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MAY 2013



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# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

May 2013  
Volume 90, No. 5

## FOCUS DIVERSITY WITHIN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

### A Longstanding Commitment / 18

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

### Diversity and Cultural Competence: Mission-Critical Elements of U.S. Foreign Policy / 21

To prioritize diversity, organizations like the State Department must think boldly, beyond the legacy paradigms of "affirmative action," "diversity" or "inclusion."

BY ERNEST J. WILSON III

### EW@S: Supporting and Mentoring Female Leaders / 25

Five years after its founding, Executive Women at State has become a strong advocate of gender parity and diversity.

BY CYNTHIA SABOE

### TLG: Expanding Opportunities at State / 28

The Thursday Luncheon Group, State's oldest employee affinity group, continues to strengthen the Foreign and Civil Service workplace through its advocacy.

BY STACY D. WILLIAMS

### Pride Every Day / 32

Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies has largely accomplished its original mission to combat discrimination. But its work continues.

BY STEVEN GIEGERICH

### Celebrating Our Past, Uplifting Our Future / 36

Publicizing the contributions of African-Americans to diplomacy and development work can help attract young, diverse talent to careers in international affairs.

BY MORGAN MCCLAIN-MCKINNEY

### How Are FS Women at State Faring? / 39

The importance of State's mission demands that we ensure talented female FSOs have the opportunity to reach for, and grab, the brass ring.

BY MARGOT CARRINGTON

## FEATURES

### Fidel Castro As Moby Dick: Dispatches from the Cold War / 46

An FSO traces U.S. policy in the Americas from the 1950s through the 1980s.

BY PAUL D. TAYLOR

On the cover: A photo of the Diplomatic Class of 1912 (rear) and one of new hire Foreign Service officers in Chennai today. Image composition by Jeff Lau. New hire FSOs in Chennai: (From left) First-tour FSO Rachel O'Hara; second-tour FSO Shiraz Wahaj, a Pakistani American (sitting); second-tour FSO Kris Arvind, an Indian-American; first-tour FSO Ben Embury; first-tour FSO Halima Voyles, a Pakistani-American (sitting); and first-tour FSO Daniel Lee, a Korean-American. Photo credit: James Talalay.

## AFSA NEWS

### Together We Grieve / 53

As we were completing this issue, we learned of the tragic death of Anne Smedinghoff, a promising young FSO and AFSA member, in a terrorist attack in Afghanistan.

VP Voice State: All Overseas Positions Should Be Language Designated / 54

VP Voice FCS: Farewell / 55

VP Voice Retiree:  
Getting What You Need / 56

AFSA President Addresses  
World Affairs Councils / 57

Benefits Series:  
Focus on Geriatric Care / 58

FS Books: Something for  
Everyone / 59

Active After Active-Duty:  
Finding Roots / 60

The Foreign Service Family:  
Remembering Carolina / 61

Husbands of Chennai / 62

AFSA Book Notes Presents  
a Master Class / 63

## COLUMNS

### President's Views / 7

Reviving the Foreign Service  
BY SUSAN R. JOHNSON

### Speaking Out / 15

It's Time to Update the  
Threshold Review  
BY BRIAN T. NEUBERT

### Reflections / 77

The Ties That Bind  
BY LEAH EVANS

## DEPARTMENTS

Letters / 8

Talking Points / 11

Books / 67

Local Lens / 78

## MARKETPLACE

FSJ Guide to Extended  
Stay Housing / 65, 66

Classifieds / 70

Real Estate / 73

Index to Advertisers / 74

# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

## Editor

Steven Alan Honley: honley@afsa.org

## Senior Editor

Susan Brady Maitra: maitra@afsa.org

## Associate Editor

Shawn Dorman: dorman@afsa.org

## AFSA News Editor

Donna Ayerst: ayerst@afsa.org

## Ad & Circulation Manager

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## CONTACTS



### AFSA Headquarters:

(202) 338-4045; Fax (202) 338-6820

### State Department AFSA Office:

(202) 647-8160; Fax (202) 647-0265

### USAID AFSA Office:

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### FCS AFSA Office:

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#### Staff Attorney

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#### USAID Senior Labor Management Adviser

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#### Staff Assistant

Alex Nostro: NostroAL2@state.gov

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Chioma Dike: cdike@afsa.org

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Shawn Dorman: dorman@afsa.org

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# Reviving the Foreign Service

BY SUSAN R. JOHNSON

In my April column ("AFSA and the Foreign Service: The Road Ahead"), I promised to discuss some of the factors that are undermining the Foreign Service as an institution and to highlight reforms to strengthen it and the State Department. This column will also draw on the April 12 *Washington Post* op-ed, "Bring Back Professional Diplomacy," that Ambassadors Ronald Neumann and Thomas Pickering and I co-authored. That opinion piece has generated considerable comment and served to draw attention to this important issue.

In it, we identified two of the factors which have weakened the Foreign Service and undermined the effectiveness of American diplomacy. The first is the steady decline of Foreign Service representation in the senior-most positions at the State Department. Increased reliance on political appointments has limited the number of positions available to Senior Foreign Service officers. The impact of this trend has been exacerbated by the longstanding practice of appointing non-career ambassadors to head the overwhelming majority of our embassies in Group of Eight capitals and other important countries.

The second factor relates to the co-existence under the same roof of two distinct State Department personnel systems: the non-rotational General Schedule Civil Service system, with no common entry standard or up-or-out evaluation; and the Foreign Service's rotational, rank-in-person, up-or-out system. That system is modeled on the U.S. military and

is designed to meet the requirements of worldwide diplomacy, as specified by the Foreign Service Act of 1980. The expansion of GS positions has resulted in a decline in FS opportunities in all bureaus, especially those responsible for human resources, management and global policy issues.

Having two fundamentally different, competing personnel systems cannot be expected to create a harmonious corporate environment in the State Department. Ideally, a more integrated personnel system is called for to serve the requirements and purposes of American diplomacy.

At the very least, we must rethink the emphasis on narrow specialization built on static positions that undergirds the Civil Service system, and the Foreign Service framework of specialized political, economic, public diplomacy, management and consular "cones." But this will require thoughtful re-examination to meet the need for strategic vision and three-dimensional thinking in Foggy Bottom.

Let me be clear: Both the Civil Service and the Foreign Service personnel systems need reform. But the inescapable question is this: How can the Foreign Service develop as a top-notch professional cadre if it is squeezed out of top positions at State and in the very overseas missions that

constitute the operational framework for it and for diplomacy? This trend must be reversed.

The Foreign Service itself needs reform in two areas. First, State must offer enhanced professional education and training

at all levels of the Service, integrated with assignments and career advancement, to build and continually renew a professional cadre ready to address the complex, challenging and changing global environment.

Second, State should review how the "cone" system has compartmentalized the Foreign Service into a set of narrow specializations. To nurture an effective, professional cadre of diplomats, especially at the leadership level, FSOs must develop broad experience in dealing with the gamut of bilateral, multilateral, political and economic issues, and diplomatic practice, as well as human resource and management issues.

Discussion of the points raised here is urgent if diplomacy is to regain its primacy in the pursuit of the foreign policy goals of national security, economic prosperity and democratic values. The experience of the two longest wars in U.S. history reveals the limitations of exclusive dependence on military or economic pre-eminence.

Effective diplomacy is indispensable because U.S. strategic goals cannot be achieved by military power alone. Our armed forces should support diplomacy, not the reverse.

In the foreign policy arena, the Department of Defense and other national security agencies must not eclipse or sideline the State Department. Similarly, State cannot assert itself as the primary institution responsible for the conduct of diplomacy without a strong, professional Foreign Service. ■



*Susan R. Johnson is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*

## Save the Legation

The mail gets to us only slowly here in Morocco, so I am only now able to comment on the excellent December 2012 article by Jane Loeffler, “Beyond the Fortress Embassy.” As the director for nearly three years now of the Tangier American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies, I have come to appreciate what Ambassador Barbara Bodine, quoted in the article, calls “embassies integrated with their surroundings and culture.”

You can't get more integrated than the American legation, which is not only nestled in the Medina (“Old City”), but bestrides “America Street” and is built over it. That was the American way of diplomacy in Morocco from the 1790s to the early 1960s. The legation is the only U.S. National Historic Landmark located abroad, by virtue of its status as the first American diplomatic property, a gift of the sultan of Morocco in 1821.

The October 1932 issue of *The Foreign Service Journal* carried a story about the legation's brand-new “Moorish Pavilion” annex, which author Honor Bigelow described as “one of the most noteworthy” American diplomatic buildings of the era. Photos of it grace publications the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has issued highlighting the Secretary of State's Register of Culturally Significant Properties and the new public-private partnership, the Fund to Conserve United States Diplomatic Treasures Abroad.

It is still a very photogenic building—until you look closely. More than 80 years after Congress appropriated \$22,000 to build the pavilion, this diplomatic treasure is at risk. Major structural fissures, water damage from leaking roofs, rotting



wood, etc., threaten what is a repository of the best that artisans from across the Maghreb could produce—mashrabiyya screens on the windows, intricately painted wooden ceilings, zellij floor tiles.

As a living embodiment of citizen public diplomacy, the legation is also a symbol of America's longstanding engagement with the Arab, African and Muslim worlds. Sultan Sidi Abderrahman recognized “the Americans” as Moroccan partners in December 1777, while George Washington was still hunkering down in Valley Forge.

OBO, the Fund to Conserve U.S. Diplomatic Treasures Abroad and historic preservationists would do well to band together to “Save the Legation Pavilion.” What could be more important than to save this example of America's diplomatic heritage—from a time when “fortress embassy” meant a solid oak door and a deadbolt lock—in such a crucial region of the world? Sultan Moulay Suleiman, our benefactor in 1821, would expect nothing less of the United States.

*Gerald Loftus  
FSO, retired  
Tangier, Morocco*

## Balancing Access and Security

In his February Speaking Out column, “The Value of Fortress Embassies,” Nick Pietrowicz contends that even heavily fortified facilities do not prevent diplomats from performing the traditional practices of their trade. Rather, it is post security policies that dictate when and how personnel may make sorties beyond fortress walls.

That assessment is basically accurate. Still, there can be adverse consequences

when the location for an embassy or consulate is selected primarily on the basis of security standards.

To find enough open land to provide the required 100-foot setbacks, the bureaus of Overseas Buildings Operations and Diplomatic Security have had to move many embassies and consulates farther and farther from convenient locations in or near the cities they serve. Decades ago, for instance, I narrowly foiled a plan to move Consulate General Montreal miles west to a location on the Trans-Canada Highway, which was served by no public transport of any sort.

