

**SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION
AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE ASSOCIATION • APRIL 2021**

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

**AFSA Governing Board Election for the 2021 to 2023 Term
Governing Board Candidates**

Nominee:	Position:	Nominee:	Position:
Eric Rubin *	President	Christen Machak *	State Rep
Daniel Crocker *	Secretary	Carson Relitz Rocker *	State Rep
John O'Keefe *	Treasurer	L. Reece Smyth *	State Rep
Thomas Yazdgerdi *	State VP	Stephanie Straface	State Rep
Jason Singer *	USAID VP	Hui Jun Tina Wong *	State Rep
John K. Naland	Retiree VP	—	USAID Rep
Jay Carreiro *	FCS VP	—	FCS Alternate Rep
—	FAS VP	—	FAS Alternate Rep
Joshua Archibald *	State Rep	Russell Duncan *	APHIS Rep
Maurice Brungardt	State Rep	Steve Herman *	USAGM Rep
Camille Dockery	State Rep	Mary Daly *	Retiree Rep
Kimberly Harrington	State Rep	Philip Shull *	Retiree Rep
Maria Hart *	State Rep		

** Member of the Strong Diplomacy slate*

ELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members

Erin Nicholson, Chair Dao M. Le
Mort Dworken Rodney LeGrand
Marcia Friedman

AFSA Staff Members

Sharon Papp, General Counsel
Ásgeir Sigfússon, Executive Director

Contact the Committee on Elections by email at election@afsa.org ■

2021-2023 AFSA Governing Board Election Candidates' Statements

In contested positions, the order of statements was determined by a drawing of lots.

Camille Dockery, State Representative

I am running for AFSA State representative because I see a continued need for the board to reflect all demographics, grades, cones, and specialties at State, just as the Department should reflect the makeup of the United States. I would like to serve as a connection between AFSA and entry and early-mid level Foreign Service personnel, as many of these officers are not aware of AFSA's various roles. As the COVID pandemic continues, I believe we should take this opportunity to examine the Department's posture on workplace flexibilities. I also believe, given the recent change in administration, we should advocate for the remaining third of Overseas Comparability Pay. I look forward to working toward greater career mobility, professional development opportunities, and transparency in assignments and promotions for Foreign Service personnel. Unconscious bias continues to be an issue at the Department. In order to achieve the ideal of a service representative of the U.S. population, we need to further address the bias inherent in our systems. I am running as an independent candidate, along with others like Kimberly Harrington and Stephanie Straface, in order to better represent all members of the Foreign Service.

Russell Duncan, APHIS Representative*

I am running for APHIS Foreign Service Representative. I am a 15-year member of the Foreign Service within USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, International Services division. I have served APHIS' safeguarding and trade missions in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Currently I am on domestic assignment with APHIS' Biotechnology Regulatory Services as an advisor on international engagements. I understand the unique dual career of our FSOs as technical science expert and U.S. diplomats; two critical areas of rebuilding in the current administration.

I am happy to join Ambassador Rubin on his Strong Diplomacy slate as it represents the needs of our APHIS members to promote diversity, inclusion, and employee equity within our organization. Over the next two years, I will aim to provide

avenues for engagement and advocacy to all members of the foreign service as a member of the governing board.

Bio note: As an Agriculture Science Officer, Mr. Duncan holds a Bachelor of Science degree in General Biology from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and a Master of Science in Plant Biology from Rutgers University in New Jersey. Mr. Duncan is a recipient of the APHIS Administrator's Award for building regional Animal Health capacity in West Africa and USDA's Abraham Lincoln Honor Award for his role in opening new markets for U.S. agriculture products to South Africa.

Philip Shull, Retiree Representative*

I am honored to run for a third term as one of the Retiree Representatives on the Strong Diplomacy slate (SD). As your representative, I know retiree priorities include preservation and explanation of benefits and learning of ways to continue contributing to the greater good. If re-elected, I will advocate for a fair annual COLA and ensure AFSA's services to retirees remain robust and easily accessible. This includes advocating to remove limits on WAE hours and annual earnings. I will also work to expand opportunities for retirees can share our experiences, insights, and the history we helped shape.

AFSA's tireless work over the past four years helped the Foreign Service through an extraordinarily challenging period. AFSA's successes were due to perseverance and adherence to our core mission of advocating for the Foreign Service and doing what is necessary to maintain its excellence. This task remains urgent.

