with a surprise Alternate Command Center drill, where participants assembled at the ACC to test how prepared it was to support a crisis-response task force. At another post, a pre-arranged “duck and cover” alarm was sounded as a bomb scenario began.

The centerpiece of post training is the crisis management exercise. For each CME, the trainer writes a series of realistic scenarios organized in a 20-page exercise booklet. The scenarios are based on situations that could realistically occur at that particular post. As the CME is customized for each post, each four-hour exercise is different. The post’s Emergency Action Committee is convened and is often joined by key locally engaged staff. Using the scenarios, participants think their way through emergencies that grow more complex as the exercise unfolds.

The process reviews the broadest possible range of a post’s emergency action plan and tests it to make sure the plan would really work in a crisis. The exercise is conducted on a “no fault” basis, which encourages a more collegial experience.

---

*Amelia Bell Knight joined FSI’s Crisis Management Training Division in September 2000. She has more than 20 years’ training experience, many with the Department of State and USAID. She holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Chicago and was on the faculty of the University of Rochester. She is married to Foreign Service officer James Knight.*

***Surprisingly often,  
shortly after trainers  
conclude the training,  
posts are faced with  
situations very similar  
to the exercise scenarios.***

During the CME, the trainer acts as the controller, identifying and summarizing teaching points; making clarifications and suggestions; responding to possible misunderstandings of Department of State policies; and guiding the team through the exercise. The trainer is a resource and a catalyst throughout the exercise.

### **Measures of Success**

There are several immediate results of the training. As participants discuss the scenarios, they review their roles and responsibilities, prioritize responses, and go through reporting and coordination requirements. They practice effective teamwork with other members of the Emergency Action Committee — and local staff, if the post chooses to have them join. They gain experience in applying analytic techniques to crises at their post. Sections of the Emergency Action Plan are reviewed during the CME, and suggestions are made to improve them. Teamwork, leadership and management skills for crisis situations are strengthened.

Surprisingly often, shortly after trainers conclude the training, posts are faced with situations very similar to the exercise scenarios. Four days after I left one post, post management requested authorized departure for the very same problem we had reviewed in the exercise. Their review of authorized departure procedures during training allowed them to respond quickly and effectively to this event.

A few months after another post conducted a CME focused on a coup d’état, a military takeover occurred in the host country. The ambassador told me later that throughout the crisis he used the *Emergency Planning Handbook* checklists I had distributed. And at several posts, even before the recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean, trainers had helped EACs work through tsunami responses.

### **A Memorable Training Trip**

Each crisis management trainer usually trains four overseas posts every quarter. When planning these trips, trainers face the challenge of visiting several posts on a schedule that will meet each post’s needs and fit reason-

## F O C U S

able airline connections. One of my trips — to South Korea, Singapore, Cambodia and Vietnam — was particularly memorable.

After some time spent juggling airline schedules in consultation with the posts, I finally planned to start the training in Seoul, departing from Dulles International Airport on Sept. 11, 2001. A week or so before departure, a senior colleague was added to the trip, and suggested we depart on Sept. 10 so we could have time to meet with U.S. military representatives in Seoul prior to training at the embassy. It sounded like a good idea, so I changed our itinerary. (Returning home weeks later, I reviewed my papers and realized I had been originally scheduled to depart Dulles on American Airlines 77, the airplane that crashed into the Pentagon on 9/11!)

Between the time I left the U.S. and the first training

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beyond an ability  
to teach.*

session, the world changed. I was pleased that all my posts wanted to go ahead with the training, even though they were deeply involved in post-9/11 responses. If anything, the attacks underscored for them the importance of preparing for unexpected catastrophic emergencies.

Immediately after 9/11, more posts requested training for wider groups of people within the mission and from the local community. In some cases even ambassadors and DCMs sat through the entire course, taking notes. More posts reached out to overseas schools, consular wardens (volunteers who help maintain contact with Americans resident overseas), family members and host-government officials. And this trend has continued.

Unfortunately, the 9/11 attacks only confirmed what those of us involved in crisis management training

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already knew: It *can* happen anywhere! 9/11 strengthened CMT's resolve to stay abreast of international terrorism, especially potential use of chemical or biological agents, and above all to help posts answer a critical question: Are you prepared?

### **Unexpected Crisis Management Experiences**

When my husband was posted to Africa, I left Washington, but not CMT. I lived in Africa, and took over training for most of those posts. I knew the continent already, having lived in five African countries and worked as an anthropologist in the Sahara. But my new job was different: It involved traveling on some of the world's most unreliable airlines to unpredictable environments.

Sometimes I have thought the hardest thing for me as a crisis management trainer is to manage the crises involved in simply getting from place to place in Africa. One day I left Cotonou, on the West African coast, and headed to Ouagadougou. Though that city is inland, on the edge of the Sahara, the airplane started west along the coast after it left Cotonou. *We'll turn northward soon*, I thought.

After a long time, I asked the flight attendant, "Why are we still flying along the coast? When will we turn north? Aren't we going to Ouagadougou?"

"What?" she answered.

I pointed out the window to the ocean and, in my most polite French, said, "Madame, Ouagadougou is not on the coast. Where are we going?"

She said that she didn't know, either.

A horrible thought hit me: *We're being taken hostage!* I could see the headlines: "Crisis Management Trainer Taken Hostage During Crisis Management Training." Finally we landed in Lomé, where I learned that a sandstorm in Ouagadougou had forced our flight to divert to Togo. Our embassy in Lomé graciously took me in until the storm abated and the flight could go on to Burkina Faso, where the dusty RSO greeted his equally dusty visitor. We shook off the dust and headed into the embassy to start the exercise.

On another occasion, getting me to Freetown, Sierra Leone, was that embassy's first crisis management exer-

***The process reviews the broadest possible range of a post's Emergency Action Plan and tests it to make sure the plan would really work in a crisis.***

cise scenario. I already knew the difficulties involved in getting across the bay between Lungi International Airport and Freetown, but I arrived at the airport to find that I was truly stuck. The helicopter shuttle was not operating, the hovercraft was not working and the ferry was not moving. Well, I thought, this will be the first time I haven't been able to make it. I simply can't get to Freetown. No CMT at this post.

And then the cavalry appeared. Actually, it was the RSO in the embassy's boat. After hearing about my situation and the failed shuttle systems, he found a solution — he brought Embassy Freetown's emergency and evacuation boat to get me. When I saw the boat bobbing offshore, I rolled up my slacks and waded out to meet it. Some local residents put my luggage on their heads and off they went to the boat, too. Welcome to Freetown! Crisis management training was on schedule, thanks to the RSO's quick thinking and boat-piloting skills.

### **The Purpose**

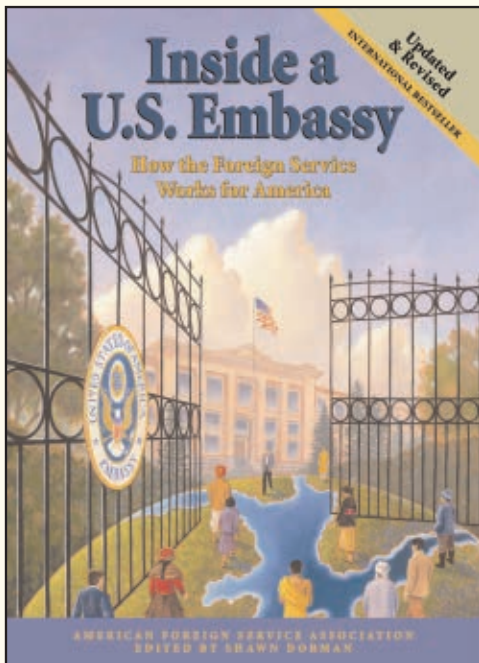
Working in crisis management training makes all of us at CMT more aware of dangers around the world, and some hit uncomfortably close to home. I arrived in one country to find a terrorist had tried to blow up my hotel earlier that same day. On another trip, as I prepared to board my flight I learned a coup d'état had just occurred at the next training stop. (I didn't go.)

As a crisis management trainer, I've worked in dozens of countries around the world, including most of Africa. I can't even imagine how many air miles I have flown. My fellow trainers in the CMT Division have had similar experiences and faced similar challenges all over the world, as we provide training to each of our posts every two years. Currently, there are eight of us on the crisis management team at FSI who regularly go "on the road." Other staff members from CMT, and sometimes from the State Department Operations Center, occasionally join us on our training schedule around the world.

As much as I enjoy my job, I never forget its critical purpose: helping Foreign Service colleagues build skills and knowledge to save lives when disaster strikes. ■

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# THE FSN EXECUTIVE CORPS: A WIN-WIN IDEA

IF YOU WORK OUTSIDE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S SIX REGIONAL BUREAUS, YOU MIGHT NOT BE AWARE THAT EACH OF THEM HAS ITS OWN FSN EXECUTIVE CORPS. THIS IS A GROUP OF FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONAL EMPLOYEES POSSESSING TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERTISE WITH THOUSANDS OF COLLEAGUES AROUND THE WORLD.

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BY ALDO NEGROTTI

If you work outside of the State Department's six regional bureaus, you might not be aware that each of them has its own FSN Executive Corps. This is a group of Foreign Service National employees possessing technical and administrative expertise in various fields, ranging from general services and financial management to information technology and human resources. They share their expertise not only with other FSNs, but also with U.S. Foreign Service generalists and specialists serving at other posts within each region.

The initiative for the FSN Executive Corps started in the Bureau of European Affairs in 2000. EUR's Executive FSN Corps now consists of 21 experienced local employees who have assisted thousands of their colleagues over the past five years.

Posts within each bureau nominate FSNs to join the corps. In EUR's case, the posts provide the Regional Support Center in Frankfurt with detailed résumés of candidates and additional data. RSC/Frankfurt makes the selection based on the personal experience and qualifications of nominated employees. No specific qualifications or training are required, but nominees typically have several years of experience working in a specific sector (i.e., HR, GSO, etc.) and have, therefore, attended

related training courses (e.g., position classification for HR). Once accepted into the Executive Corps, FSNs are given a one-week training course in Frankfurt and are then ready to start assisting colleagues at other embassies.

Any official request for assistance from the EUR FSN Executive Corps members must first go to RSC/Frankfurt, which checks to see if any member of the corps is available for the selected period and then obtains approval from the employee's supervisor(s) for him or her to go on TDY. The typical commitment for each corps member does not exceed three weeks per year, generally spent among two or three posts. In addition, corps members provide significant support via e-mail and phone.

To keep up their skills, FSNs in the program periodically take training focusing on new programs and on training techniques.

## What Posts Get out of the Corps

- *On-site assistance.* At a reasonable cost, personnel at serviced posts receive professional assistance specifically targeted at pending issues/problems. Most of the time, the problems faced at one post have probably been experienced by others, so a solution has already been found.



Even if the problem really is new or unique, an experienced professional would probably be able to delve into his/her “bag of tricks” and come up with a workable recommendation. One additional benefit of this on-site assistance is that “putting a face to a name” definitely helps establish a more personal, friendly relationship between the corps member(s) and colleagues at other posts — which eases future communications between the two parties.

- *Support by e-mail/phone.* It may take an experienced corps member just a few minutes to answer a question that may seem awkward or extremely complicated to others. Particularly once a personal relationship has been established, it becomes easier to provide direct, immediate assistance to other posts by e-mail, which allows the transmission of reference documents, regulations, samples, etc.

- *Hands-on, one-on-one training.* The importance of formal training is indisputable; nevertheless, hands-on and one-on-one training should always complement it. The Executive Corps program offers this type of training, which can be specifically tailored to current needs of the post/organization. My own experience with the Post Administrative Software Suite confirms this. PASS is the software developed by Washington to maintain and update all data and information required by post management to properly run the embassy. It basically includes all information pertinent to the HR, GSO and FMC sections’ operations.

- *Exchange of information.* This is probably one of the key aspects of the program. The possibility of exchanging or sharing various types of information and data also helps keep everybody updated. This is an essential feature considering the variety of policies, regulations and procedures that are continuously implemented or modified. Two examples from the human resources field are CAJE — the Computer Aided Job Evaluation system,

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used worldwide to classify local positions — and PSA-Plus — Personal Services Agreement-Plus, the new program used worldwide, with few exceptions, to hire local employees.

**What Corps Members  
Get Out of It**

- *Increased expertise.* Participation in this program benefits Executive Corps members by affording them the opportunity to see and compare different work environments and, thus, expand their overall knowledge. While similar in nature, some problems may have different facets when faced at different posts, and the exposure to these diverse realities provides corps members with the opportunity to learn more and become true experts in their fields.

- *Morale boosts.* Selection as an FSN Executive Corps member is, at least in my opinion, also a recognition of the employee’s professionalism. It is a way to empower local staff. Being asked to assist other posts/colleagues and being sent to the field as an official representative of a regional structure is an indication that your successful work performance at post is appreciated. This is particularly true when one considers that the responsibilities of a corps member include having direct contact with other posts’ management, and often serving as the key adviser on specific problems.

- *New ideas/suggestions.* Exchange of information is not just a one-way street. While it’s the Executive Corps’ role to assist clients and provide solutions, a visit to another post can provide inspiration on how to handle differently (and better) work or projects at the member’s home post. This is even more true when you consider the possibility of sharing your own experiences, questions and doubts with other corps members who might have been working on similar projects at different posts but welcome another perspective. (CAJE, again, is a very good example.)

- *Good feelings.* Important as Foreign Service work is, it is not always very emotionally satisfying. So, realizing that you are able to help others in the performance of their jobs, as well as training them and developing their abilities, is highly gratifying — a win-win situation for all concerned. ■

# E-LEARNING FOR DIPLOMATS

INTERNET-BASED TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
OFFER UNIQUE ADVANTAGES FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS.

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BY KISHAN S. RANA

In January 2004, Britain's Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Canada's Department of International Affairs organized a workshop in London, attended by representatives of 15 countries. The two sponsors presented a stark contrast: Canada is perhaps the world leader in applying Internet-based e-learning throughout its diplomatic network, closely followed by the United States. The British, at that time, were content to observe and profit from the experience of others. Only in mid-2004 did they appoint an official to initiate the first of their new distance learning activities, and they did not put in place an Internet-based learning management system until this year.

The other countries that attended either had small programs of their own in place, or intended to start something (the Indian Foreign Service Institute, for instance, held its first e-learning course in mid-2004). The only participant that did not represent a national diplomatic academy or training institute was the DiploFoundation, co-located at Malta and Geneva, and one of the pioneers in using the Internet for diplomatic studies.

The progress in foreign ministries' adoption of Internet solutions in their training and educational programs may be uneven, as the London workshop reflect-

ed, but it is nonetheless inevitable. In many circumstances, e-learning is undeniably more efficient and economical than traditional learning, or "t-learning."

Mid-career training and other continuing education programs in foreign ministries, for example, find a natural fit with the Internet. At any point in time, at least half the personnel in a typical diplomatic service are on assignment abroad, and it is much too expensive to bring them all together at one location for a training program. Calling locally engaged staff back to the home foreign ministry for training makes even less financial sense, save in special situations; consequently, such personnel are mostly left out of training programs. And yet, an increasing amount of non-sensitive, substantive work in embassies is being shifted to them, making their training a high priority.

Another attraction of Internet-based training is that it permits use of a wide range of options, from the self-instruction mode to highly intensive small-class training with a dynamic interface between faculty and students.