Not only would this have made it very difficult for the public to come to our office, but it would also hurt our efforts to recruit and retain good local staff. It would also increase travel time for officers to call on contacts, with a consequent increase in exposure to the very security risks that the fortress was built to protect them from.

Fortunately, that particular relocation never happened. But my initial objections to this and other impossible sites were always rebuffed with a single word: irrelevant.

Decades ago we went through another security “enhancement” that was a prime example of the DS tail wagging the embassy dog. I lost that battle, which left consular officers separated from their customers by bulletproof glass. That barrier obscures vision and sound, destroying the eyeball-to-eyeball scrutiny needed to make the best decisions.

Such a safeguard hardly seemed necessary since all visitors to the office have always been screened for weapons at the door. Moreover, a wide interview counter and a closable window already protected the consular officer from a casual fist or a lunge across the counter.

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long lines and have just minutes to make the critical decision of whether to issue or deny a visa. They need all their senses to judge applicants and their veracity.

Similarly, the installation of bulletproof glass turned consular officers into almost literally faceless bureaucrats when dealing with their fellow citizens. My own recent visit to a consular section with those abominable windows was a cold, impersonal encounter. Surely that is hardly the image we would like to project to our citizens.

Security is extremely important, of course, but it must not be the only factor considered. We go abroad to accomplish a mission, and we must carry it out even if it entails some unavoidable risk.

*Robert W. Maule  
Senior FSO, retired  
Poulsbo, Wash.*

### Thanks for the Insights

Susan Johnson's February President's Views column, "Institutional Restructuring and Reform: A Strategic Perspective," was terrific and insightful, delivering a message that needs to be heard. I hope that our "strategic" thinkers read it and work toward appropriate change.

While I am at it, I also appreciate the February Talking Points item, "Learning from Benghazi." Thank you for your service to us.

*Tim Bashor  
FSO  
Zabul Province, Qalat Provincial Reconstruction Team  
Afghanistan*

### Beware of Private Clubs

For nearly 20 years, I was a proud member of Diplomats and Consular Officers, Retired, a private club of our profession. Then on June 21, 2012, my membership was terminated by the

unanimous vote of the DACOR Executive Committee.

In seeking to rectify the situation, I sought a hearing, at the very least, to ascertain the reason for such adverse action. Alas, even that request was denied, leaving me without even a shred of my civil rights.

As I approach the first anniversary of my expulsion, I want to caution other colleagues about the perils of private clubs. Once you are a member, forget about due process, not to mention your civil rights. I am ashamed and shamed beyond grief.

*Thomas R. Hutson  
FSO, retired  
Red Cloud, Neb.*

### Is Outsourcing Bad?

I was disappointed in the article on outsourcing in your February 2013 issue ("The Hidden Costs of Outsourcing Diplomacy and Development," by

Allison Stanger). Ms. Stanger makes a lot of assumptions without providing any explanations or justifications for them.

First, she states that both State and USAID have expanded the use of outsourcing



as a response to "a decade of operations in post-conflict environments." But when comparing 2000 and 2010 contract levels, she does not distinguish between outsourcing activities in normal versus conflict environments. So it is impossible to know whether the increases reflect "surge" responses to the conflicts or a broader trend.

Per the table provided, USAID increased its contracts from \$535.8 million to \$5.6 billion over that period. But how much of the increase related to



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activities in crisis countries? One cannot argue that outsourcing is the “new normal” if most of the increases related to such activities.

Aside from such extraordinary and time-limited programs, has USAID in fact increased the funding allocated to contracts and grants? If yes, then the author can legitimately argue that a trend exists. But, without such data, such an argument becomes a matter of personal opinion disguised as fact.

Second, underlying much of the article is another critical assumption: outsourcing is inherently bad. But is it? Most government-funded activities taking place outside of government offices are already done by the private sector. So why is the use of private sources in an overseas context objectionable? And to what extent *should* the federal government perform functions and undertake activities in house, and therefore in competition with the private sector?

Many nongovernmental organizations are already working overseas implementing development and assistance activities, using private funds. When USAID decides to undertake additional, similar activities, should it establish overlapping organizations to do the work with government employees—or should it fund an expansion of the existing private-sector activities? The author appears to prefer the former, but provides no justification for this preference.

Third, Ms. Stanger assumes that expanding the government work force in these agencies (“insourcing”) will eliminate the need for outsourcing. In other words, expanded federal staffing will result in a significant reduction in contract and grant levels. While both State and USAID have succeeded in expanding their labor forces, it is not at all clear that adding employees to their rolls means

that USAID will take over implementation of assistance activities: constructing schools and roads, staffing schools and clinics, etc.

What it *does* mean is that USAID will improve its capacity to interact with host country governments on policy, to design projects to address development needs, to monitor the implementation activities undertaken by its private-sector partners, and to evaluate the effective and efficient use of federal funding.

Staff expansion will allow USAID to bring back in house some of the analytical, design and evaluation activities it was forced to outsource, due to many years of staff attrition without replenishment. But I doubt that these actions affect more than a very small proportion of the total funds being allocated to contracts and grants. After all, most such funds support implementation rather than design and oversight.

I certainly concur that the issue of outsourcing is an important one for both State and USAID. But Ms. Stanger’s article leaves three very important questions unanswered:

1. Is the outsourcing “trend” described in the article real, or is it an illusion that instead reflects the expansion of activities undertaken in connection with U.S. government interventions in several crisis countries?

2. If there is indeed a trend toward expanding outsourcing, why is that a bad thing?

3. If 1 and 2 are true, will an expansion of State and USAID work forces actually produce a meaningful reduction in outsourcing?

*Linda Rae Gregory*

*FSO, retired*

*Chuluota, Fla.* ■

## Walk into the Embassy!

In February a brand-new Simple Chinese translation of the 2005 edition of AFSA's introduction to the Foreign Service, *Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America*, was finally published in the People's Republic of China.

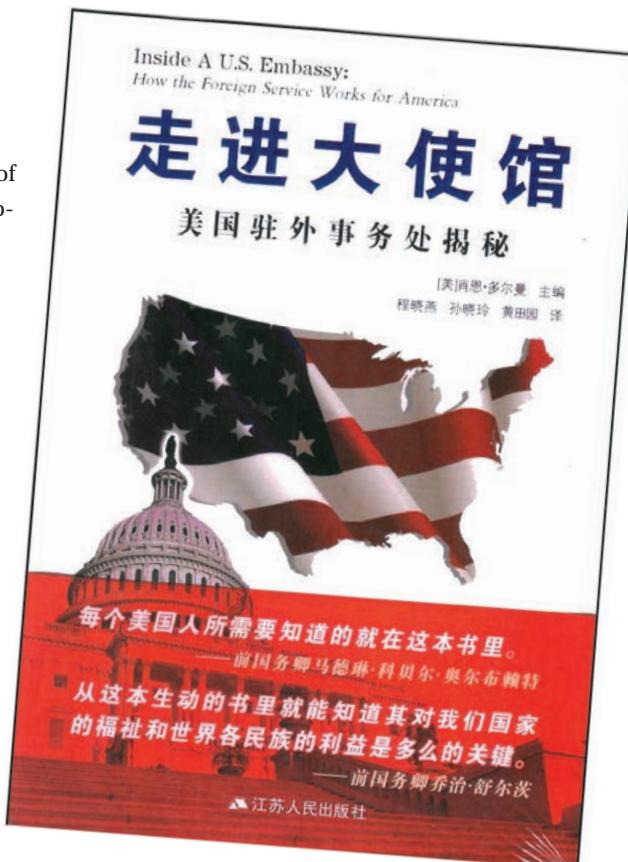
The road to publication was long, and we were never entirely convinced a Chinese edition would materialize. In fact, as of press time, we have yet to see the physical book—our copies are literally on a slow boat from China.

However, we have confirmed its existence, and can report that the book is easy to find on some of the largest online shopping sites in the PRC, including Taobao, Dangdang and 360buy, as well as on Amazon China (amazon.cn). The initial print run was 2,000, and the price is 24 RMB (\$3.86).

So how did this amazing feat come about?

In July 2009, AFSA received an inquiry from "Cherrie," copyright manager for Jiangsu People's Publishing in Nanjing, asking if they might procure the rights to the Simplified Chinese version of the 2005 revised edition of *Inside a U.S. Embassy*. Sure, we replied. We signed a contract...and waited.

Contact with Cherrie was sporadic; months would go by without replies to our inquiries. For all of 2011, there was no word. Then, in February 2012, Cherrie told us the translation was complete and being edited. We had included in the contract a clause giving



us the right to review the translation before publication. One day in March, a Chinese-language Word document containing the entire book arrived by e-mail.

With no in-house Chinese language capacity, AFSA was extremely grateful when Embassy Beijing agreed to look it over and found it a reasonable translation of the original. The embassy had not been entirely surprised by our request: The same week that the book translation came to us, a Chinese translation of the parody Foreign Service exam from the 2011 *Inside a U.S. Embassy* was circulating on microblogs in China. It drew enough media attention that the embassy had to clarify officially that it was a "fake test." No, the real Foreign Service exam did not include taking out your own appendix or writing a piano concerto (see the April 2012 *Journal*).

After AFSA sent the book translation with edits marked back to the publishing house in Nanjing, all was again quiet for months. In October 2012, we heard that Cherrie had been replaced by "Queenie." Finally, in February 2013—four years after the initial inquiry—Queenie let us know that the Chinese translation of the 2005 *Inside a U.S. Embassy* was published.

However, when we tried the link she provided for Taobao, the search resulted only in the message, "Your view of the baby does not exist." Eventually one of the translators, a professor from Nanjing University, provided a new link and the Chinese title of the book, which led to much more successful searches.

We invite you to visit the Web sites below to take a look at the book, find excerpts, and enjoy the creative Google translations. The book is most often translated as "Walk into the Embassy: U.S. Foreign Office at the Secret."

Search for the Chinese title: "走进大使馆—美国驻外办事处揭秘" or go to:

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- Shawn Dorman, FS Books Publisher and Journal Associate Editor

## A New Take on the Arab Spring

The Center for American Progress, the Stimson Center, and the Center for Climate and Security published a joint report in February titled "The Arab Spring

and Climate Change: A Climate and Security Correlations Series."