Over my 31 years with USDA/FAS I served in Beijing (twice), Guangzhou, Seoul, Buenos Aires (including Uruguay and Paraguay), Hong Kong, and Manila. I retired in 2016 as Minister Counselor in Beijing. In every post, interagency teams leveraged our diverse expertise and perspectives to produce powerful and invaluable results. Indeed, wherever we serve and in whatever capacity, our experience, judgement, and insights acquired through hard work under challenging conditions have proven vital to the nation—and still are.

Thomas Yazdgerdi, State Vice President*

I am once again honored to be part of the Strong Diplomacy slate as the candidate for State VP, running under the proven and dedicated leadership of Eric Rubin. We begin our engagement with the new administration with a renewed sense of purpose by getting the resources the Foreign Service needs to be truly effective; pushing for parity with our military and intelligence community colleagues regarding pay and benefits; promoting the Foreign Service on the Hill and throughout the country; and, most importantly, making diversity and inclusion not just a buzz phrase but a reality.

I am proud of the work we have done on behalf of our membership during the 2019-2021 electoral period and the record of success we have achieved. To name just a few, we got the Department to agree to 20 hours of administrative leave per pay period so that our members, especially working parents, could take care of their children or other relatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. We pushed the Department to expand by 50 percent the Pickering and Rangel Fellowships, proven programs which have brought underprivileged and underrepresented communities into the Foreign Service. We fought for those who received Meritorious Service Increases in 2015 and 2016 but were not given any monetary increase by the Department. In a recent decision by the Foreign Service Labor Relations Board, AFSA won: all will get their backpay—with interest. And we advocated with Department leadership and our bipartisan Hill contacts to support legislation for paid student internships so less privileged kids can get the experience they need to consider making the Foreign Service a career.

We stand at a crossroads to retool the performance appraisal and bidding and assignments processes and to remake the State Department in America's image. As the Department embarks on this effort, AFSA will be there as a partner to provide input and weigh results. I look to our members to give us their ideas on how we can do both these fundamental and challenging things. We need to have faith in the integrity of our personnel system, but also in the commitment to a work culture that demonstrates opportunity and advancement for all.

Joshua Archibald, State Department Representative*

Together with Ambassador Rubin and the Strong Diplomacy slate, I am running for reelection to help revitalize and strengthen the Foreign Service while maintaining AFSA's focus on key issues. In-state tuition for the Foreign Service

remains my #1 goal, and we've seen significant progress with this Congress. Both chambers are set to introduce bipartisan versions of the Foreign Service Families Act, and both include a section that requires states to offer in-state tuition rates to Foreign Service employees, their spouses, and dependent children after 30 days of being domiciled or posted in a state. I'll continue to push for increased transparency from management, on such issues as promotions, assignments, and COVID.

As a tandem and an O1 economic officer, with over 20 years in the Foreign Service, I know the Department can make positive changes, and that a strong AFSA plays a key role in convincing senior leadership to do the right thing. I've served in Washington and abroad, with a breadth of assignments from the 7th floor, to INL in San Salvador, to the sole economic officer in Laos, wearing AID and FCS hats, and growing a demining program to protect kids from unexploded cluster bombs. My favorite jobs in the FS married policy with actual, tangible results, and that's what I want to keep doing while representing you on AFSA's board.

Christen Machak, State Department Representative*

My name is Christy Machak and I am honored to be running to serve as an AFSA State Representative as part of the Strong Diplomacy Slate.

I believe that part of strong diplomacy is ensuring that the Foreign Service attracts and retains the most talented officers, so if elected, I'd like to focus on issues that affect mid-level retention. This includes recognizing the unique challenges faced by Foreign Service family members and identifying opportunities to provide further support, promoting diversity and inclusion within our ranks, working to address widely-shared concerns about the promotion and bidding processes, and coordinating with the appropriate offices to advocate for an agile and adaptable work place that welcomes telework flexibilities when possible. I look forward to listening to your concerns and will do my best to advocate on your behalf.

I joined the Foreign Service in 2006 through the Rangel Fellowship program. I am a political-coned officer and have served in Berlin, Port of Spain, Dhaka, and The Hague as well as in Washington in the Nuclear Risk Reduction Center and on the Kosovo Desk. I am also a wife, a mother, and a member of Balancing Act and the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship Association.