## Leaders in the Field

The Canadian Foreign Service Institute has developed over 70 training programs that are incorporated into

a “virtual campus” for their diplomats and other, home-based staff, as well as local personnel working in the embassies and consulates. Many programs are of the self-instruction type, available on the learning management system — an Internet-based system for distance learning that includes specialized software, the applications in the form of courses and methods for student-faculty interaction — and also often on a CD-Rom.

These are courses that officials are required to pass at different stages, covering basic issues such as document security, accounts, and record-keeping for properties and vehicles in embassies. One elegant program introduces Canada in all its diversity to newly-hired local staff. More sophisticated programs cover intercultural sensitivity and a range of diplomatic skills.

The Canadians also employ a neat gimmick, using free night-time hours in their 24-hour communication network linking the Department of International Affairs to diplomatic missions abroad to download all the updated teaching materials from Ottawa onto embassy servers. That way, users at post need only access the embassy network, avoiding the usual Internet delay. The Canadian Institute has developed many of these courses in multimedia formats. They are very time- and resource-intensive to produce, but have a long shelf-life and can be re-used.

The U.S. Foreign Service Institute is the world’s largest diplomatic academy, with nearly 450 different courses

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(including 60-plus languages) and an annual enrollment of 40,000 trainees. In 2003, its Distance Learning Division — encompassing training delivered online via Internet through the FSI Learn-Center or via intranet through FSI Web, correspondence materials mailed in CD or textbook form and even tele-training — accounted for 5.4 percent of FSI’s entire training delivery; by 2004, that number had climbed to 9 percent. And these

figures do not include the annual “CyberSecurity Awareness” course, which was completed by 53,000 users worldwide in 2004. (See p. 64.)

In surveying the field, one quickly learns that there is no one single model of e-learning, but rather a spectrum of different models. At one end there are the large-scale versions utilized by open universities, using real-time video-conferencing via satellite centers and broadband connections. Sometimes they reach sizable audiences more simply through radio broadcasts. More elaborate versions provide flexibility to suit the time-convenience of the students.

In some models courses are cast in self-paced, self-learning modes (with questions built into the text, pop-up screens that furnish replies to frequently asked questions and automatic assessment, in addition to user-friendly pictures and video-clips). More sophisticated versions combine text with multimedia, on CD-Roms or online, the latter with or without instructor intervention.

Broadly, the progression and cost of e-learning modes are related to the intensity of the instructor’s interaction with students. As this interaction increases, the class size comes down and, in parallel, the expenditure in manpower and resources per student rises. These are all new pedagogical ventures, with great scope for experimentation and learning for the organizations that have taken the plunge. Their evolution will depend, in part, on continuing advances in basic communications technology.

### **Faculty-Led Teaching: The DiploFoundation’s Experience**

Distance learning with intensive teacher intervention is the hallmark of Internet-based programs developed at

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the DiploFoundation, where I have taught for six years. The foundation is a nonprofit entity whose mission is to assist all countries, particularly those with limited resources, to participate meaningfully in international relations; it is supported by Swiss development aid and also receives project funds from the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Union and some U.N. agencies. The DiploFoundation's e-training curriculum includes a one-year post-graduate diploma course accredited by the University of Malta (shortly to gain E.U.-wide recognition) and several new 10-week courses begun in 2003.

How does such faculty-led teaching work, with a class size of 15 to 25 drawn from 10 or more countries, distributed around the world? Diplo uses sophisticated text-based methods because many of its students — or “participants,” as Diplo prefers to describe those enrolled in its programs — do not have access to broadband or multimedia modes. After reading the lecture (usually about 3,000 words) posted on the class Web page, the participant has two options for written comment or queries. One is “hypertext,” where the student highlights some words or part of a sentence from the lecture text, opening a box where he or she can enter a comment or furnish a hyperlink to a relevant Web site. That action modifies the lecture text, and the selected words appear in bright

yellow (drawing the attention of other readers); thereafter, anyone placing a cursor on that portion finds that a text-box opens, giving the comment and its author.

The faculty — or other participants — can then add further observations (or hyperlinks). Thus, a lecture that has been thoroughly reviewed by the class ends up awash with yellow markers. One can also view all the comments in their totality (without opening each text-box), through a “discussion tree.” In addition, the student can choose to receive an e-mail containing the text of each comment or link.

An alternative form of comment is the “discussion board” for each lecture. Essentially a blog or a forum, the discussion board provides a platform for open-ended dialogue or asynchronous (i.e., not in real time) exchanges among the class and its instructor.

Typically, each lecture is open to the class for a week, during which time comments are made and the instructor responds. Usually, all the comments are public, visible to the entire class, but an option for private teacher-student comment is also available. Thus each generation of students and lecturers creates a new layer of meaning and examples, enriching the initial text.

Unlike comments made in a traditional class, e-comments are accessible anytime, anywhere, and produce a permanent record as well.

### **Online Training at FSI: Leveraging Advances in Technology**

“In 1993, when FSI moved to its new location at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, the Instructional Support Division was first established to take advantage of advances in technology that allowed training to be provided by computer,” says Katie Sprang, referring to the pioneering office she now heads.

“Over the next several years, FSI moved from analog to digital technology-mediated training,” Sprang explains. “By 1995, we were building entire courses for delivery by computer, primarily via CD-Rom; and in 1999, FSI launched its first fully Web-based course, Russian Reading Maintenance.”

In 2003 the Internet-based FSI LearnCenter was established. Today FSI's Distance Learning unit offers 38 courses produced by FSI and specifically related to foreign affairs topics, including, in particular, a wide variety of languages, and 3,000 commercially-produced Fastrac courses online through its FSI LearnCenter portal.

By all accounts, e-learning opportunities are being snapped up at a rapidly growing pace, with the FSN community in particular taking advantage of this way of improving professional skills. In 2004, users comprised of Foreign and Civil Service employees, Foreign Service Nationals and Eligible Family Members completed 4,000 courses in FSI LearnCenter compared to 1,700 in 2003. And in 2005, the distance-learning user population has already completed more than 2,500 courses.

Online training is obviously both a cost-effective and time-effective supplement to traditional instruction in a face-to-face setting. And, as Katie Sprang also notes, “Because the courses are available any time, learning will happen that otherwise would not have happened — and that's a real benefit.”

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

### **Debate and Discussion**

Real-time debate is also incorporated in the e-learning program. On a designated day each week, the class assembles in cyberspace for an online session that takes place at a time set in “universal time.” Participants living in different time-zones adjust their schedules to make themselves available, via a typical dial-up Internet connection, to debate, among themselves and with the teacher, the points arising from a particular lecture. The format is a closed chat room, with all the limitations that a text-only chat entails — namely, difficulty in sustaining a single discussion thread, participants jumping in with tangential comments and, sometimes, an apparent lack of discipline.

Many Internet-based learning systems deliberately avoid the online chat, perhaps finding it too distracting and not conducive to a dialogue of any depth. But the DiploFoundation’s experience has been that while the instructor must juggle two or three threads of discussion (and needs to have a very fast typing speed, as well!), the online sessions create a sense of community within the far-flung class. This sense of kinship can be augmented by intensive group work among class members, such as assignments and simulated negotiations.

The Internet also gives the virtual classroom access to a range of supplementary materials that is far more abundant, and more varied, than most traditional, live classrooms might find feasible. A “resources” button on the home page, takes one to a collection of folders containing the texts of relevant documents as well as links to other relevant Web sites.

### **How Does E-Learning Measure Up?**

One may legitimately ask, is it really possible to overcome distance, replicating the instant, natural communication of the traditional format? Can online learning match the rapport that a good teacher establishes with students? And what about evaluation? Surely no video-conference or online chat room can reproduce the way a good guru assesses the absorption by the class of the ideas taught.

At first sight, e-learning programs of the self-learning type miss out on the rich interactivity described above. But in practice, once a self-paced program is designed, it is easy to add on faculty intervention, either in the form of exercises whose results go to a faculty member or via periodic group exercises or simulations that break the

apparent isolation of the self-taught format. There is only one caveat: the faculty add-on is possible only with server-based programs, not those distributed on CD-Roms.

Some e-learning systems that opt not to use the online chat, substitute for it more intensive use of asynchronous activities, including group exercises such as class assignments. The choice depends on the environment and goals of each particular organization. Another option, to use video links or other multimedia facilities, depends on whether a diplomatic service can provide broadband connectivity to all its missions abroad.

Surprisingly, in our experience at the DiploFoundation we find that — putting aside the pure self-learning programs — e-learning generates far more intensive communication between teachers and the taught than one often finds in the traditional classroom. The fact that the lecture text undergoes intensive scrutiny by the class — typically generating between 40 to 80 comments and queries per lecture, or an average of three to seven per student — is evidence of this. A huge advantage is that comments remain available for subsequent reference or reflection. Moreover, teachers invest on average 12 to 15 hours per lecture, much more than a traditional lecture takes to prepare and deliver. Most participants also find that they end up spending more than the average of six to eight hours of class work the foundation’s part-time courses project. This may be partly due to the keen interest that such courses arouse among all but the laziest!

To conclude, e-learning of the intensive kind, while not replicating the personal chemistry of traditional learning, can produce remarkable depth of its own. Where personnel needing constant skills-updating are dispersed in location, or where relatively small numbers need customized quality coaching, faculty-led e-learning, in all its variations, can be of great benefit. At the other end of the spectrum, the self-instruction materials that this medium facilitates offer another kind of option, providing good value for basic training. They give a flavor of more sophisticated learning, and can be used as a prelude to other courses.

For a course designer, the self-learning mode also provides an opportunity to seek out that elusive, quintessential “simplicity beyond complexity” of which Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote so eloquently — the kind of simplicity that comes from full mastery of a complex process or body of knowledge. ■

# SPECIAL REPORT

## FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT: AT WORK IN THE MISSION

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FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT IS A KEY ISSUE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENCIES.  
HERE IS A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE OPTIONS FOR WORK INSIDE MISSIONS.

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By SHAWN DORMAN

**T**he two-career family has become more of a norm than an exception, yet the Foreign Service is lumbering along attempting to catch up with that reality and figure out how a two-career family can succeed under the unique circumstances of Foreign Service life. Until the 1970s, the spouse (back then, almost exclusively wives) was considered by the bureaucracy to be an arm of the employee rather than an individual or professional in her own right, and the wife's performance in such endeavors as representational entertaining was included in the employee's performance evaluation reports. Spouses were not paid for their role as supporting actors, but were expected to work at that job. A 1972 Department of State directive "liberated" FS wives from employee evaluation reports, and in 1978, the Family Liaison Office was created to further assist Foreign Service family members.

Since then, more and more spouses have taken on paid employment inside and outside U.S. missions. "At any given time," says FLO's Katie Hokenson, "there are 2,000 family member employees working inside our missions overseas."

Family member employment is a key issue for foreign affairs agencies seeking to recruit and retain the best employees. The new generation of Foreign Service employees wants and expects adequate employment options for their spouses. Management does seem to rec-

ognize that to keep employees satisfied, it has to be engaged in trying to satisfy the employment needs of family members. Some of the most exciting developments on the family member employment front are tied to employment outside missions. However, over 75 percent of family members working overseas work inside U.S. missions, and most family members still express a preference for work inside missions. Accordingly, this article examines the status of those employment options.

We spoke with, among others, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources John O'Keefe, Family Liaison Office Director Faye Barnes, Overseas Employment Personnel Management Specialist Vens McCoy, and FLO Employment Program Coordinator Katie Hokenson. In addition, more than 70 family members responded to our request for input on their own experiences with mission employment.

Deputy Assistant Secretary O'Keefe explained that improved family member employment is one element of the director general's current strategy. He said that management is aiming to help family members find more "professional-level" employment. A recent survey of 2,400 EFMs, O'Keefe explained, helped illustrate clearly that "we have a real talent pool" inside the Foreign Service community; one that can and should be utilized.

### Preference for Mission Jobs

Of the 70 family members who responded to our request for comments on family member employment, a surprisingly large majority expressed the view that they would rather work inside the embassy than outside. This preference comes despite numerous bitter complaints about mission jobs focusing on low salaries, lack of professional options and frustrations about treatment by post

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management. The reason most often cited by survey respondents for their preference for mission employment was, ironically, “salary.” Many pointed out that jobs in the local economy in most parts of the world, while potentially more interesting than embassy jobs, offer unacceptably low compensation. Other reasons for their preference for embassy jobs include: the ability to accumulate retirement pay and other benefits (for certain types of positions), a secure environment, ease of commuting with their spouses, contact with the embassy community and the ability to be more “plugged in” to what is going on in the community.

More family members work inside missions than outside. About 25 percent of all family members overseas work inside missions, and 10 percent work outside, according to data from the Family Liaison Office. FLO data for 2004 show that 35 percent of Foreign Service family members overseas were working, and that 50 percent would like to be working. Data from 169 posts, compiled by FLO in its December 2004 Family Member Employment Report, show that the total number of spouses overseas was 8,413. Of those, 6,680 (or 79 percent), were women and 1,733 were men. The total number of spouses working overseas was reported to be 2,907: 2,092 working inside the mission and 815 working outside. The goal of State management, through the office of the director general, the Human Resources Bureau, the FLO and post management, is to help increase the number of working family members to 50 percent, which would meet the current demand.

The family members who responded to our survey expressed a wide diversity of attitudes about mission jobs. Their experiences were strongly influenced by how they felt they were treated by post management. Some were extremely pleased with their mission jobs, while others either did not find a suitable job in the embassy or were frustrated by the ones they did find. There is no one uniform family member employment system at work in all missions, and no uniform group of family members seeking work at all posts. The success or failure of each family member employment program appears to depend on the actual needs and resources at the post, combined with the level of commitment to fostering opportunities from post management. This can explain the wide diversity of experience family members have with mission employment.

***A commitment from post  
management to fostering  
opportunities for family members is  
the key element to the success or  
failure of any post family member  
employment program.***

## **Hiring Categories**

There are numerous hiring mechanisms under which spouses are brought on board for embassy employment (see p. 75 for a guide to some of the most commonly used acronyms and abbreviations). Eligible Family Members who are American citizens and considered “AEFM,” or Appointment-Eligible Family Members, have the broadest options for mission employment. An AEFM is a U.S. citizen spouse or U.S. citizen child at least 18 years old, on the travel orders of a U.S. citizen Foreign or Civil Service employee or military service member assigned to a U.S. mission. Non-American-citizen spouses are EFMs but are not eligible for spousal preference as outlined in the statute on preference.

Members of Household and other non-married partners of Foreign Service employees overseas are not considered to be EFMs. Most State Department mission jobs are limited to those with AEFM status, as they require a security clearance. Non-sensitive positions with other agencies are open to all EFMs.

In March 1994, the State Department established the Professional Associates Program to open up unfilled junior officer positions to EFMs. In the same year, State also implemented the Rockefeller Amendment, which allowed embassies and consulates to employ expatriate American citizens and family members in positions formerly available only to foreign nationals, and gave preference to American-citizen family members over other applicants for these jobs.

One of the most important developments in family-member mission employment was the creation of the State Department’s Family Member Appointment hiring mechanism in 1998. Prior to the FMA, spouses were hired under mechanisms that were truly the pits. The PIT (part-time intermittent temporary) appointment, used for many State embassy jobs, usually meant a low salary, virtually no benefits, no advancement and no continuity of career. The PIT has been replaced by the TEMP, “temporary appointments” for up to one year. These appointments are reserved for U.S. citizens and come with some benefits. (See chart on p. 72 for a breakdown of hiring categories.)