In five essays, scholars identify ways in which various environmental events, both internationally and in North Africa and the Middle East, led to social and political change in North Africa and the Middle East. Collectively, the contributors make a plausible case for the connection, in contrast with the many casual observers who have asserted that social media drove the Arab Spring.

In her preface, Anne-Marie Slaughter (a former director of policy planning at State, now an international affairs and politics professor at Princeton) writes that the effects of global climate change "significantly increased the interactive effects—and hence the overall impact—of political, economic, religious, demographic and ethnic forces."

As she notes, the region is particularly vulnerable to such shocks. Because they have relatively little arable land and water resources, many countries in North Africa and the Middle East must import between a quarter and half of their food.

Given this dependence on imports, the markedly poor global wheat harvest from 2009 to 2011 had a devastating impact on these governments' stability. The poor harvest was caused by various environmental factors: an historic drought in China, brushfires in Russia, record rainfall in Canada and freezing storms in the United States—all at least implicitly linked to global warming.

As Sarah Johnstone and Jeffrey Mazo argue in their essay, "Global warming may not have caused the Arab Spring, but it may have made it come earlier."

—Jeff Richards, Editorial Intern

## Salvaging Somalia

In January the Obama administration officially recognized the government of Somalia for the first time in more than two decades. Somalia has been regarded by many as the epitome of a failed state since the outbreak of civil war in 1991. The fighting soon devastated the country's infrastructure and agricultural production, which fed further competition for limited resources.

In 1992, Washington organized and led a successful international coalition to restore order and alleviate the famine. However, Somalia fell back into chaos in 1993 when the United States withdrew from the country after 19 American troops were killed in Mogadishu.

After years of internal conflict and political violence, a Transitional Federal Government was created in 2004 with the

## SITE OF THE MONTH: [www.greatergood.com](http://www.greatergood.com)

When we last featured this amazing resource as our Site of the Month, back in March 2012, it was known as *The Hunger Site.com*—and this department was still called Cybernotes. Not long after we reinvented it as Talking Points last fall, the sponsors of *The Hunger Site.com* expanded the range of activities the portal supports, rebranding it as *GreaterGood* and giving it a makeover.

The genius of the site is still intact, however: Donate funds to various worthy causes simply by clicking on a button, with every cent going directly to the site's charitable partners. It's free, doesn't generate spam, and you don't have to give any personal information or sign up for anything to take part. Though you can only donate once a day from any single computer, you can access the site from home and work to double your contribution if you wish.

Since its launch in June 1999, the site has established itself as a leader in online activism. More than 300 million people from around the world have donated the equivalent of \$29 million to nonprofit charities operating both in the United States and around the world.

Each day the new *GreaterGood* component of the site features a discrete project (e.g., send two girls to school, provide 10 pallets of food for pet shelters, save five acres of rainforest). You can then click on any or all of the eight sister sites, which variously use donations to fight hunger, breast cancer and diabetes; promote child health and literacy; feed and assist homeless and hungry veterans; treat children with autism and raise awareness of the issue; protect rainforests; and support animal rescue initiatives. (Icons for each site are prominently displayed at the top of the *GreaterGood* homepage.)

Visitors can help even more by shopping for items displayed on each of the eight sites. Each online store offers a wide array of fair-traded, handcrafted items from around the world and lists opportunities to volunteer for a more hands-on role in supporting these causes.

—Steven Alan Honley, Editor

support of the United Nations, the African Union and the United States.

The next several years witnessed an intense military struggle by the TFG and the African Union against al-Shabaab, the militant Sunni group seeking to impose strict Sharia law on Somalia. Although al-Shabaab had much success early on, the A.U. was finally able to push it into the southern corner of the country.

On Aug. 20, 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia was created following the end of the TFG mandate. Hassan Sheikh Mahmud was elected its president in September; and that month, the Somali National Army captured al-Shabaab's last major stronghold in the south. (Writing in the September 2012 issue of *The Atlantic*, Armin Rosen explains how this came to pass and the various factors that led to the organization's decline.)

Johnnie Carson, assistant secretary of State for Africa, described the Obama administration's engagement with and support for the Transitional Federal Government over the past few years at a Wilson Center event in January, expressing optimism about prospects for stabilizing Somalia.

That same month, in a CNN special report, Chatham House's Adjoa Anyimadu elaborated on the causes of the sharp decrease in Somali piracy attacks reported at the end of 2012, and the implications for stabilization efforts.

Meanwhile, President Mahmud has reached out to initiate new diplomatic relations with several countries—including the United States, United Kingdom, Belgium and Egypt. During a recent trip, he gave speeches at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., and Chatham House in London discussing the political, security and economic foundations for his country.

Due to growing confidence in the

## 50 Years Ago

**T**he death of Seldon Chapin on March 26, 1963, draws to a close a memorable era in the development of the Foreign Service. Apart from his many years of distinguished service in the ranks and as chief of mission in five countries, he will long be remembered for the very substantial contributions he made toward the betterment of the Foreign Service and for those serving in it.

In 1937, as a relatively junior officer, Seldon wrote two articles which appeared in the October and November issues of the *Journal* that year, calling attention to defects in the structure of the Foreign Service as it then existed and suggesting several remedies for effecting what he recognized to be needed improvements. Up to that time, self-examination and constructive criticism were little-known attributes of career officers.

Perhaps because of his forthrightness and penetrating insight, Seldon was chosen a few years later to be the director of the Office of the Foreign Service, at a time when organic changes in the structure of the Service were urgently needed to meet postwar responsibilities. It was due to his leadership, wisdom and determination, more than those of any other single person, that the legislation now known as the Foreign Service Act of 1946 was enacted.

The record of his achievements is long and his shining example is one which others would do well to emulate. Both the government and those who are serving in the Foreign Service today are benefiting from Seldon's untiring efforts and broad vision.

—“Selden Chapin” (*Letters to the Editor*),  
by Julian F. Harrington; FSJ, May 1963.

new government, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously on March 6 to lift the ban on light arms sales to Somalia. Last September David Shinn, a former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia who is now a professor of international affairs at The George Washington University, had discussed how the illicit flow of arms to al-Shabaab from Iran was leading the Obama administration to support lifting the ban, on Al-Jazeera's “Inside Story.”

Although Washington had provided indirect military assistance to the TFG for many years, official U.S. recognition will allow the new Somali government to access American development aid.

Not all analysts are optimistic about the long-term prospects for the new

government, however. Morgan Lorraine Roach of the Heritage Foundation cautions the Obama administration against investing too much hope in the new president's ability to lead Somalia out of chaos. And Amnesty International warns that the government's initial actions cast serious doubt on its commitment to freedom of the press and rule of law in the country.

—Jeff Richards, Editorial Intern

## The Game of Diplomacy

**D**

**“ RENEE MONTAGNE: There's no question you were a great proponent of going into Iraq and getting rid of Saddam Hussein. Ten years later, nearly 5,000 Americans troops dead, thousands more with wounds, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis dead or wounded; when you think about this, was it worth it?**

**RICHARD PERLE: I've got to say I think that is not a reasonable question. What we did at the time was done in the belief that it was necessary to protect this nation. You can't a decade later go back and say, well, we shouldn't have done that.**

— From a March 20 National Public Radio interview,  
“Perle Looks Back on the Start of the Iraq War.”

was named to *Games* magazine's Hall of Fame, alongside Monopoly, Clue and Scrabble.

Players representing seven European powers at the beginning of the 20th century forge and break alliances in their bid to achieve world domination in as many hours (or days, or years) as it takes. Unlike most board games, there are no elements of chance: no dice to roll, no pointers to spin, no cards to shuffle. The game relies solely on the players' strategy, cunning and verbal prowess.

The death of its creator, Allan Calhamer, on Feb. 28 presents an opportunity to review Diplomacy and its impact over the years. Calhamer developed what was originally called “Realpolitik” as a Harvard law student in 1954.

Not surprisingly, as *The Foreign Service Journal* pointed out in a November 2000 report (“When Diplomacy is Fun and Games”), several generations of FSOs have also been fans of the game. During the late 1960s, it was even played as part of some A-100 courses.

FSO William Armbruster used the game at Embassy Kuwait during the 1991 Persian Gulf War to demonstrate to less-experienced colleagues how size and geography can affect a nation's choices. There are “few tools better for issues that approximate zero-sum situations,” Armbruster told the *Journal* in 2000.

More than 300,000 copies of the game have been sold, and it is also played on the Internet. It has inspired international tournaments and online competition. The game is now published by Wizards of the Coast, which also makes Dungeons & Dragons.

For its creator, Diplomacy was a labor of love, inspired by a childhood fascination with a book of old maps of bygone empires, a college class on 19th-century Europe and an interest in world politics and international affairs.

Born in Hinsdale, Ill., in 1935, Mr. Calhamer attended Harvard University on a scholarship. He majored in history, graduated cum laude in 1953 and went on to Harvard Law School, but left

before graduating. He lived for some time at Walden Pond in veneration of his hero, Henry David Thoreau, and then joined the U.S. Foreign Service, serving briefly in Africa.

Mr. Calhamer left the Service after his first tour to join Sylvania's Applied Research Laboratory in Waltham, Mass., where he did operations research. Uncomfortable in corporate culture, he left Sylvania after six years and took a job as a park ranger at the Statue of Liberty.

In 1967, he married Hilda Morales, and the couple settled in LaGrange, Ill., Calhamer's hometown, where he worked as a postman for the next 21 years. On the side, he continued to develop board games, like one described by his daughter Tatiana Calhamer in which players move through dimensions of the space-time continuum, but those were never brought to market.

“He was brilliant and iconoclastic, and designed this game that's played around the world,” another daughter, Selenne Calhamer-Boling, told the Associated Press on March 2. Since Calhamer's death, e-mails had been pouring in from fans around the world wanting to convey how much the game meant to them. But the messages were not at all what she expected.

“I always think of it as such an intellectual game because it's so strategic,” Calhamer-Boling said. “But what I'm seeing over and over again in these e-mails is: 'I was a really nerdy, awkward kid who had trouble relating to people, but because Diplomacy required interpersonal skills and required you to get people to do what you wanted them to do, that's how I built my social skills.’”

Mr. Calhamer is survived by his wife and two daughters. ■

—Susan Brady Maitra, Senior Editor

# It's Time to Update the Threshold Review

BY BRIAN T. NEUBERT

**M**ost State Department readers of *The Foreign Service Journal* will just have wrapped up their Employee Evaluation Reports when this issue lands in their inbox or mailbox. No doubt many of you are mulling over parts of the process you would like to change or abolish, since I think we can all agree that the process is imperfect. Even when written well, an EER presents an incomplete picture of an officer.