Stephanie Straface, State Department Representative

America should be represented by its true colors so I am asking for your vote to be a State Department representative on the 2021-2023 AFSA Governing Board so I can make significant progress in the fair and equitable promotion of professional FSOs. This means institutional changes to evaluations, bidding, and the access to teleworking options for parents, persons with disabilities, and others. I will search for opportunities to develop professionals who are underrepresented in the Foreign Service leadership ranks - women, people of color, and persons with disabilities - to help them rise to leadership positions and truly showcase the multicultural America we are all so proud of.

I, too, have experienced much of what is quietly complained about in the Foreign Service. I've witnessed unconscious bias, the depletion of great officers, and questioned the system for promotions, evaluations, and bidding.

Despite the challenges, I've also seen many improvements and not least of all because of AFSA advocating on behalf of the Foreign Service for their institutional well-being. I will be part of the bigger picture which promotes the professional interests of the Foreign Service, represents the Foreign Service to our home country, and supports the families of Foreign Service members to become successes themselves.

It is my sincere hope that you will give me your vote so I can advocate for you.

John O'Keefe, Treasurer*

As part of the talented group on the Strong Diplomacy slate, I am running for the position of Treasurer. Eric Rubin, current President of AFSA, has outlined our plans in his statement for re-election. We at the Foreign Affairs agencies face a rare opportunity to influence the Biden Administration and Congress as they seek a significant restructuring of the Foreign Affairs community. That task will call on our collective skills to move legislation and funding to secure the tools needed to advance the interests of the United States. It means investing in our people through overhauling training and developing our talent. It means taking care of our members and their families. It means better recruitment strategies for diversification of our Foreign Service.

My primary objective, if elected Treasurer, is oversight of the finances of AFSA. Drawing on the top-notch staff at AFSA, we can support their good work on our behalf by ensuring

resources are well managed and directed toward your benefit.

In the broader arena of Foreign Service reform, we not only must claw back the diminished budgets we have suffered over the years but help create landmark legislation and new procedures to make our work effective. Listening to your ideas is the first step, and a continuing requirement all along the way. This impetus for change is widely shared among senior policy makers, among the many members of Congress who understand the critical role of diplomacy, and members of AFSA.

Under Eric Rubin's leadership and with the dedicated group I am honored to be a part of, we have the right people to help influence the profound changes that are underway.

Bio note: John O'Keefe headed the Open World Leadership Center, one of the 11 Legislative Branch agencies, from 2007 to 2017, and then as Counselor to the Board of Trustees through 2019. Before that, he served 32 years in the Foreign Service. He has been Deputy Director of the Foreign Service Institute, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources, Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, Minister Counselor for Management in Moscow, Deputy Executive Director of the European Bureau, and Management Counselor in Belgrade during the disintegration of Yugoslavia. He also served in Manila and Oslo.

Steve Herman, USAGM Representative*

I joined the AFSA board as the USAGM representative in 2017 after moving Stateside for the first time as a Foreign Service officer. Under AFSA rules, the board representative cannot be based overseas, and the position had been vacant for some years. Since then I have regularly attended the governing board meetings, held numerous consultations with the AFSA presidents and staff to protect the jobs of our USAGM Foreign Service officers and adjudicate labor issues affecting our members.

Despite us being the smallest Foreign Service component in the U.S. government, AFSA has always been extremely responsive to all of our concerns and has dedicated considerable time and resources when issues arise affecting both our members and non-members of the Foreign Service. We have also begun regular virtual meetings with USAGM and VOA management to discuss issues of common concern and to improve communication between the entities and with our members.

I urge you to contact me whenever you have a question or issue. If I cannot immediately resolve the matter, I will refer

you to the right professional on AFSA's team who will provide their experienced counsel. AFSA President Eric Rubin has personally participated in some of the more critical discussions and has a strong personal interest in our mission and the protection of our members. For that we are grateful.

Maria Hart, State Department Representative*

As I seek reelection for AFSA State Representative 2021-2023, I will not make promises I cannot keep. I will; however, push for clarity, ask questions, and send emails. I will continue until there are answers or discussions to address the issues, while giving feedback and seeking resolutions. I will use my experience to foster change and seek the wisdom of my AFSA counterparts, who have served in the trenches and seen the worst become the best. I will endeavor to see transformation for the OMS corps. We are stronger when all are standing on equal ground. I am Maria Hart; thank you for your vote.