Another hiring mechanism that has long been used by a number of agencies is the Personal Service Contract. Family members hired locally by USAID are often hired on



a PSC. There is no standard set of benefits that come with a PSC, and much depends on local practice and host-country laws. Most agencies, aside from USAID, now prefer to use the State Department hiring mechanism called the Personal Services Agreement instead of the PSC. The PSA is not subject to Federal Acquisition Regulations, which prohibit performance of certain types of duties including cashiering. The PSA was originally created for local hiring of non-Americans. It has been expanded to include American hires, and for them, it is called the PSA-Plus Program. PSA and PSA-Plus are identical except that “plus” includes Americans. Non-AEFMs are eligible to apply for both PSA and PSC positions.

The creation of the Family Member Appointment hiring mechanism represents an effort to standardize what have to date been very localized and varied employment programs for family members. There is no doubt that creation of the FMA — a result of about 20 years of advocacy by the FLO and AAFSW (now the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide) — was a big step forward.

The Family Member Appointment is defined as a Department of State hiring mechanism used to employ appointment-eligible family members accompanying career employees on assignment abroad. The FMA, according to State materials, is “a five-year limited, non-career appointment,” that allows family members to earn benefits. The benefits include annual leave, sick leave, retirement (FERS), health benefits (FEHB), life insurance (FEGLI), Thrift Savings Plan participation and non-competitive eligibility status for U.S. government jobs.

In 1999, a year after the creation of the FMA, 34 percent of family members working inside missions (of

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***As a general rule, an  
EFM who wants an FS-  
level salary would be  
best advised to try to  
join the Foreign Service.***

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150 posts surveyed by the FLO) were in FMA positions. By early 2005, the percentage had risen to 73. Clearly, the FMA hiring mechanism is taking hold.

The standardization of hiring mechanisms could help with a longstanding problem of employees leaving post without receiving a written performance evaluation. An employee with no performance record to carry to the next post or, more importantly, back to Washington, where further U.S. government opportunities may depend on adequate documentation of previous work, is at a disadvantage when seeking onward employment.

**“Either CLO or Clerical”**

Foreign Service family members looking for upwardly-mobile career paths should probably not look to the embassy for employment. As one FS spouse put it, “It’s either CLO or clerical.” This is an exaggeration, but does describe the typical perception of mission jobs — that they are not “professional” jobs.

While it may be possible to aim for similar types of jobs at different posts, usually a family member looking for mission work has to take what is available, which will at best be a continuation of a type of work done at another post, and almost certainly

not be an advancement up a career ladder.

Typical embassy jobs with the State Department include consular associate, consular assistant, community liaison office coordinator, information management assistant, general services assistant, office manager, administrative assistant, housing coordinator, newsletter or Web-site editor, and security escort. The U.S. Agency for International Development has non-Foreign Service positions, which tend to be highly coveted development jobs.

Consular associates — family members working in consular sections around the world who have completed the full ConGen Rosslyn course — have helped embassies and consulates with the heavy workload, particularly visa adjudication. There are currently between 150 and 160 CAs at work around the world, who have had wide-ranging responsibilities similar to those of consular officers.

The authority of consular associates to adjudicate visa applications is being phased out as part of the implementation of new security measures. As of this September, CAs will no longer adjudicate visa applications. It is still unclear what impact this will have, but it is clearly a denigration of the authority that was invested in the position. Management has sent word to the field that post management should try to ensure that EFM consular positions are not eliminated in connection with the changes, and to try to minimize the impact on the CA jobs.

Some of the best mission jobs are the USAID jobs, seen as more professional in nature than many State jobs open to family members. “USAID is far more amenable to hiring people as professionals, giving them work in their area of expertise, and paying them accordingly,” says an EFM working for USAID. “State has jobs for spouses that are basically sec-

retarial, never professional, and mired in the 1950s view that a spouse has no professional track in mind other than a secretarial one.” Many family members believe that most of these USAID jobs are unofficially reserved for USAID spouses, something a number of State family members point to as a source of great frustration.

Under the Professional Associates Program, originally established to open vacant junior officer positions to EFMs, the focus has now shifted to unfilled mid-level Foreign Service positions in the “hard-to-fill” category. (HTF positions are those that lack sufficient qualified Foreign Service bidders.) Every year, State management sends out a bid list for HTF jobs open to EFMs and Civil Service employees. When hired under the PA program, the EFM is hired on an FMA and receives commensurate benefits and a salary based on his/her qualifications.

This year’s list of State Department Hard-to-Fill Program positions was released in February, earlier than usual, in an effort to facilitate EFM participation. The 2005 list was particularly long and included a number of fairly high-level (FS-1) jobs. Although the EFM applicant is limited by the spouse’s post of assignment, the list does offer one more set of potential job opportunities.

During the period of severe shortage of junior officers, before the State Department began hiring under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative in 2000, State reached a maximum of 30 spouses hired under the Professional Associates Program. (FLO Director Faye Barnes indicates that the original target of 50 PA positions was not reached.) In the interim, Barnes says, the program almost disappeared until FLO picked it up again under the hard-to-fill category. Because family members are limited by the post of assignment of their spouses,

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***There is no one uniform  
family member  
employment system at  
work in all missions.***

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few have been able to take advantage of the program.

#### **About Money**

Post budgets play a major role in determining EFM employment options inside the mission, because EFM positions other than those in the Professional Associates Program are paid for out of post funds. In the 1990s, the severe budget strains on the foreign affairs agencies that resulted in a hiring freeze at State for several years and a reduction-in-force at USAID led to a shortage of entry-level employees at embassies worldwide. This led to more job opportunities for family members, many of whom began filling vacant State Foreign Service positions in consular sections as consular associates and professional associates.

During his tenure, Secretary of State Colin Powell brought budgets back to functional levels, and increased State Foreign Service hiring dramatically. More entry-level consular slots began to be filled by officers again. However, because the workload has grown substantially in recent years, the new influx of FS employees does not seem to have had a significant negative impact so far on the number of EFM jobs available. But foreign affairs agencies in 2005 are again facing tight budgets, and other types of EFM jobs at posts under severe budget strain may be

affected. “FMA jobs are often the first cut when the budget is tight,” says EFM Patrick Fogarty from Nogales, Mexico.

Now more than ever, EFMs represent a highly skilled, though extremely diverse, work force, seeking salaries matching their abilities. Overseas, these hopes are rarely met. Most family members surveyed noted that embassy jobs usually pay better than those in the local economy. Yet many expressed annoyance that mission salaries are lower than those of their Foreign Service colleagues in the embassy. As a general rule, an EFM who wants an FS-level salary for an embassy job would be best advised to try to join the Foreign Service.

Although family members tend to view embassy jobs as more lucrative than outside jobs, salaries for jobs with international organizations such as the United Nations, international and U.S.-based NGOs and U.S. or multinational companies tend not to be based on the local economic norms. Thus, many of these jobs pay much better than embassy positions.

When hired under the FMA, EFMs are eligible to receive salaries based on the “highest previous rate” calculation. Yet there are two major “ifs” at play: *if* the post budget allows, and *if* the position is not classified for a maximum salary below the HPR level. According to the survey respondents, the HPR is in fact often used for FMA hiring, but not always. Post budgets are a limiting factor, and may not allow for payment of a particular EFM’s rate. Even the HPR is often seen by EFMs as too low, because it only takes into account previous U.S. government employment, not all prior experience and salary history.

Many spouses expressed frustration at not receiving the salary level they felt they deserved. A typical comment, from an EFM in a Middle Eastern post, was that when she was hired for an embassy position the

“human resources officer single-handedly decided that my previous work experience did not matter and that I would start at the lowest grade for which the position was announced.”

EFM salaries can also be affected by the relatively new CAJE system, the Computer Aided Job Evaluation, which is being used to reclassify FSN positions around the world. EFM Joyce Otero, in Prague, explains that she was hired for an embassy job in the security office with a salary based on her highest previous rate. “But after one year, this all changed when the position was CAJE-ed at a lower grade.” Her salary will be reduced because her pay level was higher than the highest rate available under the newly classified position.

Post budgets can be affected by the needs of other posts. An EFM at a Latin American post pointed out that the Iraq War has affected employment: “Cost-cutting measures are under way here, supposedly due to the cost of Iraq. ... I’ve been told that upper managers try to save money to ‘look good,’ letting support staff be overworked even when there are back-up workers available to help them, at a much lower rate.”

The Family Liaison Office has argued that EFM positions should be centrally funded. However, because most positions fall under ICASS (the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services, which mandates the sharing of administrative costs among agencies), this idea has not gone anywhere. However, State Department local-hire positions not covered by ICASS — generally those outside the management section — could be centrally funded, and the FLO believes this could help standardize the salaries and practices for FMA hiring.

### **Local Economies**

Many family members complain that in competition for embassy jobs

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***USAID is  
implementing a policy  
to make a significant  
number of additional  
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to EFMs.***

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with locals, they usually lose. This is the case despite the statutory preference for AEFMs in hiring for embassy jobs. There seem to be plenty of ways around hiring an EFM, if the post prefers a Foreign Service National. Often it comes down to money, because in most of the world, it’s cheaper to hire a local than an EFM.

In many cases, however, there are other reasons for a post to prefer to hire a local over an EFM: Foreign Service assignment cycles dictate that EFMs will not stay on the job nearly as long as most FSNs; FSNs are usually native speakers of the host-country language; FSNs tend to know the local environment best and have vital contacts and access to the local community and/or government officials that an EFM usually would not have.

The issue of which positions should remain Foreign Service National slots and which should be filled by family members is a contentious one. The department is working to open more FSN positions to family members to increase EFM employment opportunities. According to current department policy, all non-sensitive positions should be open to qualified EFM applicants. A pilot program being tested by the Western Hemisphere Bureau aims to bring more EFMs into

FSN positions.

Many family members note that post management often uses language requirements to ensure that FSN positions are filled by local applicants rather than American EFMs.

In most regions of the world outside of Europe, FSNs earn substantially lower salaries than Americans, because FSN salaries are based on (the high end of) local-salary norms. When an EFM is hired into a position previously encumbered by an FSN, the cost to the post, in most parts of the world, is higher because the EFM is paid on the American compensation plan. So, while the salary may be low compared to FS colleagues in the embassy, it is high compared to most FSN salaries.

Because locally-hired staff get paid out of post funds, there is an obvious preference for hiring at the more affordable local rate. The opposite is true in Europe, where the local compensation plan, and the euro and British-pound exchange rate, translate into higher costs than in most of the rest of the world. One EFM in London noted that “the hourly pay levels for most EFM positions in London were more than 20 percent less than for the FSNs in the same positions, and less than what is paid to a good cleaner.”

### **The Hiring Process**

The hiring process varies from post to post. Some posts hire EFMs sight unseen, some without an interview. Others do not. The attitudes held by management at individual posts seem to play a strong role in determining how the selection process for EFM jobs works. A Post Employment Committee can help manage the process. But not all posts have a PEC, even though they are all, according to Foreign Affairs Manual regulations, supposed to have one. Each post is also supposed to have a written “post

employment policy” as well, but many do not.

Many embassy jobs require a security clearance, and the acquisition of a clearance can take a long time and delay hiring by months. In late 2003, the Diplomatic Security Bureau implemented an interim clearance process, which allows posts to give temporary clearance to a spouse based on the Foreign Service employee’s clearance. Posts must request the interim clearance from DS, and if all goes well, DS can grant an interim clearance within a few weeks that allows the EFM to begin work while the full clearance process continues.

The FMA hiring mechanism has helped many posts speed up the hiring process for EFMs, though more than a few family members responding to our survey had complaints about delays. One of the key benefits of the FMA hiring mechanism is that it allows the EFM to carry a security clearance from post to post, thus avoiding the time-consuming and costly process of redoing a security check. A security clearance granted for an FMA position can be revalidated for up to two years after the employee leaves the job. Before the FMA mechanism, a new clearance was required by each new post. A number of EFMs told us that they have successfully reactivated a security clearance at a new post, and were able to save time in the hiring process for a new job. Marlene Nice — an EFM who joined the Foreign Service in May — says she went into intermittent-no-work-scheduled status when recently transferring from Montevideo to Zagreb, and “it took just a matter of days to renew my top-secret clearance.” Others told of having trouble reinstating a clearance at a new post. The success seems to depend largely on whether the management section at post tries to make it work.

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***Many family members  
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### **Training**

Many family members receive training outside the mission for embassy jobs. Some, especially consular associates, receive training at FSI before going to post. FLO’s Katie Hokenson explains that training for family members prior to arrival at post (usually in connection with consular associate positions) is on a space-available basis. It has been somewhat more difficult for EFMs to get into consular courses during the past several years due to the increased hiring of Foreign Service employees under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative.

EFMs who work as community liaison office coordinators usually receive training away from post. Others who often receive training out of country are APO postal employees, consular associates, voucher examiners, and those in other management positions in human resources and finance. Several EFMs working in Web-site management positions reported being extremely pleased with training opportunities.

There are good positions for EFM nurses at many posts. Several nurses responded to the survey, none of whom had received training for the job. Obviously, to be hired as an RN, you have to already be a trained nurse. However, the Foreign Service nurse does have unique responsibili-

ties based on country-specific health-care availability. EFM nurse Alison Rowles recalls landing in Niamey without much information about her job: “I was handed a radio upon landing and told I had a deathly ill patient to deal with at the local hospital. I didn’t even know where my home was let alone the hospital! It didn’t stop from there.” Of respondents who had worked for USAID, some received outside training, and others did not. Training for USAID positions varies widely from post to post and job to job.