It also leads to imperfect results. As objective and fair as the promotion panels attempt to be, year after year we all know deserving colleagues who are passed over. Most of us also know some unworthy officers whose observed performance does not explain their promotions. In particular, I'm sure many of us have had occasion to wonder how in the world some Senior Foreign Service officers ever managed to get across the threshold.

With thousands of officers scattered at hundreds of posts worldwide, the State Department has had no alternative but to depend on performance files for our merit-based "up-or-out" system. This means the only time an officer is assessed in person is at the oral interview prior to entry.

Perhaps this is unavoidable for most career promotions, but the decision to

I'm sure many of us have wondered how certain Senior FSOs ever got promoted.

welcome an officer into the top ranks of the most elite professionals in the United States government should rely on more than a folder full of reports of uncorroborated praise. There should also be a live interview to get at the reality (from excellence to inadequacy) of each officer, because the senior threshold is at least as important as entry into the Service.

Would the Department of State hire new officers based only on written statements? Never. So why should acceptance to the Senior Foreign Service be different?

## The Value of Interviews

The current senior threshold review process gives promotion panels inadequate data for making crucial decisions, even though the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review emphasizes the importance of department leaders in Chapter 10, Chief of Mission Oversight:

"Given the wide array of U.S. agencies at our embassies today and the corresponding need for coordination and

leadership, all chiefs of mission must be both empowered and held accountable as CEOs of multiagency missions. We must select the best candidates for COMs and for their deputies. *We must prepare them fully for their positions, empower them and hold them accountable.*" (Emphasis added.)

How important is a 30-minute interview? What would it add to the evaluation process? Ability and potential in some areas cannot be appraised adequately from written reviews, but a short interview would be very instructive in revealing each candidate's ability to live up to Senior Foreign Service precepts such as the following:

- **Is an effective team motivator and leader, who inspires staff to participate and contribute.** The ability to motivate others requires clear communication skills and the ability to articulate the mundane and sophisticated. To "inspire" requires presence, poise and other intangibles that take years to develop. None of these qualities can be demonstrated beyond doubt in a written text, but all of them become evident (or remain absent) in a short interview.

- **Establishes and clearly communicates organization-wide performance expectations.** The DS-5055 form is a

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Brian T. Neubert is currently economic section chief in Ho Chi Minh City. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1998, he has also served in Kinshasa, Hong Kong, Antananarivo and Washington, D.C.

At Fortune 500 companies it is common for those evaluating candidates for promotion to have firsthand experience with their performance.

dramatic improvement in that much of it is written by the rated employee. The "Description of Accomplishments" is a vitally important opportunity to demonstrate the ability to communicate. However, objective examples of proficiency in oral communication, either prepared or on-the-spot, cannot be assessed at all through it.

- **Moves with ease at all social settings and levels.** It may be impossible to confirm these crucial interpersonal

skills in a short interview. However, there is a good chance that some borderline candidates for the senior threshold would demonstrate that they are not ready to represent the United States anywhere, at any time, in dealing with anyone.

- **Effectively argues complex policy issues; deals comfortably with the most senior levels of government and society.** While written and foreign language communication ability are

assessed or tested, there is inadequate evidence about whether individual Senior Foreign Service candidates can argue, debate, negotiate, cajole, convince or condemn effectively.

### **Woo-Who?**

Further reinforcement of this argument can be found in the points of emphasis used to prepare senior officers for leadership positions. In training deputy chiefs of mission and

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## Even a short interview would help reveal each officer's ability to live up to Senior Foreign Service precepts.

principal officers, the Foreign Service Institute covers 34 leadership themes organized in broad categories: executing, influencing, relationship building and strategic thinking.

Of these, "influencing" is arguably the most fundamental to the art of diplomacy. Yet the specific skill, often described as the ability to "woo," is never identified as a strength possessed by course participants. That may be because this vague yet powerful aptitude can surely only be assessed in action (as in an interview), not in writing.

Other global organizations follow well-developed best practices in selecting their top executives. At Fortune 500 companies, it is common for at least one of the promotion decision-makers to personally know the candidate and have firsthand experience with her or his performance.

Corporate leadership experts including McKinsey & Company, author of the State Department's "War for Talent" report, note that an executive's future potential must be based on personality, fit within the organization and listening skills. The department should be benchmarking itself on these kinds of thorough vetting processes.

Implementing a threshold interview need not be costly or difficult. The Career Development Program already includes several requirements an officer must meet before opening her or his window. Once promoted to FS-1, officers have years before they are consid-

ered for the senior threshold, during which time they would certainly serve in Washington or be there for consultations.

With this in mind, the Bureau of Human Resources should establish a roster of senior officers assigned to Washington who have volunteered to serve as "threshold interviewers." One can envision a system under which an FS-1 officer contacts HR two months in advance to schedule the interview with an ad hoc committee of three senior interviewers. A simple format could be established, with perhaps a menu of 20 questions interviewers could choose from.

The 30-minute interview would be video-recorded and added to the officer's performance file. In addition to reading the file, senior promotion panels would watch the videos and take them into account in ranking candidates.

### Time for a Change

For all these reasons, I believe the time has come to update the threshold review process. Not only would more mistakes be avoided, but several candidates stuck at the FS-1 level would no doubt find their live performance tips the scales and gets them into the Senior Foreign Service.

Above all, a simple 30-minute interview would improve promotion panels' ability to choose who should cross the SFS threshold and lead the State Department in the future. ■

United States Department of State

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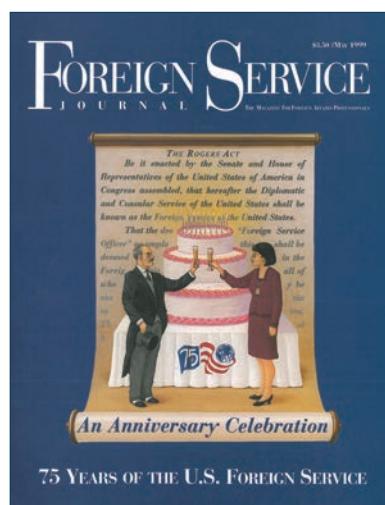
## Editor's Introduction

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

This issue of *The Foreign Service Journal* spotlights a cause that the American Foreign Service Association has long championed: the promotion of diversity within the Foreign Service, both in terms of its membership and as an institution representing the United States across the globe. While we have explored that topic in various ways over the years, this is the first time we have done so in a concentrated fashion.

Regrettably, diversity was not a major concern for AFSA's founders in 1924, nor for several decades thereafter—much less a goal to be actively pursued. But by the 1960s, even a cursory examination of the pages of *The Foreign Service Journal* reveals a growing consciousness among the association's leaders, and membership, that the Foreign Service did not truly reflect the shifting demographics, and values, of the society it represented abroad. That is one of the reasons why AFSA was a key proponent of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, which declared that "members of the Foreign Service should be representative of the American people."

By the 1990s, AFSA had formally recognized the Thursday Luncheon Group, Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies, and several other organizations as affinity groups. It has also consistently lobbied the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development and other foreign affairs agencies to set up mechanisms through which to recruit qualified women and minorities for the Foreign Service, and eliminate barriers affecting



The May 1999 FSJ.

assignments and promotions to encourage them to stay.

In conjunction with AFSA's yearlong celebration of its 75th anniversary, the May 1999 issue of *The Foreign Service Journal* was a special commemorative edition devoted entirely to that milestone. As you can see on this page, its cover vividly encapsulates a unifying theme of that issue: the transformation of the modern Foreign Service over the same period, going back to the May 1924 passage of the Rogers Act.

In her congratulatory letter to AFSA, published in that issue, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright declared: "The Foreign

Service of today is very different from that of 1924. Women, previously relegated largely to supporting roles and denied the option to combine family and career, are an ever-increasing component of the Service. We also now recognize the importance of a Foreign Service which truly reflects the diversity of America, and we will continue our concerted efforts to attract the best and brightest from across the entire spectrum of American society."

## Is the Glass Half-Full or Half-Empty?

We have indeed made real progress toward that goal, particularly when measured against the situation in 1980, when the current Foreign Service Act was passed. AFSA President Susan R. Johnson observed in her December 2012 President's Views column, "Building a Truly Diverse, Professional Foreign Service," that "members of the Foreign Service [then] were overwhelmingly

white and male, and had often graduated from a handful of elite institutions. Three decades later, the Service has become largely representative of American diversity in terms of ethnicity/race, gender, geography, age, educational background and work experience.”

As she notes, “This success is the result of a variety of recruitment measures adopted over the years (some more effective than others), which have steadily increased minority representation. A 2009 study commissioned by the Department of State concluded that the procedures currently in place for recruitment and testing attract a diverse pool of applicants, and that this diversity also characterizes those who qualify for entry.”

But the work is far from done, Johnson cautions: “We need new approaches to attract qualified African-Americans and Hispanics.”

The numbers bear out both the positive trends and the work yet to be done. According to the Foreign Service promotion statistics published in the June 2012 issue of *State* magazine—which were gender-disaggregated for the first time ever—the 2011 overall promotion rate for all eligible generalists was 31.8 percent (29.1 percent for males and 36.8 percent for females). Broken down by ethnicity and race, that rate was 31.8 percent for whites, 27 percent for African-Americans, 29.4 percent for Hispanic-Americans, 40.1 percent for Asians and 50 percent for Native Americans in 2011.

The 2011 overall promotion rate for all eligible specialists was 17 percent (17 percent for males and 17.2 percent for females). Broken down by ethnicity and race, that rate was 17.7 percent for whites, 15.6 percent for African-Americans, 14.3 percent for Hispanic-Americans, 14.9 percent for Asians and 11.1 percent for Native Americans in 2011.

## A Mission-Critical Concern

In “Diversity and Cultural Competence,” Ernest J. Wilson III, dean of the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California, addresses the diversity issue in terms of the imperative to recruit and retain high-quality talent (p. 21).

The new global reality for American foreign policy, he argues, is characterized by what he terms “double diversity.” Domestically, the United States is rapidly becoming a majority-minority country; meanwhile, the rise of powers such as India and China is changing the rules of global engagement, making diversity a factor in power relations.

It is not only urgent for the foreign affairs agencies to continue to recruit a more diverse cadre, but to incorporate and engage these talented individuals with diverse perspectives into an organizational culture that is welcoming, innovative and generative.