Maria is a Foreign Service Specialist (OMS), currently serving as a staff assistant in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs. She joined the Foreign Service (FS) in 2005 and has served at U.S. Embassies Accra, Tel Aviv, Baghdad, Tashkent, Wellington, Madagascar, and Kabul. Before the FS, Maria was a Citizen Services Specialist (Abduction Officer) in the Office of Children's Issues. She later transferred to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) as a Management Analyst, conducting research and inspections, while developing best practices to reduce waste, fraud, and mismanagement. She holds a M.A. in News Journalism, Regent University and ABD/Ph.D. in African Studies, Howard University.

Hui Jun Tina Wong, State Department Representative*

My vision is to see AFSA partner with the State Department and Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs) to build equity, strengthen transparency, and remove institutional barriers so our members are fully equipped to lead and advance diplomacy at home and abroad. My three policy goals as one of the State Department representatives are: 1) Advocate for and increase our members' access to disaggregated Department data; 2) Build on President Biden's call for equity and inclusion by increasing collaboration, urging for the prioritization of State resources, and reducing

redundancies, working alongside Department stakeholders, Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Councils, and EAGs; and 3) Increase AFSA's dialogue with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Office of the Deputy Undersecretary, and the Undersecretary for Management on concrete deliverables in the new Assignment Restrictions Task Force, and to operationalize all recommendations that remove bias, implement a fair appeals mechanism, and increase transparency in the assignment restrictions process.

Bio: Tina Wong was elected 2019-2020 President of the Asian American Foreign Affairs Association, served as core member of the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs' D&I Council, and is currently member of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR) D&I Council and EUR Driving Diversity, Growth, and Excellence (EDGE). She serves in EUR's Office of Policy and Regional Affairs. Her previous assignments included EB's trade team, Embassy Mexico City, and Embassy Beijing.

Mary Daly, Retiree Representative*

As Eric notes, the Foreign Service faced a trying period. For that very reason, my gratitude to you for entrusting me with this opportunity is profound; I would be honored to receive your vote for a second term.

Serving on the board brings myriad tasks, from the particular issues Phil Shull describes defending retirees' interests and benefits, to serving on committees (I chair the Awards and Plaques committee and serve on several others), to drawing on our long careers to help AFSA develop its strategy. As we shift from "defending" to "rebuilding" the Foreign Service, I'll continue to draw on my Hill experience, most recently during Tillerson's tenure when I worked with Congress to protect the budget, set a floor below which the Foreign Service could not be cut, and invigorate the Foreign Service caucus.

What serving as your representative always means is reviewing AFSA actions from the point of view of retirees, including ensuring Congressional advocacy encompasses your interests. This year, the board endorsed my proposal to make lifting caps on re-employment part of our broader advocacy with Congress for parity with the military.

Moving forward, I will continue to fight for you. Let me know what's on your mind.

Mary Daly is a retired FSO. Her career focused on European, Congressional, and Human Rights issues.

Jay Carreiro, FCS Vice President*

Dear Colleagues:

The Foreign Commercial Service plays a critical role in advancing U.S. interests in every region of the world. While you as commercial officers do the hard work to ensure our companies get a fair shake and that our interests abroad are protected, it is AFSA's job to ensure that your agency provides the tools and resources you need to work effectively. This includes effective outreach and advocacy in Washington, as well as working closely with our Commerce management team to advance our mission. I'm excited to be part of that effort and I ask for your vote for FCS VP.

I'm also delighted to be part of Ambassador Rubin's Strong Diplomacy slate. I can say without reservation, that this team cares about the entire Foreign Service and will work tirelessly for all members. For my part, I will continue to push for transparency at all levels within Commerce, especially with respect to budget and workforce planning. I will continue to dive into current debates on the role of trade promotion and commercial diplomacy, challenge assumptions where necessary, and work toward reasonable outcomes. As always, I will rely heavily on your feedback to ensure that our voice is fully heard.

I will continue to engage vigorously with our backers in Congress and will leverage our relationships with our District Export Councils and other stakeholders throughout the country to raise our profile. My outreach strategy will also include our colleagues in the domestic field who are often our best conduits to members of Congress, and our most underappreciated resource.