### **Attitudes:**

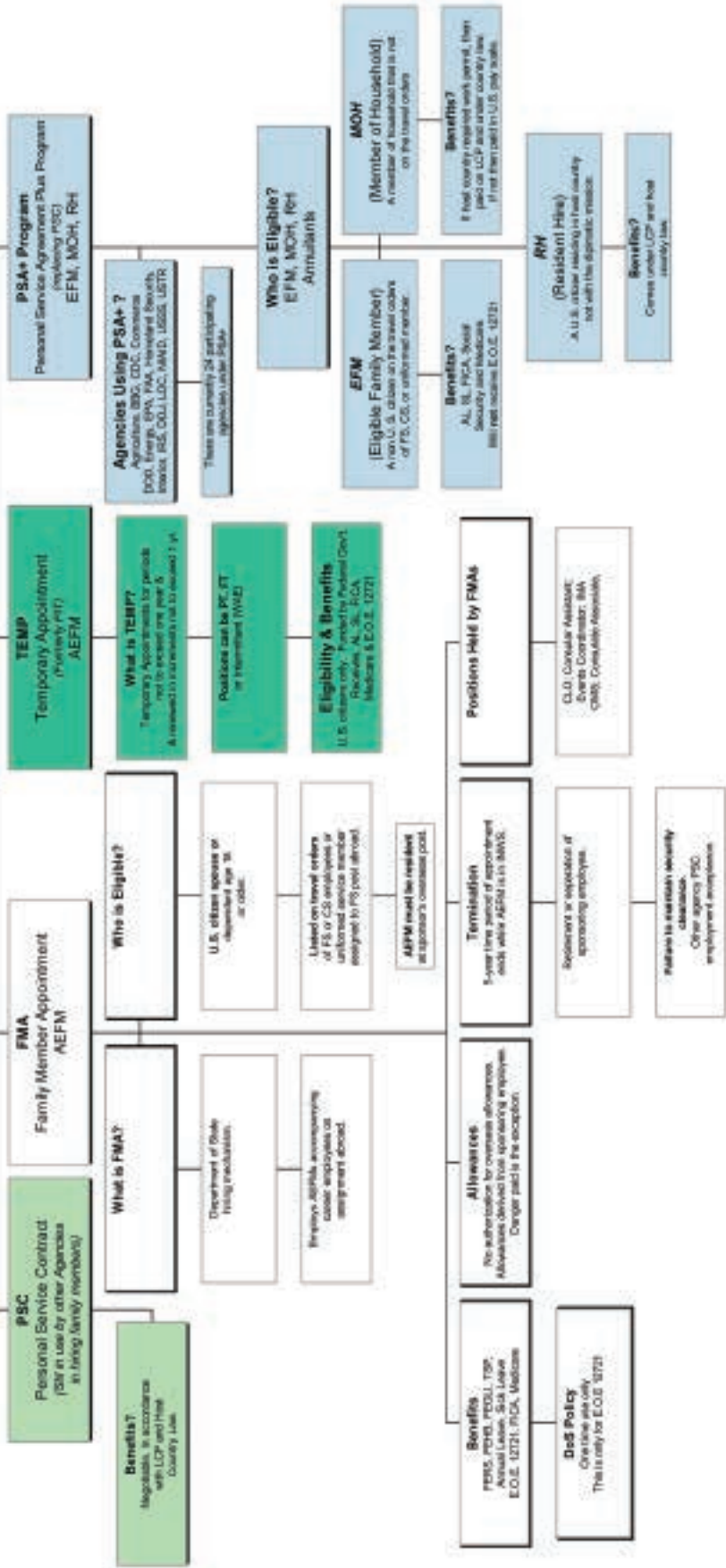
#### **Just Because We’re Here**

Many family members in embassy jobs complain that they feel underutilized, unappreciated and underpaid. “All the talk in the State Department about the importance of spousal employment does not amount to a hill of beans for anyone that has more than a high-school education,” says a male EFM at an African post. “I have been told and have read a million times that if I’m flexible enough and try hard enough that I will be able to have a rewarding career as the spouse of a Foreign Service officer, and it is really just not true. I have tried every category possible, and most positions have either required I get paid a ridiculously low salary or that I work at a level well below my experience. . . . EFM positions are usually low-level, administrative positions. Most spouses these days show up with university and graduate degrees and salary histories that just do not make [the] available EFM employment opportunities appropriate or interesting.”

EFM Adrienne Treiber in Warsaw says that embassy management should “recognize that we have a lot of skills . . . pay us as you would anyone else. . . . Do not take advantage of our desire to work, but give us real jobs, a professional attitude and a realistic remuneration.” A first-tour EFM in an African



**Embassy Hiring Categories**



**Other Hiring Category:**

**Civil Service (CS)** – Department of State hire. Only an AEFM can hold this position. Can obtain E.O.E. 12721  
**Recreation Association (RECASSN)** – Can be held by a AEFM, EFM, MOH, RH

Last Revised: 2.18.05

post noted that “EFMs are not empowered to make decisions even though they may have much more experience and knowledge than their inexperienced first-tour junior-officer supervisor. There’s a very intelligent, experienced employee pool here that is underutilized.” And finally, one frustrated EFM says: “I will never apply to work as an EFM on a Family Member Appointment again. I was not treated as a person who could advance professionally but rather as a spouse who had been given the gift of a job that I should be happy to have, like social welfare.”

Many EFMs express frustration at the identity they have inside the embassy community. The term “dependent” still has a negative connotation, one that seems to strip away any prior professional experience. Bernard Huon-Dumentat, an EFM in Lisbon who writes about issues of family member employment, had this to say: “The department still views FMA jobs as opportunities that the U.S. government has created to keep spouses happy. Therefore the attitude is that EFMs should be satisfied with whatever pittance they receive in salary and whatever pitiful regard they receive for their real input to the organization. There is no long-term vision.” Another family member who has been watching the issue for years, Terri Lawler Smith, notes: “I have to tell you that over the last 20 years a lot of lip service has been given to all the positive changes that the State Department has made in EFM employment, but in reality, very few concrete changes have taken place since the old PIT days.”

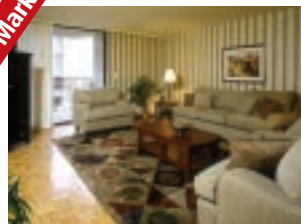
A view from an East European post was more optimistic: “I think working conditions and appreciation for EFMs have improved. An EFM working in an FMA position is not seen as being ‘just the dependent’ anymore but as a ‘real employee.’” And from a first-tour

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EFM at a hardship post: "I have been very impressed with the importance that post management has put on family member employment. I am at a hardship post, and since I have been here I believe that almost every spouse that wanted to work in the mission has a job here." A family member new to the Foreign Service, who runs her embassy's Web site, says: "I have been overseas for seven months now, and have seen many opportunities for family members. I post all the jobs on the Web site so I have seen all of them. I believe HR works with all family members to find positions suitable and enjoyable for them."

So much depends on the management team at post. The key players determining the employment situation at a post are the ambassador and deputy chief of mission, the management officer and the community liaison office coordinator. The players and the dynamics are different at every post as American personnel cycle through from year to year and as the needs of each post change. Therefore, opportunities for family members can vary widely from post to post, and from year to year at any given post.

### **Outside the Fold: When a Family Member is Ineligible**

The FMA hiring mechanism is only open to AEFMs who are not receiving a U.S. government annuity, so there are many family members who do not qualify. This is a point of stress for those family members outside the AEFM box, including Members of Household, other unmarried partners and non-U.S.-citizen spouses of Foreign Service employees.

"The program of employment for family members fails to address the needs of the significant portion of spouses who are not U.S. citizens," says USAID Health Officer John Dunlop. "These people find themselves plunked down in a foreign country without even real cultural ties to the

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## ***The FMA hiring mechanism is providing spouses employment benefits never before available to them in mission jobs.***

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American community, much less the local community. They cannot work in the embassy, which can lead to a very isolating situation of forced unemployment. This is very hard on the family as well as the spouse."

There are nepotism considerations that preclude other categories of family members from gaining access to embassy jobs, including family members who would serve under the chain of command of their spouse if they served in an embassy job. As the Foreign Service employee rises in rank, the options for the spouse become more limited due to the wider authority under the employee.

There are also conflict-of-interest concerns that can limit employment options. The Foreign Affairs Manual requires that spouses ask permission to accept a job in the local economy. A family member is not supposed to work in a position involving duties that could overlap or conflict with those of the Foreign Service employee spouse. This can limit work options both inside and outside the mission. The American Foreign Service Association heard from a family member in April who had to decline a lucrative private sector job offer because the work might have involved issues her spouse was working on inside the embassy. Management saw potential for a conflict of interest. The implementation

of the rules on this vary from post to post.

### **What's New or Improved?**

In a March message to all chiefs of mission, entitled "Supporting Our People," Director General W. Robert Pearson laid out eight specific suggestions for helping validate the commitment to "improve the quality of employment life for our family members throughout the world." Half of the suggestions focused on mission employment, and requested that chiefs of mission: endorse the USAID/State pilot project to place qualified family members of USAID and State employees into professional positions; endorse the current department policy of family member preference in recruiting locally engaged staff; keep an eye on consular associate positions as CAs lose their visa-adjudication authority in September 2005; and ensure that every family member employee who works at post receives a performance evaluation.

The FMA hiring mechanism is providing spouses employment benefits never before available to them in mission jobs. Since its 1998 inception, with support from the director general, it has become the hiring mechanism of choice for many EFMs and managers.

A pilot program under State's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs is aiming to increase opportunities for EFMs by implementing hiring preferences for "locally employed staff" positions. Announced in December 2004, the pilot project is a collaboration between the Family Member Employment Working Group and the executive office of WHA. (Note: The FMEWG is comprised of representatives from the FLO, the Office of Overseas Employment, Employee Relations Office and the Office of Policy Coordination, all under the director general's office.) Under the

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*The authority of the  
consular associates to  
adjudicate visa  
applications is being  
phased out.*

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pilot, as of Jan. 1, 2005, WHA posts have been obliged to use a recruiting policy giving hiring preference to AEFMs and U.S. veterans for positions that have traditionally been seen as Foreign Service National positions. The WHA pilot program could help increase job opportunities for EFMs in Western Hemisphere posts. Vens McCoy in the Overseas Employment Office tells us that feedback on the pilot has been positive and that they have plans to expand the program to the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau in January 2006.

Another new initiative, based on a cooperative agreement between State and USAID, looks promising. Last fall, USAID and State sent out a joint message (04 State 199609) stating that “USAID joins the Department of State in reaffirming its strong support for employment opportunities for the family members of U.S. government employees assigned to posts abroad. Employment opportunities should be available to qualified EFMs. ... Family member employment has been an established feature of life at Foreign Service posts for decades, and providing such employment opportunities for them throughout the course of their time abroad has become increasingly important to all the foreign affairs agencies.

“In support of family member employment overseas, USAID is

## Guide to Family Member Employment Terms

- AEFM:** Appointment Eligible Family Member, U.S.-citizen spouse or child over 18 on travel orders of U.S.-citizen Foreign or Civil Service employee or military service member assigned to a U.S. mission
- CAJE:** Computer Aided Job Evaluation, created to reclassify FSN positions
- CLO:** Community Liaison Office, supports family members at posts
- CS:** Civil Service employee
- EFM:** Eligible Family Member, a dependent of a USG employee on travel orders
- EOE:** Executive Order Eligibility, a 3-year window for a qualifying AEFM to apply for U.S. government positions in the U.S. under category of “status candidates” or “non-competitive eligibles”
- FAMER:** Family Member Employment Report, produced by FLO
- FLO:** Family Liaison Office, State Department office supporting family members
- FMEWG:** Family Member Employment Working Group
- FMA:** Family Member Appointment, a hiring mechanism
- FSN:** Foreign Service National
- GES:** Global Employment Strategy, a new family member employment program
- HPR:** Highest previous rate
- ICASS:** International Cooperative Administrative Support Services, the program requiring cost-sharing among agencies at overseas missions
- INWS:** Intermittent-no-work-scheduled status, for those leaving FMA positions
- LES:** Locally Engaged Staff, another term for Foreign Service National
- MOH:** Member of Household, an FS employee dependent without EFM status (yet)
- PA:** Professional Associate, an AEFM who is selected to fill a Foreign Service position overseas
- PEC:** Post Employment Committee
- PIT:** Part-Time Intermittent Temporary appointment, a term no longer used by State; now called a TEMP or temporary appointment
- PSA:** Personal Services Agreement, a State Department hiring mechanism used by many agencies
- PSC:** Personal Services Contract, a hiring mechanism used by USAID
- RH:** Resident Hire
- SNAP:** Strategic Networking Assistance Program
- TEMP:** Temporary Appointment (formerly PIT)



implementing a policy to make a significant number of additional positions available for EFMs, to be filled through USAID selection at post to include review by the Post Employment Committee. ... USAID directors are expected to make locally established positions available to EFMs. ... Directors of missions with up to five U.S. direct-hire positions must, at a minimum, identify one local position for primary staffing by an EFM.” The message gives special emphasis to identifying “professional-level positions.”

USAID has often been the source of professional-type jobs for family members, who have in the past been hired primarily under PSC authority. The new initiative calls for USAID to hire under State’s FMA when the employee desires. Several EFMs who commented on FMA hiring noted concern that if USAID positions are put under the FMA umbrella, the positions might be downgraded. One noted that the conversion to FMA for the higher-salaried USAID jobs might actually bring down the salaries to more typical FMA levels.

A brief mention of employment options outside missions must be made, for it is in this realm that a number of exciting programs are under way. The Global Employment Strategy has recently been launched by State. GES, according to the FLO, which runs the program, “seeks to increase spousal employment opportunities by establishing a global network of potential employers from multinational organizations and NGOs.”

Another new program, E-Entrepreneurs, has come online to train family members to run their own portable businesses. The first pilot training was offered in May. The Strategic Networking Assistance Program, known as SNAP, has moved out of the pilot phase, and is being covered by ICASS funding. SNAP

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***Realistically, family members should not expect to have a traditional professional career path working in mission jobs.***

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aims to help connect family members with opportunities for local employment outside the mission, and to help with career development and planning, résumé writing and honing interview skills. New posts will be added to the SNAP program as a regional expansion of the program is implemented in Central America and Africa.

### **Walking the Walk**

Family member employment has long been an issue fairly low on the list of management priorities, when it’s been on the list at all. State management now seems to recognize that family member employment opportunities are a key element in efforts to recruit and retain the best employees. Embassy jobs will never be able to satisfy all the employment interests of family members. These jobs are just one piece of an expanding network of options.

Still, members of the Foreign Service community must understand that the foreign affairs agencies will probably never be able to ensure that all family members who want good jobs can get them at every post. “Heretical as it may sound and as much as I wish it were not so,” long-time family-member advocate Mette Beecroft says, “there are couples

whose joint career aspirations simply will not flourish in the Foreign Service. Especially in cases where an employee has had longtime aspirations to join the Foreign Service, it can be difficult to admit that the Foreign Service might just not be right for them.”

To be blunt, the most exciting innovations and opportunities emerging for family members are from the world outside the embassy. The Internet — which vastly expands the options for continuity of contact with all types of employers and clients — will probably prove to be the single most valuable asset to a Foreign Service family member seeking some semblance of a career. Realistically, family members should not expect to have a traditional professional career path working in mission jobs. But they should be able to expect good-faith assistance from post management in their efforts to find the best employment possible.

One element of the five-point strategy put forward by Director General Pearson in 2004 is improved options for family-member employment. The five-point strategy — “nurture our own talents” (under which the concept of support for family members falls), provide better training, cooperate more directly with national and international players, respond more quickly with more expertise and build that expertise for the future — defines personnel goals for the State Department.

The director general has gone on record asking chiefs of mission at all posts to make family member employment a priority, and he has laid out specific ways that they can do this. Obviously, this will only succeed if post management around the world takes it on as a priority. We have seen that management can talk the talk. Let’s see if management will give it teeth and require posts to walk the walk. ■



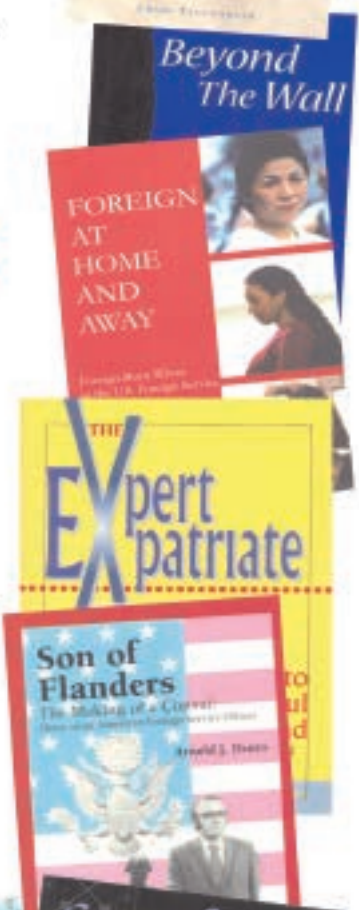
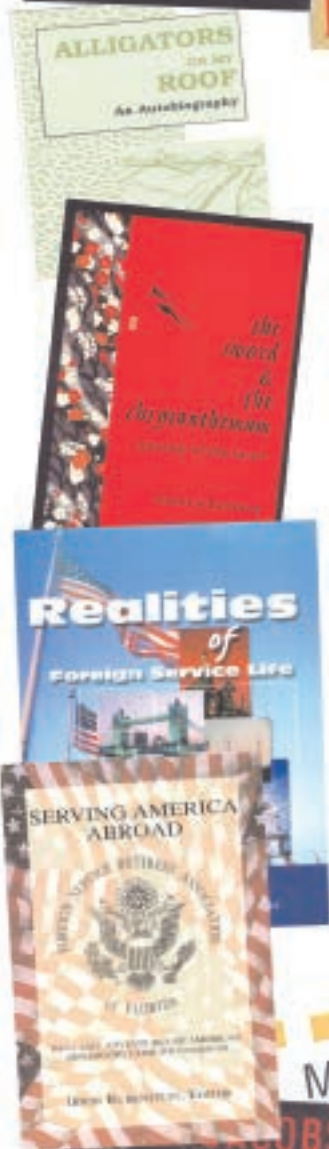
The November 2005 *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors.