This means putting a premium on what Wilson calls “cultural competence,” which he defines broadly as “the capacity to think, act and move easily across borders, whether national, cultural or institutional, to pursue one’s goals effectively.”

## Getting the View from the Advocacy Groups

To shed further light on whether the diversity glass is half-full or half-empty, we invited all AFSA affinity groups to contribute their perspectives to this issue. Our thanks to those who did so.

Just five years after its founding, Executive Women at State has already become a strong advocate of gender parity and diversity, within the Foreign Service and Civil Service. Cynthia Saboe, its current president, describes the group’s mission in “EW@S: Supporting and Mentoring Female Leaders” (p. 25).

The Thursday Luncheon Group, the department’s oldest employee affinity group, has been “Expanding Opportunities at State for Four Decades” (p. 28). As TLG President Stacy D. Williams notes, while TLG’s main mission is to increase participation by African-Americans in the formulation, articulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy, it also supports more general efforts to promote the importance of diversity in strengthening the Foreign and Civil Service workplace.

Four years ago, Steven Giegerich contributed a Speaking Out column explaining the reasons he saw “Hope for Gay and Lesbian Foreign Service Employees.” In his follow-up article, “Pride Every Day” (p. 32), he describes the key role Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies has played over the past two decades (with strong support from AFSA, it should be noted) to make many of those hopes a reality. But as he points out, that job is far from done.

In “Celebrating Our Past, Uplifting Our Future” (p. 36), Morgan McClain-McKinney makes the case that publicizing the contributions of African-Americans to diplomacy and development work can help attract young, diverse talent to those careers.

As Margot Carrington notes, she borrows the title of her article, “How Are FS Women at State Faring?” (p. 39), from the question AFSA State Vice President Louise Crane posed in her January 2005 AFSA News column. Then, as now, the answer appears to be: Slightly better than before, but not nearly as well as they should be.

Though that article concludes this month’s focus section, we hope our coverage sparks continued debate and dialogue about diversity, both within these pages and in the Foreign Service at large. Please contact us at [Journal@afsa.org](mailto:Journal@afsa.org).

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*Steven Alan Honley was a Foreign Service officer from 1985 to 1997, serving in Mexico City, Wellington and Washington, D.C. He has been editor of The Foreign Service Journal since 2001.*



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# DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE: MISSION-CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

**To prioritize diversity, organizations like the State Department must think boldly, beyond the legacy paradigms of “affirmative action,” “diversity” or “inclusion.”**

BY ERNEST J. WILSON III

In today's globalizing, fast-changing, networked world, the capacity to turn diversity to one's advantage is critical. It is not just a nice thing to do; it is a must. As America and the world have changed dramatically, diversity has become a widespread organizational imperative—from Google to the Defense Department.

Yet if we agree that “diversity” is essential to achieving organizational goals, how do we define it in practical ways? How do we embrace it while maintaining other essential values? And

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*Ernest J. Wilson III is the Walter H. Annenberg Chair of Communication and dean of the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. A former National Security Council staffer and an Africa specialist on Capitol Hill, he has also been a consultant at the World Bank and the United Nations. He is the author of *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy: A Reader* (Routledge, 2004). This article is adapted from his keynote address on “Diversity, Inclusion and U.S. Foreign Policy,” delivered at a June 7, 2012, panel discussion at the State Department.*

how do we confront challenges like the fact that the percentage of people of color at the State Department is declining, not growing?

Last year, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton invited me to chair a panel designed to address the issues of innovation and diversity. Very senior people in the department participated in our deliberations, as did members from the private sector, higher education and other government agencies.

We were charged to develop proposals to better foster innovation and promote diversity at State, on the assumption that the department was operating in a turbulent international environment requiring 21st-century statecraft—and 21st-century talent.

To carry out this responsibility, I drew on many years of experience observing and participating in the design and conduct of U.S. foreign policy from multiple vantage points: as a member of the senior National Security Council staff, an Africa specialist on Capitol Hill, in foreign policy think-tanks like the Council on Foreign Relations and the Center for Strategic and

International Studies, and in universities.

In none of these positions did my portfolio explicitly include responsibility for promoting diversity. Yet the challenge of managing and making the best of diverse perspectives regularly arose.

Sometimes the challenge was balancing the different perspectives of, say, State and Defense, or private and public experts, or people of different nationalities and backgrounds.

One experience that stands out as especially relevant was the 18-month “listening tour” I undertook as dean of the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. During it, I met with chief executive, operating and communications officers at both top Fortune 100 companies and entrepreneurial startups. I asked each to describe their top-priority talent needs for the coming decades.

## The Talent Imperative

I learned three big things from these varied conversations. First, senior executives see recruitment and retention as perhaps their single

most pressing challenge. Second, they are desperately seeking diverse talent, broadly defined. Third, such talented individuals can only be effectively deployed inside an organization whose culture views them as essential and empowers them to operate against the organizational grain where necessary. In Silicon Valley firms especially, successful leaders told me they deliberately sought talent that could be disruptive.

These leaders talked about getting and keeping high-quality talent with an intensity and urgency that surprised me. “I go to bed each night really worried that IBM won’t be able to find the

If the institutional culture does not welcome new talent, then strategies of diversity, innovation and inclusion will fail.

talent it needs to develop new markets for the services and goods it sells,” John Iwata, IBM’s brilliant chief marketing officer and chief communications officer, told me.

He is not alone. According to an article in the *Harvard Business Review*,

only 15 percent of senior executives in North America and Asia believe they have adequate talent pipelines. A PricewaterhouseCoopers study found that talent shortages have already damaged many companies’ capacity to develop products and markets.

Forward-looking senior executives are not seeking yesterday’s talent. “Don’t send me your usual graduates,” said the

CEO of a large strategic public relations company. He wanted people with extraordinary experiences, unusual perspectives on tough problems and culturally varied backgrounds. He wanted people whose experiences let them connect the dots in new ways, who can think “360 degrees,” outside of the proverbial box. “We either innovate or we die” was the mantra I heard repeatedly.

Here, though, is the catch. If the State Department wants to recruit individuals possessing innovative talent and a diversity of perspectives and experiences and help them succeed, it must embed them in an innovative, generative organizational culture. In the end, culture trumps everything else. If the institutional culture does not welcome new talent, then strategies of diversity, innovation and inclusion will fail.

## Understanding Double Diversity

“Double diversity” is a concept I developed to capture the

## Distinguished American Diplomats



In May 2006, the U.S. Post Office issued the “Distinguished American Diplomats” stamps commemorating six accomplished diplomats, including Francis E. Willis, the first female FSO to become an ambassador and Clifton R. Wharton Sr., the first African-American FSO in the State Department.

new global reality that confronts organizations that operate internationally, in both their *external* and *domestic* environments. I have described this in greater detail in my book, *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Routledge, 2004).

It is a fact that the world is becoming more black, brown and yellow, while birth rates in Europe are stalling. This increasing *global diversity* does not simply imply a quantitative change; it makes for a qualitative one, as well.

Of course, the world has always been diverse, in terms of the profusion of ethnicities and well-developed cultures around the globe. But we in the developed world didn't always have to pay attention to that. As one of my college teachers, Karl Deutsch, used to say, "Power is the capacity *not* to have to learn."

Now, we *do* have to listen to non-Western countries, for their power is increasing. The growing global leverage of rising powers like India and, most importantly, China—non-Western countries that do not adhere to a Eurocentric value system—is an important reason to listen carefully. We are also seeing the rise of state and non-state actors from the global South—some benign, some not. All these changes alter how America must respond to the world.

*Domestic diversity*, the other side of the coin, is easily seen in the emerging reality that the United States of America is rapidly becoming a majority-minority country. These changes, too, require that our leadership calculate the national interest in new, more inclusive ways.

By itself, "diversity" is simply a factual condition, like "winter." Depending on our response, it could be helpful, harmful or neutral. So the question for our leading institutions is: How will we respond to these two changing realities—greater diversity "out there" and greater diversity here at home?

## A Framework for Action

Three scenarios come to mind. One: It will just be more of the same and won't matter much. Two: A greater diversity of perspectives will motivate, inspire and render America more dynamic, innovative and productive. Three: Greater diversity will lead to increasing intergroup friction, social fragmentation, and cultural and political strain.

We need people with brand-new portfolios of talents, whose diverse perspectives can challenge and change for the better our traditional ways of thinking and acting.

The first scenario is improbable, if the still-reverberating political dynamics of last year's presidential election are any indication. Of the other two, clearly the second is the preferred scenario. With that in mind, the State Department, USAID and the

other foreign affairs agencies need to work harder not only to recruit a more diverse cadre, but to incorporate and engage these talented people who bring novel perspectives, if they are to be successful.

Many firms in the private sector have already reached this conclusion, as has the military. They are working on finding a better balance between socializing new recruits into the traditional model of global engagement, and being socialized by the new recruits in the new competencies of 21st-century diplomacy.

The key to this is what I call "cultural competence." I define it as "the capacity to think, act and move easily across borders, whether national, cultural or institutional, to pursue one's goals effectively." Cultural competence requires having the appropriate skills, attitudes, knowledge and experience to operate effectively at the multiple intersections of global and national diversities. It also requires us to recognize there are different kinds of cultures and borders.

First, there is "Culture" with a capital 'C.' This is the traditional idea of global cultures in other nation-states (e.g., Chinese, Hindu or Yoruba). Also relevant are *subnational culture(s)* with a small 'c'—the values and attitudes associated with different ethnic minorities. And then there is "institutional culture." The State Department, for instance, has a very different culture than the Defense Department; and universities have different cultures than corporations.

Culturally competent people know how to navigate all three kinds of boundaries. And it is increasingly essential to both recruit for and train to develop this ability.

## Rethinking Recruitment

It's easy for me to prescribe new cultural, strategic and personnel shifts, but I recognize how difficult they are to achieve.

The cultural transformations I call for involve far-reaching changes, and they are especially difficult for institutions, such

as the State Department, that have powerful vertical hierarchies; a strong and deeply ingrained culture that is often self-referential, inward-looking and lacking clear measures of success; a system of discipline that offers few rewards for successful risk-taking, but lots

of punishment if initiative leads to failure; and entry based on a complex examination system that does not recognize contemporary conditions.

Our State Department panel debated the relative value of current recruitment measures, such as the Foreign Service exam, lateral entry, specialized programs for minorities, etc. While individual members may have preferred one approach over another, there was a consensus that the recruitment base must be quickly and innovatively rethought. We suggested bolder, more targeted ties to external sources of innovation and diversity, and internal reforms to reward new ideas and promote deeper, more practical knowledge.