Finally, while being a commercial officer is certainly both challenging and rewarding, no one ever said it would be easy. As you all know, living and working overseas requires resilience and sometimes sacrifice. AFSA can, and should, play a role in ensuring that life in the foreign service goes as smoothly as possible for you and your families. My door will always be open, and if you feel you're not getting the support or guidance you need, I want to hear from you. I will do my part to advance your interests, hold management accountable, and ensure that our organization provides the support you need and deserve.

Biographical Note: Jay Carreiro is a career Foreign Service officer and a 20-year veteran of the Commerce Department. He is the current Vice President for FCS. Prior to joining Commerce, Jay worked as a judicial law clerk in New Jersey. He can be reached at: jay.carreiro@gmail.com.

Kimberly Harrington, State Department Representative

The Foreign Service has given so much to my family and me over the past 18 years. I would love to give back by serving as your voice on the board.

I'll advocate for State to meet its commitments on diversity and inclusion. This translates into common sense policies like name/gender blind evaluations. I'm thrilled at the announcement of a Chief Diversity Officer; I'll work to strengthen platforms to ensure your great ideas to advance diversity are funneled into our policies. Mid-level hiring is not the answer to increasing diversity; instead, we should focus on holding on to existing talent.

State must work to retain FSOs via policies that promote work-life balance for all. As vaccines allow for more in-person work, I envision a Department that embraces a blended technology environment, creating a more agile workforce. Managers have seen efficiencies that can be gained through telework; let's not forget these lessons post-pandemic.

As part of a tandem couple, I understand the challenges of navigating two FS careers. I support expanding the DETO program, and the quick resolution of nepotism reviews, including for EFMs. Ethics is imperative; but we need to slash the red tape that hinders tandems from professional advancement.

If elected, my door will always be open to hear your ideas on how we can best support our colleagues and the Department.

Maurice Brungardt, State Department Representative

With over 18 years in the Foreign Service serving domestically and abroad accompanied by my family, I can relate to you and your experiences, both professionally and personally, in one way or another. As a special agent with Diplomatic Security, we are able to create safe and secure environments for the successful conduct of diplomacy because we work as a team. It is this shared set of experiences and collaborative spirit with which I would represent your interests in five specific ways: (1) the Foreign Service Act of 1980; (2) the Department's current approach towards risk; (3) the diversity of our Foreign Service personnel; (4) our understanding and use of technology; and (5) AFSA's ability to increase understanding among Americans about the U.S. Foreign Service.

Daniel Crocker, Secretary*

As a member of Ambassador Eric Rubin's Strong Diplomacy slate, I ask for your vote to give AFSA the leadership team that can deliver results over the next two years. Ambassador Rubin has spelled out the challenges and opportunities that we face. And here is why I believe that I can be a critical member of this team.

First, I have experienced the Foreign Service from three vantage points. I started as an Econ coned officer with State, doing my visa tour in the Dominican Republic. I left and spent two years doing startup work in Silicon Valley. I then spent seventeen years with Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service. And I retired from Commerce to return to the private sector. The breadth of this experience, I believe, allows me to speak credibly of the Foreign Service as a larger entity, across multiple agencies and with the vibrant and growing former Foreign Service alumni – not only those who retired after twenty-plus years but also those who left early or at a mid-career point. We are all Foreign Service and have served our country. AFSA is unique in representing this larger and more fluid community.

Second, I served as a constituent AFSA Vice President from 2017-2019, during an extremely challenging time for the Foreign Service. As a member of AFSA's leadership team I worked to ensure better coordination across the constituent agencies and succeeded in helping Congress reject the former administration's calls to slash funding. Our goal at that time was to show that a properly resourced Foreign Service is essential to advancing U.S. national interests. In the next two years, as Ambassador Rubin notes, AFSA can help Congress and the Biden administration understand the need for adequate funding, authorization, and ongoing oversight – and to help inform any structural reforms. In these conversations, AFSA has an honest commitment to you, as dues paying members, to represent your interests. I will help AFSA get your real-world feedback incorporated into any changes. And I will ensure that AFSA's outstanding Labor Management team is resourced properly to help you with individual challenges.

Bio note: Daniel Crocker is Managing Director of Veracity Worldwide, a strategic advisory firm helping investors navigate challenging and complex markets. A former Senior Foreign Service officer, Daniel's last assignment was as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe & Eurasia at Commerce, with previous overseas postings in Madrid, Belo Horizonte, Brasilia, Panama, Santo Domingo, and Monterrey. He served as AFSA FCS VP from 2017-2019 and is a member of the Foreign Ser-

vice Journal's Editorial Board. His complete bio can be seen here: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/danielcrocker/>.