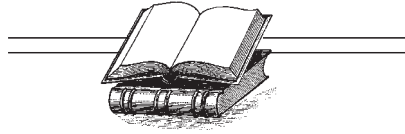
## Calling All Foreign Service Authors!

FS authors who have had a book published in 2004 or 2005 that has not previously been featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author, to:

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# BOOKS

## Time to Act

### Engaging the Arab and Islamic Worlds Through Public Diplomacy: A Report and Action Recommendations

William A. Rugh (ed.), *Public Diplomacy Council*, 2004, \$19.95, paperback, 174 pages.

REVIEWED BY DAVID NEWTON

Perhaps no aspect of American diplomacy has received more attention in the period since 9/11 than public diplomacy, conducted by the Department of State since the 1999 demise of the U.S. Information Agency. There is widespread agreement that the state of our public diplomacy is seriously inadequate in all respects. The congressionally-created Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, chaired by retired Ambassador Edward Djerejian, issued a scathing critique, including detailed recommendations, in October 2003. Like the 9/11 Commission, the study called for significantly greater funding, but also recommended structural changes and greatly increased, trained human resources.

Now another group of public diplomacy experts, comprised largely of retired USIA officers, has joined the debate. The Public Diplomacy Council, a nonprofit organization founded in 1988 and with close ties to the USIA Alumni Association, adds in this report a professional analysis of

*Rugh identifies three causes for public diplomacy's decline: increased security measures, decreased funding and the merger of USIA into State — all factors that preceded 9/11.*



the means to conduct successful public diplomacy and an action plan to implement such a program. The study is edited by former ambassador and USIA officer Dr. William A. Rugh, who has written extensively on the subject.

Leading off the six-part report, Shibley Telhami, Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, sets the political stage, noting, as have others, the collapse of Arab trust in the United States, particularly in the first term of President George W. Bush. He identifies the Arab-Israeli issue as the "prism of pain" through which Arab audiences judge the United States, even though the region has many other problems. He makes the telling point that much resentment aimed at the U.S. is based on the perception that the U.S. does not care about the views and concerns of oth-

ers. Telhami also adds support for authoritarian governments and the information revolution as other significant factors in the growth of Arab resentment. He judges that public opinion in the region is playing an increasingly relevant role and is increasingly independent of Middle East governments.

In the study's second part, three public affairs officers (Kenton Keith and Barry Fulton, retired; James Bullock, active-duty) give the reader a hands-on analysis of the daily demands of the job, stressing respectively the indispensable use of personal contact, the need to make effective use of rapidly changing technology, and the day-to-day challenges facing public diplomacy in the field. One thread running through these contributions is the muddled lines of control and the new bureaucratic burdens created by the USIA merger into the Department of State, a merger many observers now consider ill-advised.

The report's third section, with much less consensus, deals with U.S. international broadcasting, directed by the presidentially appointed, non-partisan Broadcasting Board of Governors. Broadcasting to the Arab World and Iran has been completely reorganized in recent years. The Arabic Service of the Voice of America has been replaced by the new, largely music/entertainment-oriented Radio Sawa and by TV Alhurra; Radio Free Iraq (part of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) has been gutted; and the entertain-





ment-oriented Radio Farda has replaced the Iranian Service of RFE/RL.

In the first of three contributions, Alan Heil, former VOA deputy director, recalls the rich history of VOA Arabic, which operated at much less cost than Radio Sawa, and calls for its revival. Norm Pattiz, the BBG member most responsible for the creation of the new broadcast media and himself a very successful commercial broadcaster, argues in contrast that a new market research-based approach reaching a much larger audience is needed, and cites BBG studies that claim large audiences for both Radio Sawa and TV Alhurra. But Mark Lynch, a professor at Williams College who has written widely about Arab public opinion and media, cites

other data to argue that TV Alhurra has only a small share of a highly competitive market and will prove to be a costly white elephant. He judges that Radio Sawa, despite its large audience created by clear FM signals and first-rate music, has had only mixed success, since its primary focus remains on its "quite attractive, but politically irrelevant, music."

In the fourth section Barry Ballow, former director of academic exchanges at USIA and State, outlines the achievements of international visitor programs, many of whose participants have gone on to important responsibilities (including 32 Nobel laureates). He deplores the program's woeful underfunding and the impact of new, post-9/11 security procedures. Former ambassador Crescencio Arcos,

now directing international affairs at the Department of Homeland Security, explains the department's efforts to balance security with facilitating visitors. In the fifth part, Howard Cincotta, a former USIA and State expert, analyzes the State Department's print media, including the daily *Washington File*, magazines, e-journals and book translations.

The study closes with Dr. Rugh's conclusions and action plan. He identifies three causes for public diplomacy's decline: increased security measures, decreased funding and the merger of USIA into State — all factors that preceded 9/11. As other analysts before him have done, he urges a broad-gauged expansion of public diplomacy in the region: more staff with greater training; more use of

"Fascinating"

**Behind Embassy Walls**  
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local media channels; revival of American centers, English language programs and libraries overseas; expanded and reinvigorated exchange programs; revival of VOA Arabic; and, perhaps most fundamental, consolidation of clear lines of authority for public diplomacy at the Department of State. He calls for funding to be quadrupled to at least \$4 billion annually.

The Council's report could not be timelier, for the necessary consensus to improve exists. I agree with the report's action plan, with the exception of simply restoring VOA Arabic: I would prefer a country-specific approach targeted at key Arab states, as Radio Free Iraq was created to do. A new public diplomacy team, headed by Karen Hughes, is taking over (though not until the fall, regrettably). After four discouraging years, there appears to be a chance for a fresh start on Israeli-Palestinian peace, however long the odds; the situation in Iraq may still be salvageable; and democratic trends are stirring tentatively in the region. Taking advantage of new developments, however, will involve more than increased resources or better marketing. It will require, in my view, acknowledgement of the resentment Arabs feel over U.S. policies affecting the Palestinians and a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" — aspects of the problem all recent public diplomacy studies have addressed only lightly.

---

*David Newton was U.S. ambassador to Iraq and Yemen during his 36-year Foreign Service career. He served as a special envoy for public diplomacy after his 1998 retirement and then for six years as director of Radio Free Iraq. He joined the Public Diplomacy Council earlier this year, after this book was published.*

## International Cooperation Pays Off

### Chasing Dirty Money: The Fight Against Money Laundering

*Peter Reuter and Edwin M. Truman, Institute for International Economics, 2004, \$23.95, paperback, 218 pages.*

REVIEWED BY TODD KUSHNER

Combating money laundering — defined as the act of hiding the source, ultimate destination or intended use of funds — has long been a key component of the State Department's International Narcotics Control Strategy. But even before the 9/11 attacks, the global anti-money laundering regime (known as AML) had begun to expand from that initial focus on drug trafficking and the criminal organizations behind it into an international campaign which now also encompasses terrorist financing, corruption, kleptocracy and other non-drug-related crimes.

As a result, assessing and reporting efforts by host governments to comply with AML standards has become an increasingly important task for all Foreign Service posts in recent years. Money-laundering techniques have become more complex as criminals devise ways to beat the system arrayed against them, while the AML system has had to contend with multiple goals and institutional and attitudinal differences among countries.

It is timely, then, that Peter Reuter, a senior economist and criminology professor, and Edwin M. Truman, a former director of the Division of International Finance of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, have teamed up to produce a seminal study of this important subject. In *Chasing Dirty Money: The Fight Against Money Laundering*, the

two have put together a wide-ranging but compact book that demystifies the intricacies of money laundering and international efforts to counter it.

Frequently drawing on economic and other analytical techniques, they set forth the important contributions of AML efforts, not only to fighting crime but to ensuring global financial system integrity and overall stability. Chapters three and four, in particular, provide effective overviews of money-laundering mechanisms and techniques (placement, layering, integration) as well as the system of international standards and national laws and regulations set up to thwart them.

Throughout the book, the authors discuss and demonstrate the analytical and policy challenges faced in attempting to evaluate the money-laundering problem and policy responses to it.

No credible measure has been devised, for example, for the scope of money-laundering worldwide: various techniques produce estimates ranging from the small hundreds of millions to the trillions of dollars. Similarly, there is a dearth of credible performance measures to assess accurately the effects of AML measures, whether these are aimed primarily against crime or terrorism. The authors set forth some useful suggestions for improving assessments of overall money laundering and regimes to combat it.

Despite those obstacles, however, Reuter and Truman make a compelling case that AML policies and measures are likely having positive and important — although possibly modest — results, even though these benefits are difficult to precisely measure.

This book will be especially valuable to those evaluating money-laundering challenges and responses. But it should also be of interest to all read-



ers because it shows how international cooperation can make a real difference. As noted in the State Department's 2004 Country Reports on Terrorism, continuing terrorist threats "require a growing level of international cooperation between the United States and its many partner nations around the world to interdict terrorists, disrupt their planning, restrict their travel, reduce the flow of financial and material support to terrorist groups, and enable partner governments to assert control over weakly governed territory where terrorists find sanctuary." Successful AML efforts are a key element of that cooperation.

---

*Todd Kushner, an FSO since 1985, is the director of the Designations Unit in the State Department's Office of the Counterterrorism Coordinator. He is also a member of the AFSA Governing Board.*

## The Heavy Hand of the Past

### **Liberty for Latin America: How to Undo Five Hundred Years of State Oppression (Independent Studies in Political Economy)**

*Alvaro Vargas Llosa, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005, \$25, hardcover, 288 pages.*

REVIEWED BY ALEXIS LUDWIG

Alvaro Vargas Llosa's new book, *Liberty for Latin America: How to Undo Five Hundred Years of State Oppression* — originally published as *Rumbo a la Libertad* — reviews the unfulfilled promises of Latin America's recent age of privatization. As he notes, during the 1990s, many governments across the continent took

to heart the idea that private enterprise, foreign investment and open markets would pave the way out of the prolonged stagnation of the 1980s — the region's "lost decade." The catchwords then were "stabilization, liberalization, privatization ... and the horn of plenty seemed to be around the corner."

But despite its initial success in countries like Argentina, Mexico and Brazil, by the turn of the new century the fragile edifice was tumbling down. Even in the author's own Peru, where the economy registered solid, if unspectacular, growth thanks to the new medicine, the underlying indices of social inequality and poverty remained unchanged, with well-known consequences for political stability. Thus, the very idea of democratic government, not to mention market economics (aka "liberalism"), began to be called into question throughout Latin America.

To explain this debacle, Vargas Llosa identifies "five principles of oppression" that he argues have persisted from the time of the Spanish conquest to the present day, and underlie the failures of many successive attempts at reform: corporatism, state mercantilism, privilege, transfer of wealth and political law. He summarizes the operation of these principles in the functioning of a "state through which a group of men have exploited others to satisfy their own needs."

The fifth of these principles, political law, is at the center of his analysis. Political law functions not to promote justice for one and all, as the "rule of law" theoretically does, but rather to protect the privileges of the chosen few. An anecdote taken from a news report in Bolivia, where I am currently serving, illustrates this principle with an almost comical clarity. The son of a former dean of one of the

country's more prestigious law schools was arrested for criminal disorderly conduct. Armed with his authoritative knowledge of political law, what did the father do? Posing as the current dean, he confronted the police and warned them to release his son or face the wrath of his friends in high places, including the minister of government (who heads the national police). Naturally, he got his way. (One wonders whether this "legal" strategy formed the basis of a special course that the former dean taught to particularly gifted students.)

As one of the co-authors of the celebrated *Guide to the Perfect Latin American Idiot* (1996), Vargas Llosa already dismissed dependency theory — the argument that "it's their fault we are poor" — as an explanation for the region's continuing predicament. While he does blame Washington's historical political and military interventions, as well as its trade and aid policies, for reinforcing the status quo, he mainly focuses on Latin America's own flawed institutions and warped values.

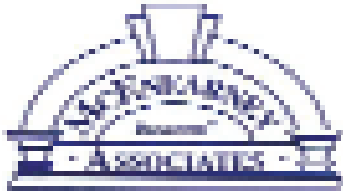
*Liberty for Latin America* offers a useful lens through which to understand the fundamental social, political and economic challenges still facing the vast region south of our border. It also offers some hope. Dismantling the current set of disincentives to development, and constructing in their place a system that protects the freedom of the individual (regardless of status or group association), will enable genuine democracy to emerge and flourish throughout Latin America. That, in turn, will release the region's pent-up economic potential. ■

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*Alexis Ludwig, an FSO since 1994, is currently deputy economic-political section chief and labor officer in La Paz.*



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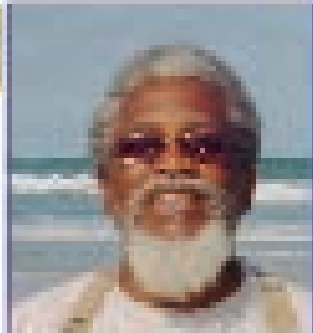
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# REFLECTIONS

## *Sri Lanka Sojourn: Paradise Revisited*

BY BARBARA M. BEVER

I arrived in Sri Lanka six weeks after the December 2004 tsunami struck two-thirds of the coast and killed nearly 31,000 people. Eighteen years ago, while posted to Pakistan, my family spent an idyllic spring vacation at the Triton Resort in Ahungalla on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka. On hearing I was going back to Sri Lanka to help USAID with the tsunami recovery efforts, my sons, now 23 and 21, shared detailed memories of that trip: the lagoon-style pool adjacent to the open-air lobby and reaching out to the sea, the lobsters that were as big as our 3-year-old, the “treehouse” on the beach where we climbed a ladder and ate grilled lobster, the elephant who came and drank from the pool, a carved cobra slithering down a banister, and an island band who sang “blue water shining nice, Sri Lanka, paradise.” Sri Lanka is also special because, when we lived in India, our beloved housekeeper originally came from this island paradise.