State should emulate successful private firms by aggressively recruiting innovative young people through targeted internships to identify top candidates, especially those who use social media successfully. And just as the Foreign Service Institute can teach anyone Spanish or embassy management, it should be able to teach anyone how to improve their cultural competence, and to nurture their innovative spirits.

There is no silver bullet to meet the challenges of double diversity, but forward-looking leadership can make a huge difference. Just look at the pathbreaking steps State has already taken in regard to women, both in terms of substantive issues of special importance to women and high-level appointments.

## Diversity, Innovation and Transformative Inclusion

To prioritize diversity, organizations like the State Department must think boldly, beyond the legacy paradigms of "affirmative action," "diversity" or "inclusion."

The first bold step is to recognize that, whatever we call these baskets of activities and attitudes, at this point in American history they are mission-critical.

The second bold step is to accept *why* they are mission-critical: not for ethical and legal reasons alone; nor simply because we are experiencing a substantial overall labor shortage for highly skilled employees of all types. They are essential because

There is no silver bullet to meet the challenges of double diversity, but forward-looking leadership can make a huge difference.

we need to hire people with brand-new portfolios of talents, whose diverse perspectives can challenge and change for the better our traditional ways of thinking and acting. And we need to give this new talent the leeway to do so.

Third, we need to aggressively pursue change agents. We need to hire the impatient, the different. We need to bring in employees with distinctive emotional intelligences and different kinds of traditional intelligences, with different professional backgrounds and complementary strengths.

Finally, ethnic diversity by itself is not enough. We also need all new employees to be culturally competent and able to negotiate important differences; to be respectful of both tradition and transition; and to be able to minimize the inevitable frictions that will occur.

Creating a diverse, inclusive organizational culture requires training in cultural competence for everyone.

## Moving Forward

Moving forward, we should hire people with diverse perspectives not just to help them be more like us, but to help us and our organizations be more like *them*. There must be a balance between acculturating employees enough to make them effective, but not so much that all their creativity, innovation and different perspectives are diluted.

To get a better idea of the required approach, ask yourself this question: *If you were inventing the U.S. diplomatic service from scratch in today's world, what would it look like?* Wouldn't there be more bridges between the department and other stakeholders in society? Wouldn't we recruit more people with science and technology backgrounds? Wouldn't we have a more ethnically diverse Civil and Foreign Service?

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our new global and local conditions require a new kind of leadership. These challenges for success place huge responsibilities and demands on the shoulders of today's leaders.

Engaging double diversity, through cultural competence, to achieve innovative, transformative inclusion, is not easy. It's a messy process filled with experiments that will succeed, and others that will fail. It is a challenge, but what an exciting, timely and hugely important one! ■

# EW@S: SUPPORTING AND MENTORING FEMALE LEADERS

**Five years after its founding, Executive Women at State has become a strong advocate of gender parity and diversity, within both the Foreign Service and Civil Service.**

BY CYNTHIA SABOE

With nearly 1,500 members, Executive Women at State is now the largest affinity group in the department. A sister group modeled on EW@S, Women @ AID, was established at the U.S. Agency for International Development last year, and has already grown to more than 400 members.

The mission of both groups is to advocate for achieving gender parity for senior career women. Toward that end, EW@S places great emphasis on mentoring the next generation of female leaders, within both the Foreign Service and Civil Service.

Our roots go back to the early 1990s, when a group of United States Information Agency employees was active in the Women's Action Organization. Years later, in the autumn of 2007, a foursome of WAO alumnae found themselves back together in Washington, all working at the State Department. The four—Julie Gianelloni Connor, Elizabeth Corwin, Georgia Hubert and Monica O'Keefe—began meeting over lunch to discuss how to reactivate a group focused on women's issues.

Their efforts led to the formal establishment of EW@S the following year. The organization held its inaugural event on Feb. 25, 2008, featuring Ambassador Robin Raphael. Other

speakers that first year included Under Secretary for Management Pat Kennedy, Office of Civil Rights Director John Robinson and Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula Dobrianski.

## Inspiring Role Models

Over the past five years, EW@S has held more than 50 departmentwide programs, including co-sponsorship of the department's Women's History Month and Women's Equality Day observances. We were honored that former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton accepted our invitation to be the keynote speaker for Women's History Month in March 2009, one of her first presentations to the department.

Some of our speakers have had a diplomatic connection. Journalist Gwen Ifill, whose sister is a retired Foreign Service officer, recounted the challenges she faced as a young black journalist. When an anonymous colleague in one newsroom left a hostile note on her desk, for instance, she refused to let it get to her. Instead, she realized that "This clearly isn't about me!"

Cokie Roberts, whose mother, Lindy Boggs, served as U.S. ambas-

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*Cynthia Saboe, a State Department Civil Service employee since 1981, is president of Executive Women at State. She is currently the acting executive director in the Office of the Inspector General.*



Photo credit: Department of State

Georgetown University Professor Deborah Tannen (fifth from right), Director of the Office of Civil Rights John Robinson (fourth from left), Under Secretary of State for Management Patrick Kennedy (fourth from right) and EW@S board members (left to right) Cathy Walker, Sandy Robinson, Kelly Kiederling, then-EW@S Vice President Cynthia Saboe, Betty Swope, Joan Corbett, then-EW@S President Julie Gianelloni Connor, Georgia Hubert and Monica O'Keefe. EW@S and OCR sponsored Dr. Tannen's talk on workplace communication, "Women, Language and Authority," for the 2010 observance of Women's History Month at State.

sador to the Holy See from 1997 to 2001, presented a humorous, insightful talk about the wives of the Founding Fathers. "You'd Think Men Did It Alone" amplified many of the themes of gender equality that EW@S works to address.

Other speakers have included Terry O'Neill, president of the National Organization for Women, who posed the question: "Has the Glass Ceiling Cracked?" George Washington University Professor Allida Black shared lessons from one of the great women leaders of the 20th century in "Eleanor Roosevelt, Not Invisible Then or Now," while Georgetown University Professor Deborah Tannen translated the mysteries of workplace communication in her presentation on "Women, Language and Authority."

During this year's Women's History Month observance, distinguished author and evolutionary theorist Riane Eisler set forth the principles of a caring economy to explain her premise that "What's Good for Women Is Good for the World."

## **Advocating for Diversity and Women's Advancement**

Meetings of EW@S board members with senior State leaders have offered opportunities to influence the department's diversity activities and information. As a result of one such meeting, EW@S was invited to submit recommendations and work with the Office of Human Resources to improve the transparency of diversity statistics. This led to publication of gender-disaggregated Foreign Service promotion statistics in the June 2012 issue of *State* magazine. As former EW@S President Julie Gianelloni Connor observed, "That was the result of five years of effort."

Beginning in 2008 and again in 2011, EW@S board members had compiled these statistics informally by extrapolating from

bureau and post leadership listings, award and promotion lists, and other published sources. That approach presented a variety of challenges, from determining who held the information to addressing the ambiguity of certain names: "Does anyone know if Robin (or Marion or Leigh) is a male or a female?"

Impressed with the openness achieved by this collaboration, representatives from another federal agency asked, "How did you accomplish this? Our human resources office treats this information like an official secret." The answer is simple: steady and repeated EW@S engagement with department principals and HR professionals to promote greater transparency in the availability of diversity statistics, resulting in changes that benefit not just EW@S but all diversity groups.

We also coordinate or co-sponsor many events at State each year. A recent panel, "Looking Beyond State: Opportunities for Civil Service Employees," was so oversubscribed that it had to be moved from a conference room to the Loy Henderson Auditorium. More than 130 people attended, and the program was recorded to make it available to many others. (The video is posted on EW@State's SharePoint site.)

Similarly, a brown-bag mentoring session we held in the Main State cafeteria, "How to Present Yourself for Success," attracted so many attendees that the original table space had to be doubled. Our quarterly networking breakfasts are also popular, drawing 40-60 women to start the day over coffee and pastry while exchanging business cards and professional information.

## **Still a Way to Go**

We have also learned from other federal agencies' practices. In June 2012, Stephanie Miller, the director for diversity management

in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, explained the changing approaches to women in the work force by the U.S. military at a standing-room-only EW@S event. She described how women in the military

loved what they did, but felt they had to leave to improve their personal lives—an observation that struck a chord with many.

The Navy realized that its costly investment in training people was walking out the door when employees left, and it took action. It created an exit survey to probe the reasons for departures, evaluated the responses received and developed solutions to address each of the barriers cited. For instance, the Navy now has a pilot program that allows all employees to take up to three years off to focus on family care, education or anything else they wish, without being penalized in the promotion process—essentially “stopping the clock.”

While exit interviews exist for Foreign Service members, it is not clear what happens to the responses. There is no comparable process for Civil Service employees. Consequently, one EW@S objective is to replicate the Navy’s success in understanding the reasons employees leave. We currently have only anecdotal information, so we are interested in creating and using exit surveys from all departing employees to identify challenges and solutions to the issues faced by our employees so we can work with the department to address barriers to employee retention.

Ongoing EW@S objectives reflect the long road ahead of us. These include continuing to expand our reach to ever-increasing numbers of employees, exploring ways to prepare more women for senior leadership positions, and moving the needle ever closer toward gender parity for senior career women at the department. While the numbers of career women in senior positions are at their highest levels ever, parity is still not within reach.

## Paying It Forward

EW@S has three membership tiers, each of which focuses on a specific career level and mentors the level below. The Executives, consisting of women at senior leadership levels, sponsor and mentor the mid-level Associates, who, in turn, sponsor and mentor the women of the Entry- and Junior-Level Program (affectionately known as the EJs, pronounced “edges”). And the EJs, not to be outdone, have expanded the organization’s reach beyond the walls of State by mentoring interns and students interested in beginning a career at the department.

Our approach combines informal, situational, speed and

## EW@S has also learned from other federal agencies’ practices.

reverse-mentoring opportunities. As Jennifer Carter, president of the EJs, recently noted, “The appetite for mentoring seems insatiable.”

Chief Diversity Officer and  
Office of Civil Rights Director

John M. Robinson has described EW@S’s tiered career development and mentoring model as “a best practice for the federal government.”

In addition to programs for each career level, the three groups collaborate in hosting monthly programs, formal and informal networking and idea-sharing opportunities, and social events where women with shared interests can come together.

## Please Join Us!

While women at State have made real progress in recent years, we still have a long way to go to achieve full representation in the department’s top ranks. We welcome all interested colleagues to join us in this important work. Volunteers to serve on committees and assist with programs and events are always welcome.