Carson Relitz Rocker, State Department Representative*

The world is experiencing seismic shifts and our systems must shift too. Under the effective leadership of Ambassador Rubin and using the unique power of AFSA, the Strong Diplomacy team can continue to champion a respected, diverse, equitable, and inclusive Foreign Service that sits at the center of U.S. foreign policy formulation and implementation. If elected, I will actively represent you in pursuing these goals.

This is a team of changemakers, not handwringers. I love our country, the Foreign Service, and challenging the system to realize positive change for all. With your vote, my priority will be addressing the endemic problems that cause so many talented colleagues to leave the service. My focus: our professional development, evaluation, promotion, and assignment systems and accountability for poor management. We need a system and a culture that helps all of us serve to our fullest potential.

I am a political officer with almost two decades of experience. I have deliberately worked outside of cone as well as collaboratively across sections, offices, bureaus, and agencies. My tours have included Belarus, Ethiopia, Burundi, Afghanistan, and Albania, as well as regional and functional bureaus in Washington, in a range of policy and managerial positions. To serve you and advance the needs of the Foreign Service, I respectfully ask for your vote.

Eric Rubin, President*

I am running for reelection as president of AFSA with a terrific slate of colleagues who share my determination to rebuild, restore, reform and revive the Foreign Service after one of the most difficult periods in its modern history. Now more than ever, our country needs strong, well-resourced and creative diplomacy and development to cope with multiple challenges in every area of our national security and national interest. The Foreign Service needs to return to its central role across the broad scope of our foreign policy. From climate change to trade agreements to counterterrorism, from economic development to rebuilding alliances, elected policymakers need the expertise and

knowledge of our career diplomats to make sound decisions on the difficult issues that lie ahead.

We have served through a series of unprecedented crises and challenges, from the exclusion of the Senior Foreign Service from most leadership positions, to the subpoenaing of our members to testify against the instructions of the President in the first impeachment process, and most recently to the long, painful and too often politicized toll of Covid-19.

The past year has also seen a level of upheaval, protest and national reckoning not equaled since the 1960s. We and our fellow Americans have been forced to confront hard realities about the aspects of our society that still cry out for change.

We will do everything we can to support our members as they continue to deal with the consequences of the pandemic and its impact on them and their families. We will join a concerted effort to address the true crisis in diversity in all of our agencies—a crisis that of late has been getting worse, not better. We must be a Service that truly represents America as it is—not as it was in the days of segregation, economic and racial exclusion, gender discrimination and class bias.

We will insist on the nomination and appointment of our most talented senior colleagues to a much larger share of ambassadorships and assistant secretary-level positions than we saw in the previous administration. We will also insist that political appointees to such positions be truly qualified, and not selected in reward for campaign donations—a practice prohibited by the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

We will work with the new administration and with Congress on critically needed reforms to the 41-year-old Foreign Service Act, which must be brought up to date, while maintaining the core tenets of a non-partisan, merit-based service. We will seek to reexamine every aspect of our profession: recruitment, training, assignments, evaluations, promotions, and retirement. We are not satisfied with the status quo in any area of our careers.

As the modern Foreign Service approaches its centennial, we have much to be proud of, but also much that needs changing. We are determined to make the next two years a period of progress, reform, and service to all of our members. We ask for your vote and your support.

Bio note: A member of the Foreign Service and of AFSA since 1985, class of Career Minister, Eric Rubin has been

president of AFSA since July 2019. He previously served as Ambassador to Bulgaria from 2016 to 2019. He also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in EUR, 2011-2015, and as DCM in Moscow, 2008-2011. Other assignments include Principal Officer in Chiang Mai, Executive Assistant and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, INL Director for Policy and Coordination, EUR special assistant, Assistant White House Press Secretary and NSC Director for Public Affairs, desk officer for the Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe, and watch officer in the Operations Center. He was a Dean and Virginia Rusk Fellow at Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy. Eric previously served as a member of the Foreign Service Journal editorial board.

L. Reece Smyth, State Department Representative*

I am honored to be a member of the Strong Diplomacy slate under Ambassador Rubin's leadership. We share a calling to revive the Foreign Service and promote policies to improve the lives of our members and their families, both at home and abroad. If elected, I would focus attention on improving fairness and transparency in the promotion and assignment process. Additionally, I would advocate for continuing workplace flexibility for our members and their families in these difficult times during the pandemic. I would also push for policies that promote the career ambitions and welfare of Foreign Service spouses.