In a matter of hours, on Dec. 26, 2004, more than 100,000 homes were fully or partially destroyed, leaving

---

*Barbara M. Bever is a USAID Foreign Service spouse currently posted to Tel Aviv, where she works as a free-lance consultant. She has also lived in Rabat, Islamabad, Jakarta, New Delhi and Fairfax, Va. During her tour in New Delhi she was USAID's communications manager. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair “Stamp Corner.”*

over 400,000 people without shelter. Hardest hit were the lower-income coastal communities of fisher folk, coconut fiber spinners, and small shopkeepers and workers who supported the tourism industry

I found the Triton Resort, like so many resorts, just empty shells strewn upon the beach. It was a ghostly structure of damaged concrete, broken glass, twisted staircases, a drained and damaged pool, trees stripped of their fragrant blossoms and foliage, soggy mattresses and splintered furniture heaped into mountains at the hotel entrance. Hotel employees had been paid for the first month after the disaster to clean up the debris, but are now unemployed as the owners await insurance inspectors and insurance money to begin the rebuilding. The hope at the Triton is to reopen before Christmas 2005, but skilled labor is in short supply given the extent of damage throughout the country. More than 100 beach hotels are in a similar state, and thousands of tourism-dependent employees are out of work.

Experience has demonstrated that communities recover more quickly and completely when they are actively involved in rebuilding their lives immediately after a disaster. The unemployed hotel workers are among 650,000 people benefiting from USAID's cash-for-work programs totaling more than \$10.9 million over a six-month period. Community workers are being paid to repair schools and homes, build latrines,

clear wells, open culverts and construct transitional shelters. A \$10-million small loans program funded by USAID is enabling affected families to repair their boats, reopen shops, jump-start cottage industries and commence new businesses.

Unfortunately, there are those who take advantage of disasters for personal gain. I heard about a family who, when asked to identify the body of a female relative, found the woman's two ring fingers cut off . . . in order to steal the rings from a swollen corpse. Though custom duties on relief commodities were lifted in the first month following the tsunami, politicians who stood to gain from these duties slapped them back on again for the many privately-collected donations from church groups, clubs and schools around the world.

Being back in South Asia was like coming home: the bright colors, intense smells and calls to prayer were all very familiar. Bright smiles and friendly faces greeted me on street corners and in shops. Just before the end of my two-week assignment, I stocked up on favorite spices — cumin, cinnamon, fennel, curry, cardamom and turmeric — and splurged on two rings in memory of the woman who lost hers. I selected one pink sapphire and one blue sapphire, for which Sri Lanka is famous. While I cherish those old memories of Sri Lanka, I am fortunate to have brought back new memories of the resilience of the human spirit — more precious than gems. ■

# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • July-August 2005



## AFSA Performance Award Winners

This year's AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy has gone to Senator Richard Lugar, R-Ind., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Senator Lugar is one of the strongest supporters of American diplomacy in Congress and one of the legislature's most thoughtful leaders in the realm of foreign policy. During his 28 years in the Senate, Richard Lugar has made enormous contributions to American foreign policy and has been instrumental in promoting democracy around the world. He led in establishing the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, which aims at dismantling weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union. He continues to work toward eliminating the threat of nuclear, chemical and biological proliferation to make the world a safer place. As chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Lugar has consistently demonstrated strong support for both the practice and practitioners of diplomacy. He has been a staunch advocate and faithful friend of the career Foreign Service, the "unsung heroes" of public service. See the interview with Senator Lugar in the June issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*, p. 18, or online at [www.afsa.org/fsj](http://www.afsa.org/fsj).

Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick presented the award to Senator Lugar at the June 17 AFSA award ceremony in the Department of State's Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room. All of this year's AFSA awards were presented at the ceremony.

Look for coverage of the June awards ceremony in the September *AFSA News*. Articles about the other performance award winners start on page 7 of this issue of *AFSA News*. □

## AFSA Constructive Dissent Award Winners

"Dissent is to the Foreign Service what canaries were to coal miners at the turn of the century. Dissent lets Foreign Service employees know how breathable the air is where they work." (From a July 1996 *Foreign Service Journal* article on dissent by the late Ambassador Hume Horan.)

AFSA is proud to continue the 30-year tradition of honoring those among us who have the courage to challenge the system from within. This year's Constructive Dissent Award winners were Geoffrey R. Pyatt, who received the William R. Rivkin Award; James Arlen

Holt, who received the W. Averell Harriman Award; and F. Scott Gallo, who received the Tex Harris Award. Each of these brave individuals stood up for what he believed was right, regardless of possible negative consequences for his career. Articles about them begin on page 4 of this issue of *AFSA News*.

AFSA did not present the Christian A. Herter Dissent Award this year. The AFSA Awards Committee, upon review of the original decision to confer the award on Ambassador John Evans, withdrew the award because the nomination did not meet the criteria for constructive dissent. □



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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY

## AFSA Honors Fallen Colleagues at Plaque Ceremony

The AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony was held May 6 during Foreign Affairs Day in the C St. lobby of the State Department in front of the west plaque. The annual ceremony serves to honor those colleagues who have lost their lives in the line of duty while serving their country overseas. The names of three more fallen colleagues were added to the plaque this year: James Mollen, Edward Seitz and John O'Grady.



Under Secretary Nicholas Burns and AFSA President John Limbert unveil the new names added to the AFSA Memorial Plaques.

Continued on page 9



## AFSA Testifies on Protecting Soft Targets

On May 10, AFSA President John Limbert testified before the House Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, concerning the recent GAO report about protecting soft targets overseas. These hearings provided an excellent opportunity to voice concerns for the safety and security of FS members as terrorists expand their reach and threaten us at schools, restaurants, churches and homes. Find AFSA's opening statement — and recent testimony by State VP Louise Crane to the House International Relations Committee — at [www.afsa.org/congress/testimony.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/congress/testimony.cfm).

## Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER, FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

## Stay in Our Loop

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## Meeting with Secretary Rice

**A** FSA President John Limbert and AFSA State Vice President Louise Crane met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on May 3. They expressed AFSA's view of the importance of adequate funds to provide secure housing and work space for our colleagues in Iraq. The Secretary agreed that there was no higher priority than the safety and well-being of those working in that dangerous environment.

AFSA stressed the importance for the Foreign Service of the personnel provisions in the State Authorization Act (S. 600). The Secretary agreed, noting she hoped that the bill would return to the Senate floor for debate and passage. On locality pay, AFSA urged Sec. Rice to give her full support to correcting a situation that is getting worse. She said that she fully supports the principle of pay equality and will do her best to help in this regard. She repeated this support in answer to Louise Crane's question during the June 3 State Department town hall meeting.

On resources, the Secretary expressed her determination to protect the department's security, infrastructure and training. AFSA urged her to ensure that the Foreign Service did not fall back to the days of the 1990s, when failure to invest in people and facilities undermined both morale and operations.

The Secretary emphasized how much she appreciated the talents, loyalty and dedication of the Foreign Service. She said she always tries to meet with embassy staff when she travels, and appreciates their crucial role in carrying out a very active foreign policy. AFSA pointed out that for our colleagues, the worst thing was not to be overworked, but to be ignored or considered irrelevant. She understood, and said she intended to make full use of such a unique and talented cadre. □

## Ave atque Vale\* (This is my final column.)

**F**or the past four years serving as the AFSA vice president for the State constituency, I have met every entering class of generalists and specialists. In addressing them, I note the two greatest changes I have witnessed over the past 40-plus years since I entered the Foreign Service.

The first is obvious if one looks at the formal portraits of entering A-100 classes over the past 80 years. Until the 1970s, most classes were exclusively composed of white males. The few females were token (there were three in my class), while minorities were non-existent. Happily, this is no longer true. Both Secretary Powell and Secretary Rice have made a more diverse Foreign Service a priority, one I applaud. The Foreign Service is far more representative of the America whose taxes pay our salaries than it ever was in 1965.

I have served in countries that are ethnically homogeneous. This homogeneity has sometimes translated into feelings of superiority. In an increasingly globalized economy, American firms are better suited for overseas operations than those that systematically exclude or depreciate the talents of women and minorities. I remember meeting an IBM executive in Tokyo who complained about the rule emanating from the company's U.S. headquarters mandating that a certain percentage of appointments and promotions in the Japan operations be female. I told him I had no sympathy. A diverse Foreign Service in this globalized era makes us far more effective in advocating our policies, our culture and our society.

The second change from my entry-level days is that the world has grown far more dangerous for us. It all began in 1965, when the death toll began to climb with terrorist bombings in Saigon. The toll of terror has not ceased. When I walked into the State Department's C Street lobby for the first time, there was only one plaque memorializing our members who had died in the service of their country. And it was about half-full. The roll quickly spilled over onto another plaque and then AFSA had to add side panels to accommodate the overflow of names of our fallen comrades.

I make one more remark to the new hires. I congratulate them on becoming members of the Foreign Service. I tell them that for more than 40 years I have had the blessing of doing a job worth doing. I have been part of a corps of employees whose work actually makes a difference for the security and well-being of our country and its citizens. Most importantly, I believe that my own efforts over the past 40 years have made a difference. I know few people who upon retirement can claim to have made important and positive contributions to their country and their fellow Americans.

I was afforded one final blessing at the end of my career. My colleagues chose me to serve as their representative before department management for the past four years. My pride in the Foreign Service only swelled as I learned how they labored and the sacrifices they and their families made for the good of our country. I regret that my accomplishments as the AFSA vice president for this constituency are so meager when measured against their contributions.

The date on my birth certificate dictates my departure from the rolls. I depart with pride in my work, my profession and, above all, my colleagues. I have no regrets. None. Not one. □

\* Translation: "Hail and Farewell," from Catullus' elegy to his brother. (I am a graduate of Boston's Girls' Latin School.)





## AFSA'S 2005 DISSENT AWARD WINNERS

The constructive dissent awards publicly recognize individuals who have demonstrated the courage to challenge the system from within. Stories by Shawn Dorman

### William R. Rivkin Award

FOR A MID-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

## Geoffrey R. Pyatt

Geoff Pyatt was selected for the 2005 William R. Rivkin Award for his intellectual courage and initiative while serving as political minister-counselor at Embassy New Delhi, one of the largest U.S. missions in the world. He is being recognized for his contribution to the construction of a new agenda for U.S.-India partnership on issues of nuclear proliferation and strategic collaboration that were longstanding irritants in the relationship. According to the nomination, Pyatt took the lead in pushing against “the bureaucratic incrementalism and status-quo approach that traditionally marked

U.S. policy toward India on nuclear proliferation and strategic collaboration” to identify new opportunities for greater cooperation on these technical and controversial issues.

Pyatt worked persistently to overcome the longtime culture of suspicion of the U.S. role in South Asian regional issues to successfully establish a pattern of U.S.-India cooperation and mutual trust, particularly during the response to the Nepalese crisis in February. His efforts over three years, according to the nomination, “transformed mutual suspicion and often conflicting policies into a new habit of cooperation that strengthened both countries’ influence over the course of events in Nepal.”

He skillfully balanced his efforts to extend the limits of U.S. policy toward India with an extensive public outreach to high-level and influential Indian officials, resulting in greatly improved relations between the two countries. His intellectual courage played a major role in the success of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership initiative, which includes expanded cooperation between the U.S. and India on civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-tech trade and a dialogue on missile defense. He pushed Washington policy-makers at State, the Defense Department, the White House and elsewhere to identify new opportunities for strategic collaboration with India, and he convinced Indian officials that U.S. attitudes were changing.

Pyatt has served in Delhi since May 2002 — his second posting in New Delhi and third in South Asia. Prior to this India assignment, he served as trade policy officer at U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong from 1999 to 2002. From 1997 to 1999 he was principal officer at the U.S. consulate in Lahore. His Washington assignments include director for Latin America on the National Security Council staff (1996-1997), special assistant to the deputy secretary of State (1995-1996) and staff assistant to the assistant secretary of State for Latin America (1994). He was a political officer in New Delhi from 1992 to 1994 and economic officer and a vice-consul in Tegucigalpa from 1990 to 1992.

Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Pyatt worked with The Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based think tank. He grew up in La Jolla, Calif., and holds a master’s degree in international relations from Yale and a B.A. in political science from the University of California at Irvine. He and his wife Mary have two children, William and Claire. □



Above: From left: Urdu-language newspaper editor Zaheer Mustafa, Geoff Pyatt, embassy FSN, and Political Section FSN Dinesh Dubey at the Immabara, a revered tomb for Indian Shias, Aug. 2004.

Below: Geoff Pyatt and Defense Attaché Col. Steve Sboto (far left), and their families, on a whitewater rafting trip down the Ganges River in October 2003.



## W. Averell Harriman Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE JUNIOR OFFICER

### James Arlen Holt

For his courage to do the right thing despite clear warnings that his actions could damage his career, James Arlen Holt was selected for the 2005 W. Averell Harriman Award. Serving as assistant general services officer in his first Foreign Service assignment, a rotational consular/general services officer position at Embassy Seoul, J. Arlen Holt showed exemplary courage and strong character by discovering and reporting apparent fraud and abuse of power committed by a more senior officer.

Soon after transferring to the GSO section of the embassy, "Holt began to notice irregularities in property disposal records and practices," according to his award nomination. "He politely raised the issues with a more senior officer who was involved in the problem. The initial response to his concern was an order that Holt should focus on fulfilling instructions without question or disagreement." He later discovered further questionable practices, which took place during an embassy auction sale.

Making his position even more difficult was the fact that Holt was one of only two officers working for the more senior officer on a compound several miles from the chancery. The physical isolation was further complicated by the fact that, as was later found, several Foreign Service National employees in the section were complicit in defrauding the U.S. government.

Holt then raised his concerns with his section chief, who warned him that his actions could have serious consequences for his future career. He was counseled by his supervisors to stop making trouble and keep quiet. Determined to do what he believed was right, Holt took his concerns up the chain of command to the deputy chief of mission, who had been unaware of these issues. The DCM assured him that his concerns would be

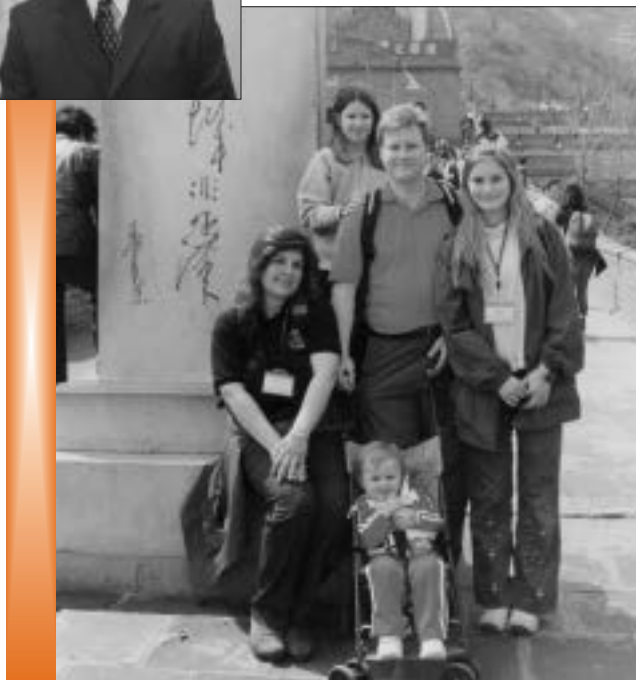
thoroughly investigated and that Holt would not suffer any retribution.

As a result of the investigation, the senior officer is now facing criminal charges, a senior FSN in the section was terminated and other FSNs have been suspended or reprimanded.

"Sure, doing 'the right thing' required determination and I was concerned it would short-circuit my career," comments Holt, "but I also knew it was what the folks back home would expect of me, especially overseas representing what we stand for. I couldn't turn a blind eye to what I knew was wrong."