Membership in EW@S (and attendance at its events) is open to Department of State women, and men who support women’s advancement, at all grade levels. Membership is also open to political appointees, When Actually Employed personnel and contractors who hold or previously held an equivalent rank.

Since there are no dues, all you need to do to join is to sign up for the appropriate mailing list:

1. Executive Women at State—Executive Level (Senior Foreign Service, Senior Executive Service, FS-1, and GS-15 levels): [ews@state.gov](mailto:ews@state.gov)
2. Executive Women at State—Associates (FS-2 through tenured FS-4 and GS-12 through GS-14): [ewsassociates@state.gov](mailto:ewsassociates@state.gov)
3. Executive Women at State—Entry and Junior Level (untenured FS-4 through FS-6, GS-5 through GS-11, and interns): [ewsej@state.gov](mailto:ewsej@state.gov)
4. Friends of EW@S (male and female supporters at all levels who do not wish to be full members): [ewsfriends@state.gov](mailto:ewsfriends@state.gov).

If you’d like to learn more about EW@S, please contact any of these e-mail addresses. Or visit our SharePoint site (<http://shared.state.sbu/sites/ews/default.aspx>), which has numerous resources including program and meeting notes, events calendars, and membership and contact information.

EW@S also has a managed group on the department’s Corridor site: <http://corridor.state.gov/groups/executive-women-at-state-ews>. ■

# TLG: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES AT STATE

**The Thursday Luncheon Group, State's oldest employee affinity group, continues to strengthen the Foreign and Civil Service workplace through its advocacy for diversity.**

BY STACY D. WILLIAMS

In 1973 William B. Davis and Robert Dumas, African-American employees of the U.S. Information Agency, became interested in identifying career paths for the advancement of African-American employees of USIA, State and other foreign affairs agencies. The duo organized meetings over lunch with likeminded African-American officers on the first Thursday of each month, inspiring Davis to dub the organization the "Thursday Luncheon Group."

TLG, as the group is usually referred to, quickly began to focus on outreach to senior State Department officials, with the goal of advancing long-term personnel and management goals. One point we consistently highlighted was the urgent need to improve the accuracy of the department's statistical records. As a result of that campaign, all State Department employees can now voluntarily select their race and ethnicity within their personnel profiles.

Today, the informal mentoring program Davis and Dumas launched four decades ago has grown into a robust organization, comprising more than 300

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*Stacy D. Williams is president of the Thursday Luncheon Group, the State Department's oldest affinity group. Since joining State as a Presidential Management Intern in 1997, he has held a series of management and policy-related Civil Service assignments, ranging from auditing consular programs and handling money-laundering issues to negotiating multilateral issues in the Organization of American States. He is currently executive secretary in the Office of the Haiti Special Coordinator.*



Michael Gross

President Stacy D. Williams presents TLG medallion to then-Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton. TLG member Clayton Bond looks on.

active-duty Foreign Service officers and Civil Service employees, associate members and retired employees of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. It is also the oldest of the 12 State Department employee affinity groups recognized by the Office of Civil Rights.

Speakers at our luncheon meetings (now held on a quarterly basis) have included Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Rodham Clinton, as well as many Foreign Service directors general, under secretaries for management and ambassadors. We also invite leaders of nongovernmental organizations and other figures from the foreign policy world to address our events.

### Lending a Helping Hand

Mentoring continues to be one of TLG's top priorities, with special emphasis on entry-level employees. Foreign Service pioneers like Ambassadors Edward Perkins, Ruth A. Davis, Harry Thomas and Harriett Elam-Thomas are among the group's foremost mentors. Former Deputy Secretary of State

Thomas Nides served as TLG's most recent leadership liaison and strongly championed the group's goals.

In a targeted effort to attract the next generation of career FSOs, we partnered with the American Foreign Service Association in 1995 to establish a joint internship program. The AFSA/TLG internship program introduces minority college students to international affairs through a 10-week internship program at State. Two of them, Tejal Shah and Stacy Session, have entered the Foreign Service, and I am an alumnus of the program, as well.

Also in 1995, we established the Terence Todman Book Scholarship to encourage outstanding students at historically black schools to study and pursue careers in international affairs. Since its inception, we have given well over \$20,000 to students at Howard, Morehouse, Spelman, Southern University, Rust College, Bethune Cookman University and the University of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

While TLG's main mission is to increase participation by African-Americans in the formulation, articulation and imple-

mentation of U.S. foreign policy, we also support efforts by other organizations, such as the Association of Black American Ambassadors, to promote the importance of diversity in strengthening the Foreign and Civil Service

workplace. (Although ABBA is not an official State Department employee affinity group, many of its members are also TLG members, and the two organizations support the same platform.)

### The Rangel and Pickering Fellowships

As part of a strategic approach to the recruitment, career development and retention of minorities within the Foreign Service, the Thursday Luncheon Group has long been a staunch proponent of the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship (established in 1992) and the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Fellowship program (established in 2002). TLG members mentor many Rangel and Pickering Fellows throughout their internships, as well as after they join the Foreign Service.

Created to help the department increase the number of minority FSOs, both programs identify and develop a cadre of successful FSOs from all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The Pickering Fellowship began with the support of Ambassador Edward Perkins, a former director general of the Foreign Service and ambassador to South Africa, among other countries. He and others saw the need for a program to ensure that the Foreign Service reflected the composition of American society. In 2001, the fellowship was named to honor one of the most distinguished American diplomats of the latter half of the 20th century, Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering.

The Rangel International Affairs Fellowship is named for a longtime New York congressman, Charles B. Rangel, who secured federal funds for the program and has championed the cause of greater diversity in foreign affairs careers. Both men continue to support the objectives underlying the fellowships, and regularly participate in events to promote them and the professional development of the fellows.

The two fellowship programs are funded by the department and administered as cooperative agreements, overseen and implemented by the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment. Fellows are selected by an independent review panel in a rigorous and

To attract the next generation of career FSOs, TLG and AFSA established a joint internship program in 1995.

competitive process that tests candidates' writing skills, substantive knowledge, knowledge of the Foreign Service and interviewing skills. The selection panels—comprising former FSOs, academics and admin-

istrators—seek candidates who demonstrate the potential to succeed in the Foreign Service.

The Pickering Fellowship Program, administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, selects 20 undergraduates and 20 college graduates annually. The Rangel program, administered by Howard University, selects 20 graduate fellows each year.

Each program disburses financial assistance to selectees for use to complete a two-year master's degree, plus two internship opportunities (one domestic and one foreign), as well as professional development and mentoring support. Participants must meet all Foreign Service entry requirements and, on completion of their academic program, must serve three years in the Foreign Service as part of their contractual agreement.

Over the past 20 years, nearly 580 Pickering Fellows and 150 Rangel Fellows have contributed to the department's mission and served with distinction around the globe. Most fellows enter the program with prior overseas experience, such as foreign study, the Peace Corps, Fulbright scholarships or military service. Many of them also have prior work experience in the private, public and nonprofit sectors, and extensive knowledge of foreign languages.

In 2010, the programs' alumni formed the Pickering and Rangel Alumni Association to create opportunities for alumni worldwide to connect, network and engage in professional development and community service.

### A Partnership Bears Fruit

The Thursday Luncheon Group is also reaching out directly to regional and functional bureaus to promote greater diversity in their recruitment programs, with encouraging results.

In the 63 years from 1949 to 2012, only nine career African-American Foreign Service officers were appointed as chiefs of mission within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Over the same period, just one career African-American FSO has ever served as a deputy assistant secretary in that bureau.

Over the past four years, however, EUR has become a model of effective outreach to the department's employee affinity

groups as part of its effort to attract competitive minority candidates for domestic and overseas assignments. Shortly after her arrival in 2009, the bureau's former principal deputy assistant secretary, Nancy McEldowney, participated in a round-table discussion with the leaders of the Thursday Luncheon Group and other affinity groups on identifying and advancing diversity initiatives within the bureau. Shortly thereafter, EUR developed a bureau mission statement incorporating diversity as a priority objective, a goal that its front office has repeatedly underscored both within the department and to its overseas posts.

The bureau held periodic brown-bag sessions to orient candidates to its bidding process, and points of contact within the bureau quickly responded to questions from candidates. Ambassador Tina Kaidanow, McEldowney's successor as principal DAS, maintained the program's momentum; shortly after her arrival, she spoke to a TLG luncheon on the European Union's financial crisis. Her successor, Marie Yovanovitch, has assured the group's leadership that she is equally committed to the bureau's diversity goals, and she has already designated an EUR liaison to TLG.

Because of EUR's consistent and effective management approach, we have seen an increase in the number of mid-level African-American officers serving within the bureau. Such assignments are giving these FSOs vital exposure to the important issues in the region, and TLG is confident that, over time, they will be equipped to competitively bid on and secure positions of greater responsibility, including principal officers, deputy chiefs of mission and ambassadors. They will then bring overseas experience and expertise to leadership positions in Washington.

### Celebrating 40 Years

As these initiatives demonstrate, TLG is off to an exhilarating start in celebrating its 40th anniversary. Just as we enjoyed an unprecedented level of support for our leadership and management goals from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and her team, we look forward to continuing these collaborative efforts under Secretary John Kerry.

We continue to believe that actively recruiting a work force that reflects the American public in all its variety will strengthen our U.S. foreign policy and serve as a model to attract even more distinguished African-American Foreign Service officers.

For more details about our activities or to join us, please visit our Web site, [www.thursdayluncheongroup.org](http://www.thursdayluncheongroup.org). ■

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# PRIDE EVERY DAY

**GLIFAA has largely accomplished its original mission: to combat discrimination in the employee clearance process. But much other work remains to be done.**

BY STEVEN GIEGERICH

In its 21-year history, Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies has already achieved dramatic success in its work to secure full parity for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender personnel and their families, both in the United States and overseas. Founded at a time when simply being LGBT was grounds for denial or revocation of a security clearance, GLIFAA has largely accomplished its original mission: to combat discrimination in the employee clearance process.

Now, in partnership with key allies at all levels across the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, it is working to raise greater public awareness of LGBT issues and to deliver substantive, equitable policy changes for LGBT employees.