As a member of the Senior Foreign Service with over 20 years' experience, I have seen how AFSA plays a key role in convincing management to do the right thing for our members and their families. I have been a member of AFSA in good standing since I joined the Foreign Service in 1999. This is the first election of any kind in my life that I have put my name forward, but recent events have put into focus my need to serve. To that end, I want to be part of the AFSA leadership to make positive change on behalf of my colleagues. Thank you for your support.

John K. Naland, Retiree Vice President

I ask for your vote so I may continue to represent you as AFSA Retiree VP. Over the past two years, my focus has been on issues which impact Foreign Service retirees, their spouses, and survivors. I have devoted time and energy to

those issues using my expertise as a former Director of the Office of Retirement.

For example, I wrote two dozen substantive items for AFSA's bimonthly Retiree Newsletter. I gave multiple retirement benefits presentations at AFSA HQ and via webinar (one session had over 600 attendees). I met with senior officials of the Office of Retirement (GTM/RET) and the Office of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services (CGFS) to raise retiree concerns. I participated in strategy sessions of the multi-union Fed-Postal Coalition which lobbies Congress to protect federal retirement benefits. I assisted AFSA's Retiree Counselor in responding to member questions about benefits and procedures.

Beyond my efforts focused on retirees, over the past two years I chaired the AFSA Scholarship Committee, was one of three members of AFSA's Political Action Committee, and served on AFSA's Legal Defense Fund Committee. I proposed and coordinated the \$50,000 AFSA Memorial Plaque Expansion Project that is scheduled to be unveiled at the annual plaque ceremony this May 7. As chair of the Centennial Celebration Committee, I led initial planning for the 100th anniversary of the 1924 founding of the U.S. Foreign Service and AFSA.

If elected, this will be my sixth term on the AFSA Governing Board. As AFSA State VP (1999-2001), AFSA President (2001-3 and 2007-9), and Retiree VP (2017-21), I possess the institutional knowledge to weigh in on critical issues facing the Foreign Service using my experience of having negotiated for AFSA with three Secretaries of State.

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

Jason Singer, USAID Vice President*

Colleagues,

In 2019, no FSO formally ran for either USAID Vice President or USAID Representative. Recognizing the need for USAID representation, I ran a write-in campaign for VP because: (1) I believe in AFSA's role both as the union and professional association for the career Foreign Service, and (2) USAID FSOs deserve a strong voice. Now, having served for nearly two years, I am formally seeking your vote to continue as Vice President for those same reasons.

It has not been an easy time for our Agency, but it has been gratifying to support the USAID Foreign Service as

VP. During this term, I have engaged leadership to advance a number of critical FS priorities related to the new performance and promotion systems; assignment processes; work-life balance; strategic workforce planning; diversity, equity and inclusion; recruitment; reorganization; and of course the incredible challenges posed by the global pandemic.

With the support of the incredible AFSA staff, we have helped hundreds of FSOs. We have provided career guidance, helped members navigate the bureaucracy, counselled FSOs on professional development and supervisor relationships, and taken both formal and informal actions to resolve conflicts. And we have provided formal representation in grievances and disputes. No matter the issue, my goal is to be respectful and professional while ensuring that AFSA members receive the strong representation they deserve.

While the new administration has a more open and supportive approach to labor-management relations, the fundamental organizational challenges facing USAID are long-standing, non-partisan and overdue for solutions. I am excited to work with the new leadership to take these on. With a new Administrator and a permanent seat at the National Security Council, USAID FSOs will be called on to deliver like never before — we will do so. But we deserve the training, resources, support, respect and empowerment to deliver. We shouldn't try to achieve USAID's goals in spite of the bureaucracy -- we should achieve them with the strong support of the bureaucracy.

Our strength is our FSOs and their field presence, field perspective and field focus -- not our use of multiple hiring mechanisms, workarounds and check-writing. We know that there is much to be done to truly empower, reinvigorate and expand the career Foreign Service at USAID. If re-elected, I am committed to supporting you in your critical work, bringing AFSA's resources to represent your needs, and to building back better the career Foreign Service at USAID so that we can focus on our shared mission on behalf of the American people.

Thank you for your service and your commitment to USAID.