Embassy Seoul was the first Foreign Service posting for James Holt. Following a brief stint at FSI for Spanish language training, he will head off to San Jose this summer. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Holt was the public information officer for the Pitt County government in Greenville, N.C. He served as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard for five years before that.

Holt and his wife Thania, who is from the former U.S. Canal Zone in Panama, have three daughters, ages 13, 10 and 22 months. Holt was raised in eastern North Carolina where his father was a Baptist minister and his mother a high school social studies and history teacher. "Their lives of public service influenced me greatly even though they passed away when I was young," he says. □



Arlen and Thania Holt, with their three daughters. Inset: Arlen Holt at the office in Seoul.

## Tex Harris Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

### F. Scott Gallo

**O**n an issue of no less importance than the security of the embassy staff and their families, Scott Gallo took a brave stand against a bureaucracy that was pushing the community to move into a new residential compound that he believed was vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Gallo has received the 2005 Tex Harris Award for his constructive and principled dissent on this issue. Following a difficult process that threatened Gallo's career — during which he was viewed by



Above: Scott Gallo at Lake Natron in Tanzania in April 2004.  
Below: The Gallo family on home leave at Pebble Beach, Calif.



some in Washington as a “problem” and an “obstacle” — his dissent proved successful: the necessary changes to address security vulnerabilities were made and embassy personnel moved into the new compound.

As regional security officer for Embassy Nairobi from 2001 to 2004, Gallo was responsible for the security of embassy employees and families at a critical threat post, a post still recovering from the deadly terrorist attack on the embassy in August 1998. During the planning phase for the construction of a new residential compound to protect the American embassy community from rising crime, the objective was expanded to include housing more families and addressing the threat of terrorism. However, it became clear to Gallo and members of the community that the compound was vulnerable to possible terrorist attacks because of its location on an exposed ridge above a shopping mall.

Gallo did not think the compound was secure enough to warrant immediate occupation by embassy families as Washington was instructing. The ambassador and the embassy staff agreed with his view and supported it. Gallo conveyed his security concerns to Washington, along with specific suggestions for mitigating the problems. An assessment team visited post and determined that the security issues were not sufficient to delay occupancy. Gallo did not accept the team's assessment and was criticized by his superiors in Washington

for his dissenting views. Embassy staff were so opposed to moving onto the compound that some said they would curtail their assignments if ordered to move there.

In his steadfast attempts to solve the problem, Gallo outlined compromise solutions, worked out budgetary issues and demonstrated how needed security measures could be implemented quickly. The consistent response from Washington was criticism of Gallo. Yet, ultimately, his view held sway and the appropriate security improvements were made. Embassy personnel are scheduled to move onto the new compound before the end of 2005.

The chief of mission described Gallo's success: “As chief of mission, my primary concern is the well-being and safety of the mission personnel and their families. That I am able to fulfill this goal is a credit to the integrity and the courage shown by Mr. Gallo in sticking to principles and defending the mission's best interests despite the criticisms made of him personally.”

“I've never been one who subscribes to self-preservation or maintaining the status quo,” says Gallo, “and therefore, I'll cherish this special recognition. . . . I'd like to thank Ambassador Mark Bellamy and Deputy Chief of Mission Leslie Rowe for their support in doing the right thing at the right time for mission security, the agencies at post that didn't waver and a special thank-you to Ambassador Don Yamamoto and his staff in the Africa Bureau.”

Scott Gallo and his wife Karin have three children, ages 11, 9 and 5. He began his career with Diplomatic Security in 1985, following seven years with the FBI. He has served in Khartoum, Denver, Washington (Secretary of State's Protective Detail), Dubai, Cairo, Salt Lake City (Olympic Security Coordinator) and Nairobi. He is currently serving in Washington as DS Special Adviser to the Coordinator of Counterterrorism in S/CT. □

These awards honor exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions. Stories by Shawn Dorman.

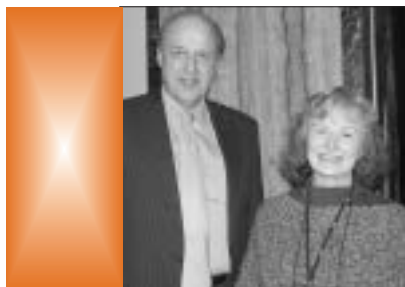
## Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

### Nancy Alain

It was a lucky day for Embassy Baghdad when Nancy Alain arrived as the first management section office management specialist for the new embassy. Nancy Alain has received the 2005 Nelson B. Delavan Award for her extraordinary performance in this job. Working conditions could not have been more difficult: long hours and a seven-day workweek, punctuated by rocket and mortar attacks, and an office she had to set up under a stairwell.

"Nancy brought order out of chaos," states her nomination for the Nelson B. Delavan Award, "and creativity and energy to her job. But more importantly, she brought a contagious enthusiasm to build an embassy like one the world has never seen before ..." She became a key conduit for information and assistance to the endless stream of palace personnel (about 4,000 at last count) including not only the regular foreign affairs agency employees but uniformed military, private security contractors,



Nancy Alain with Ambassador John Negroponte in Baghdad.

Iraqi employees and others, many of whom had never been in an American embassy before. As stated in her nomination, Alain "graciously guided this diverse and ever-changing population through a bureaucratic and institutional maze."

One of the many extraordinary things she did was to guide the efforts by the Iraqi interim prime minister to establish an executive secretariat. She developed flow charts and sample forms, memos and letters, which were used by the new office. In order to assist wounded U.S. soldiers who were hospitalized, she launched an e-mail campaign to provide entertainment options for them, resulting in a generous world-wide response that enabled the presentation of two new DVD players and over 300 DVD movies to the wounded.

As one Air Force commander wrote in an unsolicited commendation of Alain's contributions: "Nancy's drive, talent and interpersonal skills have enabled our respective staffs to work together smoothly, efficiently and professionally, in what is the most hostile and demanding operational environment in the world. There are many in uniform here who have never before worked with an embassy, and for them, Nancy is the State Department. You simply could not ask for a better representative."

The Foreign Service is Nancy Alain's third career, and follows 26 years as a civil engineering project coordinator in the private sector and several years as an executive assistant at three different universities. In 1995, while serving as executive assistant to the vice provost of Columbia University, Nancy Alain got the call from the Foreign Service and hasn't looked back. She has served in Tegucigalpa, Dhaka, Bujumbura, Tallinn and Baghdad, and will head next to Algiers. □

## M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

### Catherine McSherry and Marilyn Tarter



Tarter and McSherry as "Siamese CLOs," at an FSN costume party in Bangkok.

Catherine McSherry and Marilyn Tarter, serving as the community liaison office team for Embassy Bangkok, were selected for the 2005 M. Juanita Guess Award for, among other accomplishments, their extraordinary work responding

to the December 2004 tsunami disaster and aftermath.

Immediately after the tsunami struck the Thai coast, McSherry and Tarter began mobilizing community resources to cope with the tragic event. They organized volunteers to assemble and distribute donations of essential items to tsunami victims: Americans, Thais and others.

McSherry and Tarter recruited volunteers to visit the injured in hospitals, assist them with passport and consular needs, as well as bring books, clothing and cell phones for contacting relatives in the U.S. They helped create a kind of "free store" in the American Citizen Services section of the consular section. They mobilized the community to donate blood. The CLO office served as the clearinghouse for all information and activities dealing with the disaster, and McSherry and Tarter are credited with maintaining high mission morale and a strong sense of community during this critical time.

Tsunami relief was not the only significant contribution made by this outstanding CLO team. Their other accomplishments include: improving the integration program for post newcomers; conducting an assessment of special-needs educational opportunities in Bangkok for prospective bidders; and organizing events and activities to help build stronger bonds between the official American community and the large FSN community. They also played a key role supporting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings that culminated in a presidential state visit.

"Marilyn and I love working together as a team alongside our outstanding FSN CLO Assistant Khun Jeed," says McSherry. "It's great to receive recognition for doing something we find so rewarding."

Catherine McSherry was born in Florida. She met her husband, Foreign Agricultural Service officer Rod McSherry, while both were working in Moscow in 1989. They have two sons. In addition to Moscow and Bangkok, they have been posted to Mexico City and Caracas.

Marilyn Tarter was born and raised in Idaho and is married to Army Col. Dan Tarter. They have two children. They have been in Thailand for seven out of the last 12 years and this is her fourth year as CLO. Previous postings include Chiang Mai and Aschaffenburg, and their next assignment is to Rangoon. □



Tarter with then-Secretary of State Powell and FSN Khun Jeed in January 2004.



## Avis Bohlen Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY MEMBER

### Lisa Vershbow

Over the past four years, Lisa Vershbow has been an extraordinary cultural ambassador for the United States, promoting a wider understanding in Russia of American contemporary art and personally organizing artistic exchange exhibitions. Lisa Vershbow used her professional background as a jewelry designer and teacher to promote American contemporary art and craft in Russia and to reach out to the Russian community.

Vershbow conceived and organized an exchange exhibition in Moscow, featuring works by 35 contemporary jewelry artists from the Washington area and 35 from Moscow — the first-ever major exhibition of its kind in Russia. Another one of her many successful endeavors was to serve as a mentor for a student design company sponsored by Junior Achievement of Russia.



Lisa Vershbow, wearing an original piece of her jewelry. Above: Posters for a Moscow exhibit of Vershbow's work.

Her own creative work has been shown in museums in six major Russian cities. For each of her exhibitions, Vershbow has given a lecture to local curators and critics and taught a master class for local jewelry artists. A curator in Kaliningrad said that one of Vershbow's exhibits had "stimulated a revolution among local designers, who have started to experiment more with non-traditional forms and materials," according to the Bohlen nomination.

Vershbow assembled a highly unusual collection of contemporary American crafts for the Art in Embassies collection at the ambassador's historic residence, Spaso House, and organized tours for local curators and gallery owners to view the exhibits and learn more about American craft movements and artists. She opened Spaso House to the wider expatriate community through her Saturday morning "Art Tours," and provided information about the architecture and history of the residence and background about the artists displayed in the Art in Embassies collection to a wide range of visitors, including Russian art students, members of the embassy community and high-level officials.

In appreciation of her efforts, the Russian Academy of Fine Arts made her an honorary member. "Serving in Moscow as the spouse of the ambassador is a tremendous privilege but has also provided the opportunity for many fascinating experiences as an artist," says Lisa Vershbow. She adds, "Art is a wonderful representational tool and my various projects proved to be a good way to share a slice of American culture." She notes that it is particularly meaningful to be able to carry on the tradition of Avis Bohlen herself, who also lived in Spaso House.

When not posted abroad, Vershbow teaches metalsmithing and design and works out of a studio at the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria. She shows her work at numerous exhibitions. She is married to U.S. Ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow. □

## AFSA Special Achievement Award

### David Dlouhy

In appreciation of his outstanding leadership in improving retiree services at the Department of State, AFSA has chosen to honor David Dlouhy with the AFSA Special Achievement Award. During his 30-year Foreign Service career, Dlouhy has earned the reputation as a man who understands people and processes and who can make the system work. In 2004, he was asked by the director general to take a one-year special assignment as director of the Office of Retirement. He is also serving as the administrator for the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

Dlouhy was assigned to lead the retirement division at a time when AFSA was speaking out on serious deficiencies in the way the retirement office was handling retiree issues and pushing management for action to fix the problems. Dlouhy took the concerns seriously and worked to solve problems that were endemic to the system. As AFSA Retiree Liaison Bonnie Brown put it, "He sees the problems, and he's been responsive."

In pursuing improvements to retiree services, Dlouhy demonstrated genuine and thoughtful concern for the problems facing retirees and those near retirement; commitment to reforming the retirement system; innovation in creating new systems and procedures to enhance services; and exceptional skill in bringing people and interests together in a positive way. He has brought more accountability into the Retiree Office, setting up procedures and protocols that have already helped improve customer service.

Dlouhy helped create a new Web site for Foreign Service retirees and employees – RNet. During Foreign Affairs Day, May 6, Dlouhy officially launched the new site. AFSA had previously asked the director general to create a Web site for retirees, and David Dlouhy deserves much of the credit for the establishment of this Web service. State describes it as "the Internet gateway to a lifetime relationship with the Department of State for active employees participating in our retirement programs and retirees and annu-



David Dlouhy and AFSA State Vice President Louise Crane during Foreign Affairs Day, May 2005.

Continued on page 9

**Achievement Award • Continued from page 8**

itants enjoying the extended benefits of a global career. RNet is about continuity from active employment through active retirement.” Visit the site at [www.rnet.state.gov](http://www.rnet.state.gov).

Dlouhy played the key role in working with AFSA to produce a statement of mutual expectations and rights, outlining what Foreign Service employees and retirees should expect from the retirement branch and what the retirement branch should expect from Foreign Service employees and retirees. This agreement sets out goals for better service and, if followed, will go a long way toward giving retirees the service they need and deserve. The rights for employees and retirees include courteous and timely responses to inquiries and requests for assistance; access to retirement records that are accurate and complete; an interactive, easy-to-use Web site that provides annuity statement information and allows users to perform most transactions online.

“I need to make sure that all of us, Civil Service and Foreign Service, get that pot of gold at the end of the career rainbow — a good, secure retirement,” says Dlouhy. “Our department leadership is fully committed and there are good people here trying to make that happen. AFSA’s award is a recognition of this commitment and the contributions that many people are making. I am just waving a baton around trying to get the notes right on a new score.”

AFSA applauds David Dlouhy for taking on this difficult assignment and for all that he has accomplished in a short time to improve retirement-related services to Foreign Service employees and retirees.

Dlouhy has previously served in Conakry, Santiago, San Salvador, Luxembourg, La Paz and Washington, and has held a number of special positions, including U.S. Representative to the Council for Bosnia-Herzegovina Dayton Peace Agreement and Special Adviser to the Director General/Diplomatic Readiness Task Force. □

**Foreign Affairs Day • Continued from page 1**



PHOTOS: JAY WALLIN

Family of John O’Grady. From left: Brenda O’Grady Liistro (daughter), Elsie O’Grady (widow), Brian O’Grady (son) and Michael O’Grady (grandson).



Brothers and nephews of James Mollen.

AFSA President John Limbert gave remarks and introduced Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, who was representing Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice because she was traveling. He read a message from President Bush and paid his respects to the families of the three employees.

Edward J. Seitz was a Diplomatic Security special agent serving as the assistant regional security officer for Embassy Baghdad when he was killed in October 2004 by a rocket attack on a military base near the Baghdad airport. James Mollen was murdered by terrorists in November 2004, while serving as Embassy Baghdad’s senior consultant to the Iraqi ministries of education and higher education. John O’Grady lost his life in June 1960, in an airplane crash off the coast of Queensland, Australia, while serving as the U.S. consul in Brisbane. (His name was added in 2005 because of a subsequent change to the criteria for inscription on the plaques.)

A United States Armed Forces Color Guard presented the colors at the solemn ceremony. Family members of the men honored were in attendance and were greeted by Under Secretary Burns and State Director General W. Robert Pearson. Others in attendance were Representative Sander Levin, D-Mich., Embassy of Australia’s Minister Counselor and Consul



Director General W. Robert Pearson (left) greets Rep. Sander Levin, D-Mich. and Alba Seitz, mother of Edward Seitz.

General John McAnulty, Trade and Investment Commissioner for the Queensland government in the U.S. Bob Gibbs, Deputy Director General of the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service Thomas Moore, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Operations of the Foreign & Commercial Service Barry Friedman.

**Other Foreign Affairs Day Activities**

Prior to the plaque ceremony, Under Secretary Burns gave the keynote address to the nearly 500 Foreign Service and Civil Service retirees attending Foreign Affairs Day. After the plaque ceremony, participants chose among various seminars on regional and global issues led by State Department officials.

In a presentation to Foreign Affairs Day participants, Retirement Office Director David Dlouhy introduced the RNet Web site. The RNet site seeks to help reconnect retirees to the department and to provide information on retirement issues.

AFSA staff greeted Foreign Affairs Day participants and gave out complimentary tote bags and copies of the *Foreign Service Journal* as well as information about many AFSA programs of interest to retirees.

Following the conclusion of Foreign Affairs Day, AFSA held a reception at the Foreign Service Club for attendees. During the reception, AFSA honored scholarship recipients, many of whom were present to receive their certificates. By presenting scholarships to Foreign Service children during a day honoring retirees, AFSA helps bring the generations of future, current and past Foreign Service members together. □

# Taking the Foreign Service Message to the Hill

BY AUSTIN TRACY, AFSA EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

On May 5, during AFSA's fifth annual Day on the Hill program, 27 retired and three active-duty Foreign Service members, along with AFSA Governing Board members and staff, visited 19 congressional offices. AFSA has made a tradition of inviting retirees in town for Foreign Affairs Day to join us for a visit to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and staffers on issues related to the Foreign Service and foreign affairs. This year, the 30 colleagues participating in Day on the Hill represented seven states and the District of Columbia (Calif., Mass., Md., N.Y., Ohio, Va. and Wash.).

The main active-duty issues AFSA took to the Hill were: eliminating the overseas pay disparity; the need to pass a Foreign Relations authorization bill; and support of the administration's FY 2006 international affairs funding request. The retiree issues included: support of legislation to allow retirees to pay for health care premiums with pre-tax retirement annuity dollars; support for legislation that would repeal both the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset; and concerns about Social Security reform.

Mary Locke, senior professional staff for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, addressed the whole group in a plenary session before the meetings. Locke spoke about the need to increase awareness among both the American people and Congress on the importance of the Foreign Service and the work they do. Locke pointed out the failure of Congress over the past few years to pass a foreign relations authorization bill as indicative of the relative unimportance Congress assigns to the role of the foreign affairs agencies and diplomacy.

It is not that Congress does not care



PHOTOS: MIKKELA THOMPSON

about foreign affairs, Locke explained, but rather when it needs to find an offset to fund a program, it will often target foreign affairs funding. Locke pointed to the recent vote to take funding in the supplemental bill away from the State Department in order to hire more border patrol agents. AFSA and its members must work to change the perception that no harm comes from using "150 Account" funds to support domestic objectives.

After a Q&A session with Ms. Locke, participants separated into smaller groups to visit the offices of their representatives and senators. Because AFSA had already sent copies of its briefing packet to the offices being visited, many congressional staffers were well prepared for a discussion on our issues.

AFSA's message on eliminating overseas pay disparity seems to be gaining traction this year. More congressional staffers are aware of the issue this year than last. Our three active-duty colleagues were very effective in explaining the issue. Several offices,

notably the sponsors of bills regarding premium conversion and WEP and GPO, were delighted to hear that AFSA supported their bills.

Now for the bad news. Several congressional staffers were pessimistic about the passage of a foreign relations authorization bill.

## Virtual Day on the Hill

This year, AFSA introduced a new initiative called "Virtual Day on the Hill" to allow those unable to travel to Washington, D.C., to help advocate Foreign Service issues. AFSA asked that members call, write, e-mail or fax their members of Congress, and provided a sample letter to send as well as contact information for each representative and senator. AFSA plans to improve and expand this initiative next year. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please let us know. Send feedback to Austin Tracy at [tracy@afsa.org](mailto:tracy@afsa.org). □





## Call for Nominations: Outstanding Volunteers

Nominations are being accepted now until Oct. 7 for the annual AAFSW/Secretary of State's Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad, known as SOSA. These awards recognize the outstanding volunteer activities of U.S. government employees and family members serving overseas. One winner will be selected from each of the regional bureaus, and, from these, a worldwide winner will be chosen to receive the newly established Green Global Volunteer Award.

This year, both the SOSA and Green Awards will be presented at a ceremony at the Department of State in December. All winners will be flown to Washington, D.C., to receive their awards, which last year consisted of a certificate signed by the Secretary of State, a pin, and a check for \$1,000.

Nominations should cover volunteer activities in one or more of the following categories: exceptional service to the official U.S. community; outstanding activities directed toward the host country; and/or exceptional service during emergencies at post.

Posts and individuals may submit as many nominations as they wish. Each nomination should not exceed three printed pages and should include the name of the nominee and, if a family member, the name and relationship to the direct-hire employee and position and agency. Please also include the nominator's name, agency and a description of association with the nominee. The narrative should discuss the actions and qualities that qualify the nominee for the award, with specific examples of accomplishments that fulfill the criteria.

All nominations should be mailed to: AAFSW Office, 5125 MacArthur Blvd, NW, Suite 36, Washington, DC 20016; e-mailed to: [office@aafsw.org](mailto:office@aafsw.org); or faxed to: (202) 362-6589. For more information call AAFSW at (202) 362-6514 or go to the Web site at [www.aafsw.org/aafsw/awards.htm#sosa](http://www.aafsw.org/aafsw/awards.htm#sosa).

## Memories of 1940s Moscow?

Andrew Meier, former Moscow correspondent for *Time* magazine and author of *Black Earth: A Journey through Russia after the Fall*, is doing research for an upcoming book about an American killed by Stalin in 1947. If you have recollections of any of the following people, please share them with him: Amb. Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr.; Francis Bowden Stevens; or any of three special agents: Daniel H. Clare, R.D. Clark and T.F. Fitch. Send input to [andrew.meier@earthlink.net](mailto:andrew.meier@earthlink.net).

## BOOKFAIR Donations

The AAFSW needs handicrafts, artwork, coins and stamps from around the world to sell at its 45th annual BOOKFAIR. Donations may be dropped off at the book room (State Department B816) — please call first. For pick-up, or drop-off, call Virginia Jones at (202) 223-5796. From overseas, items may be pouched to the AAFSW BOOKROOM, #B816 HST. (No more book donations are being accepted.)

## D.C. Pension Tax Relief

The D.C. Council did not include pension tax relief in its 2006 budget, which included \$94 million in tax breaks and \$500 million in new programs. There is still a possibility for this tax relief in a second reading of the budget, however, if pension relief becomes tied to a revenue trigger (or receipt of excess revenue). Go to [www.afsa.org/retiree/DCTax.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/retiree/DCTax.cfm) for councilmember telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

## Gone to Carolina

Kudos from AFSA to retiree Ed Williams and his group "Carolina Friends of the Foreign Service" for their outstanding efforts to promote the Foreign Service to their regional audiences, including the major universities in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area. AFSA President John Limbert addressed this active and well-organized group in Chapel Hill on May 1, talking about "the state of the union" — current issues for retirees and active-duty employees and our efforts to carry (with their help) the message of pride in our profession. Our North Carolina colleagues publish an excellent monthly online magazine, *American Diplomacy*. Visit the site at: <http://americandiplomacy.org>.

## Seeking Marketing Director for *Tales from a Small Planet*

The Webzine *Tales from a Small Planet* — [www.talesmag.com](http://www.talesmag.com) — is seeking a marketing director to manage fundraising activities. This small non-profit organization serves the Foreign Service community and everyone else interested in "what it's really like to live there." *Tales*, founded and run primarily by Foreign Service family members, aims to enrich and share the experience of living abroad through *Real Post Reports* and literature, and to provide information and resources for expatriates around the world.

The marketing position is paid on a commission-only basis, and payment is equal to 10 percent of any deposited funds from activities directly associated with the fundraising work. For more information or to apply for the position, e-mail CEO Sonia Evans at [sonia@talesmag.com](mailto:sonia@talesmag.com).



# 2005 AFSA Merit Award Winners

AFSA is proud to announce the 23 Foreign Service high school seniors who were selected as the 2005 Merit Award winners. These one-time-only awards, totaling \$26,750, were bestowed on May 6. AFSA congratulates these students for their academic and artistic achievements. Winners received \$1,500 awards and honorable mention winners received \$500 awards. The best essay winner received \$250. Judges were drawn from the Foreign Service community.

This year, 61 students competed for the 15 Academic Merit Awards. They were judged on grade-point average, Scholastic Assessment Test scores, essays, letters of recommendation, extra-curricular activities and any special circumstances. From the Academic Merit Award applicants, a best-essay winner (James Donovan) and a community-service winner (Scott Warren) were selected.

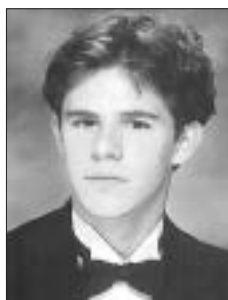
Sixteen students submitted art merit applications under one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, drama or creative writing. Art applicants were judged on their art submission,

letters of recommendation and essays. Devin Mawdsley was selected as the Art Merit Award winner for his submissions of oil, pastel and acrylic. Martin de Vlyder was selected as the Art Merit Award honorable mention winner for his piano submissions. Finally, Nicholas Klinger was selected as the Achievement Award winner.

Four academic merit named scholarships have been established to date, and these awards are bestowed on the highest-scoring students. The recipients of these scholarships were: Aaron Curtis, for the Association of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholarship; Sally Morgan, for the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholarship; W. Stuart Symington, for the John C. Leary Memorial Scholarship; and Whitney Martin, for the Donald S. and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholarship.

For more information on the AFSA Merit Awards, the AFSA Scholarship Program, or how to establish a named scholarship, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504, or [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org). Please visit our Web site at [www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm).

## Academic Merit and Art Merit Winners



**Devin Mawdsley:** AFSA Art Merit winner; son of Christopher Mawdsley (State) and Valerie Mawdsley (State); graduate of George C. Marshall High School, Falls Church, Va.; attending The College of William and Mary, majoring in international relations, languages or philosophy.



**Isaac Cowell:** son of Karen and Bainbridge Cowell (State); graduate of Carol Morgan School, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; attending Bowdoin College, majoring in humanities.



**Aaron Curtis:** recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Academic Merit Scholarship; son of Keith Curtis (FCS) and Bert Curtis (State); graduate of Kungsholmen's Gymnasium, Stockholm, Sweden; attending Cambridge or the University of Virginia, majoring in geography or earth science.



**Aaron Haviland:** son of Andrew Haviland (State) and Patricia Haviland; graduate of American Embassy School, New Delhi, India; attending the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., majoring in physics.



**Tara Mahoney:** daughter of Christopher Mahoney and Carolyn Cohen (USDA APHIS); graduate of Carol Morgan School, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; attending The College of William and Mary, majoring in biology.



**Daniel Neitzke:** son of Ronald Neitzke (State) and Jean Neitzke (State); graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology, Alexandria, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in philosophy.



**Brendan Owen:** son of Michael Owen (State) and Annerieke Owen-Huisman (State); graduate of the International School of Tanganyika, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; attending Princeton University, majoring in computer science and international relations.



**Joel Pattison:** son of Stephen Pattison (State) and Carolyn Johnson (State); graduate of Lancing College, West Sussex, United Kingdom; attending Yale University, majoring in history.



**W. Stuart Symington:** recipient of the John C. Leary Memorial Academic Merit Scholarship; son of Susan and Stuart Symington (State); graduate of J.E.B. Stuart High School, Falls Church, Va.; majoring in economics, Japanese or film studies.



**Elaine Tousignant:** daughter of Jeanne Porrazzo and Alan Tousignant (State); graduate of the American International School of Johannesburg, South Africa; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in government and foreign affairs.



**Scholarship winners who attended the May 6 ceremony.**

Back row from left: John Limbert, AFSA President; David Neitzke; James Donovan; Devin Mawdsley; Ambassador Edward Dillery, AFSA Committee on Education Chairman; Mrs. Terri Williams, AAFSW Past President; Mr. William Pope, Martin de Vlyder's father; and Mary and James, Jr. Warlick, Jamie Warlick's parents. Front row seated: Sally Morgan; J.R. Lanzet; W. Stuart Symington; Nicholas Klinger; and Whitney Martin.

**PMA Presents AFSA with \$3,700 check**

On May 6, in honor of the 37th anniversary of the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service, PMA presented a check for \$3,700 to AFSA to be awarded under the AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship Program. This award was given in memory of Ambassador Paul Henry Nitze, a longtime PMA member whose senior government posts spanned nearly half a century and eight presidents. The AFSA Scholarship Fund has bestowed a PMA scholarship every year since 1992 on a college junior or senior majoring in foreign affairs who is a child of a Foreign Service employee.

From left: Nadia Bobb, 2004/05 AFSA Financial Aid PMA Scholarship Recipient; Nick Frankhouser, PMA Scholarship Director; and Ambassador Edward Dillery, Chairman of the AFSA Committee on Education, at PMA's 2005 annual luncheon at the State Department.



**Academic Merit Honorable Mention Winners – \$500**

**Andrew DeWitt:** son of Gloria and Robert DeWitt (State); graduate of Shanghai American School, China; attending Brigham Young University, major undecided.

**Andrea Griffiths:** daughter of Jeanne and Robert Griffiths (State); graduate of the International School of Beijing, China; attending Brigham Young University, double majoring in economics and Chinese.

**Eric Sheely:** son of Julie and John Sheely (State); graduate of James Madison High School, Vienna, Va.; attending Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, majoring in international relations.

**AFSA Achievement Award**

**Nicholas Klinger:** son of Gene Klinger (State) and Lin Carroll (State); graduate of Gaithersburg High School, Gaithersburg, Md.; attending Marshall University in Huntington, W. Va., majoring in theater and journalism.

**Art Merit Honorable Mention Winner**

**Martin de Vlyder:** son of Christina Hoffman and William Pope (State); graduate of West Springfield High School, Springfield, Va.; college choice pending.

**Best-Essay Winner**

**James Donovan:** son of Mei Chou Donovan and Joseph Donovan (State); graduate of George C. Marshall High School, Vienna, Va.; attending The College of William and Mary, pursuing a liberal arts degree. To read James Donovan's essay, please visit [www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm).



**Whitney Martin:** recipient of the Donald S. Spigler and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Academic Merit Scholarship; daughter of Kristen Williams and Thomas Martin (State); graduate of The Maret School, Washington, D.C.; attending Stanford University, majoring in psychology.



**John Miller:** son of Thomas Miller (State) and Eleni Miller (State); graduate of George C. Marshall High School, Ankara, Turkey; attending University of Maryland, majoring in international business.



**Sally Morgan:** recipient of the John and Priscilla Becker Family Academic Merit Scholarship; daughter of Francilla Morgan and Thomas Morgan (State); graduate of Langley High School, McLean, Va.; attending Virginia Tech, majoring in geosciences.



**Scott Warren:** son of Randee and Glenn Warren (State); graduate of the American International School, Quito, Ecuador; attending Brown University, majoring in international relations. Scott also received the Community Service Award.



**James Warlick III:** son of James, Jr. Warlick (State) and Mary Warlick (State); graduate of St. Albans School, Washington, D.C.; attending Yale University, majoring in biology or English.



**Andrea Zvinakis:** daughter of Anh and Dennis Zvinakis (USAID); graduate of International School Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Thailand; attending University of California – Berkeley, majoring in business administration.

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