Back in May 2009, this magazine published a Speaking Out column I contributed ("Hope for Gay and Lesbian Foreign Service Employees") describing the barriers that same-sex couples still faced within the Foreign Service, and highlighting

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*Steven Giegerich is currently consular chief in Stockholm. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1991, he has served in Baghdad, Hong Kong, Pretoria, Frankfurt, MFO Sinai, Vancouver, Tashkent, Nassau and Athens. He is a longtime member of Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies.*

the promising developments that loomed just over the horizon. Four years later, many of these gains have been realized, with truly seismic impact for LGBT employees.

Under former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, the definition of "eligible family member" was expanded to include same-sex partners in declared long-term commitments to each other. As a result, our spouses and partners are now included on travel orders, receive funded travel (for permanent changes of station, rest and recreation, home leave, emergency travel, etc.) and have access to overseas health units, as well as assistance with visa requests where possible, revised cost-of-living allowance calculations, etc.

That change allowed me to safe-haven my partner, Daniel, at my previous posting in Hong Kong during the year I just spent at Embassy Baghdad (an assignment I would not have taken had that option not been available to us). U.S.-citizen spouses and partners can now obtain diplomatic passports, along with, in many instances, the privileges and immunities afforded to other members of a diplomatic household.

There is no question that these changes have been dramatic. But as helpful as they have been, we are still a long way from finished. Indeed, these limited successes have blinded some of our supporters to the important work that remains. I never cease to be amazed at how many genuinely supportive



Michael Gross

Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton addresses a packed Benjamin Franklin Room commemorating GLIFAA's 20th anniversary in November 2012.

colleagues are surprised that any issues still remain for LGBT employees and our families. "I thought they fixed all of that" is a common reaction.

### The Defense of Marriage Act

Don't get me wrong: The changes at State and other foreign affairs agencies have been hugely beneficial, both practically and psychologically. But for all the positive press over the designation of same-sex spouses and partners as Eligible Family Members, the so-called "Defense of Marriage" Act, passed by Congress in 1996, puts three crucial categories of benefits out of reach: health care coverage, pension/inheritance benefits and immigration rights.

Following the publication of my Speaking Out column, many colleagues suggested I solve my predicament by marrying my partner in a state where same-sex marriage had been made legal. Unfortunately, DOMA renders even legal, state-recognized same-sex marriages null and void at the federal level, where the most significant legal benefits reside.

The Obama administration has refused to defend the law and has expressed the view that it is unconstitutional, a position increasing numbers of federal judges share. But it is

powerless to overturn its provisions.

So until the law is either repealed (extremely unlikely, given the fact that the current Republican-majority House of Representatives is actively defending it) or struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court (much more promising, but by no means assured), DOMA will continue to prevent me from adding Daniel, my partner of 10 years, to my health care coverage. Nor is he entitled to inherit my Social Security or pension benefits. I cannot even petition to have Daniel live in the United States with me.

### Coping with DOMA

So, no, we have most certainly not "fixed all of that." But I will be eternally grateful to Sec. Clinton for the very real benefits her policy changes have afforded my family, and those of all LGBT officers.

On the immigration front, GLIFAA partnered with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs to develop helpful, though still limited, relief. Specifically, in 2011 CA announced the creation of a special exchange visa (J) program for non-U.S. citizen partners of Foreign Service officers, which includes employment authoriza-

## **Despite real progress on many fronts, same-sex spouses and partners still lack access to health care coverage, pension/inheritance benefits and immigration rights.**

tion. This is clearly a significant change, and much credit goes to the department and GLIFAA for finding an accommodating, creative way to assist foreign-born partners without violating DOMA prohibitions.

Having our foreign partners be able to work in the U.S. is a major incentive when considering domestic assignments that otherwise may not be viable because of the severe reduction in family income or lack of career opportunities for our partners. But as excellent as this program has been, it, too, can only be considered a stopgap measure.

For starters, the program is only available to employees assigned long-term (at least six months) to the United States, so it does not help those who, for example, are on temporary duty for language training at the Foreign Service Institute. Nor does it apply to those who wish to keep their partners on Separate Maintenance Allowance in the U.S. while they serve in unaccompanied hardship posts, such as Iraq or Afghanistan.

It also requires a minimum amount of time devoted to “approved” educational or volunteer programs at the partner’s expense and separate from their employment pursuits—which can cost thousands of dollars a year.

Most importantly, the new J visa program is only available to the partners of employees who will be transferring back overseas at some point in their career. So any employee who is contemplating retirement in the United States still has no mechanism to do so with his or her foreign partner or spouse. Just pause for a moment to imagine what that must be like.

### **Much More to Do**

Still, just as I expressed optimism in my 2009 Speaking Out column, I am hopeful that we will achieve real progress on these vital issues in the near future. This summer the Supreme Court may well overturn the Defense of Marriage Act—and if it does, that will open the door for partners to seek same-sex marriage benefits. If not, then only legislative action would rectify the situation, something that seems much further off on the horizon despite the rapid shifts in popular support for LGBT issues.

Yet voiding or repealing DOMA isn’t the end of the chal-

lenge. Even after its demise, LGBT employees will still face unique obstacles in overseas assignments. Although the U.S. government may soon come to provide equal treatment to its LGBT citizens, the same certainly cannot be said for the rest of the world.

Accordingly, those employees will still find it difficult or impossible to obtain visas or accreditation for their families in countries with less enlightened policies, effectively barring them from considering many otherwise attractive or career-enhancing posts. The State Department must therefore continue to apply diplomatic pressure to push these countries to accord our family members the recognition they are entitled to under diplomatic conventions.

Many LGBT employees also still face homophobic work environments, particularly in posts where local culture stigmatizes homosexuality. In such places, local staff are often inadvertently (though occasionally deliberately) insensitive in their treatment of LGBT colleagues and their families. Increased and sustained sensitivity awareness campaigns by the department could effectively combat this situation.

Many countries all over the world have made great strides in treating their LGBT citizens equally. Marriage equality is the law of the land in 11 countries, including Argentina, South Africa, Mexico and Portugal, and is on the way in France, Uruguay, Nepal, Taiwan and the United Kingdom. But other countries seem to be moving in the opposite direction.

Russia has been toying with the idea of enacting a nationwide ban on the “promotion of homosexuality,” whatever that means, and has already banned gay pride parades for the next 100 years (true story!).

Uganda, fueled by material and spiritual support from American fundamentalists, teeters dangerously close to passing a harsh anti-gay law that could conceivably invoke the death penalty for those who are caught or suspected of “aggravated homosexuality.” It even includes a provision for extraditing Ugandan nationals found to be in violation of the law while overseas.

Both GLIFAA and the U.S. government thus share a common mission in advocating for the dignity and human rights of



David Kero-Mantz

GLIFAA members discuss issues with Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Resources Marcia S. Bernicat, center, at the group's 20th-anniversary event.

LGBT individuals around the world, so that equality does not end at our borders. As Sec. Clinton so simply, yet forcefully, put it in a 2011 speech marking International Human Rights Day: "Gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights."

We are fortunate Secretary of State John Kerry shares his predecessor's commitment to this cause. He was one of just 14 senators to vote against the Defense of Marriage Act back in 1996, and has been a vocal supporter of marriage equality since 2011.

### Advocating Equality

Now that America has seen the light on issues of LGBT equality, we have become advocates for treating gay rights as an integral aspect of the promotion of human rights worldwide. After years of opposition, the United States' decision to support a 2011 United Nations resolution condemning discrimination against LGBT citizens was instrumental in getting it passed in the Human Rights Council against the fierce opposition of Russia and some African and Islamic countries.

When asked how the U.N. resolution would affect gays and lesbians in countries that opposed the resolution, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary Daniel Baer said it showed "that there are many people in the international community who stand with them and support them, and that change will come."

"It's a historic method of tyranny to make you feel that you are alone," he said. "One of the things that this resolution does for people everywhere, particularly LGBT people everywhere, is to remind them that they are not alone."

For GLIFAA, the journey continues as we strive to fulfill our motto: Pride. Every day. The world over. ■

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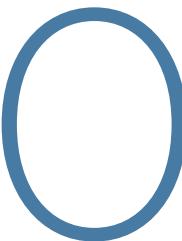
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# CELEBRATING OUR PAST, **UPLIFTING OUR FUTURE**

**Publicizing the contributions of African-Americans to diplomacy and development work can help attract young, diverse talent to careers in international affairs.**

BY MORGAN MCCLAIN-MCKINNEY

ver the past five years, there have been many articles profiling young African-Americans who have been inspired to pursue politics or public service by the historic election of President Barack Obama. Yet far too many students are still unaware that the Foreign Service is even a career option—partly because they haven't met any persons of color who have played a prominent role in foreign affairs.

To address this problem, and as part of a wider effort to organize a celebration of African-American leadership in foreign affairs, a group of volunteers at the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development launched a research project in 2011. Our mission was to compile a database of African-Americans who have contributed to international

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*Morgan McClain-McKinney is a program analyst for the Private Capital Group for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development. Prior to coming to USAID in 2011, she spent time on Capitol Hill and at the Department of State, where she worked with international organizations. She is a member of both Young Professionals at AID and Women at AID, as well as the Thursday Luncheon Group at the Department of State.*

development and diplomacy, either through employment with government agencies or at nongovernmental organizations.

Some names were obvious: President Barack Obama; Colin Powell, the first African-American Secretary of State; and his successor, Condoleezza Rice, the first female African-American Secretary of State; Susan Rice, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and Ambassador Johnnie Carson, currently assistant secretary of State for African affairs. But as we went further back in time, we found major gaps in the record.

The Ralph Bunche Library and the Office of the Historian, both at State, were helpful in filling in some of these gaps. We also reached out to members of the Thursday Luncheon Group (the State Department's oldest African-American affinity group), and the Library of Congress. But when we contacted State and USAID's human resources bureaus to request data that disaggregated employees by race or gender, we were told such information was not available.

## An Unexpected Source

Fortunately, we soon caught a break. Tucked away in the pages of a 2008 Department of State financial report, we uncovered the names of some key firsts in the field, as well as a database that catalogued all African-American ambassadors up to that year.

Though extremely pleased that we could celebrate the first black diplomat, the first African-American Foreign Service officer, etc., we endeavored to go beyond the firsts. We wanted to collect information about the second, third, even the 85th black U.S. diplomat, as well.

In the next phase of the project we conducted interviews with agency staff, including Senior Foreign Service and Civil Service officials—mission directors, ambassadors, office directors, etc.—to glean any historical data they had collected about their predecessors. We were delighted to learn that a treasure trove of such details was housed in the minds of our staff and agency leadership.

Our research confirmed that the proportion of African-Americans in leadership positions in the Foreign Service

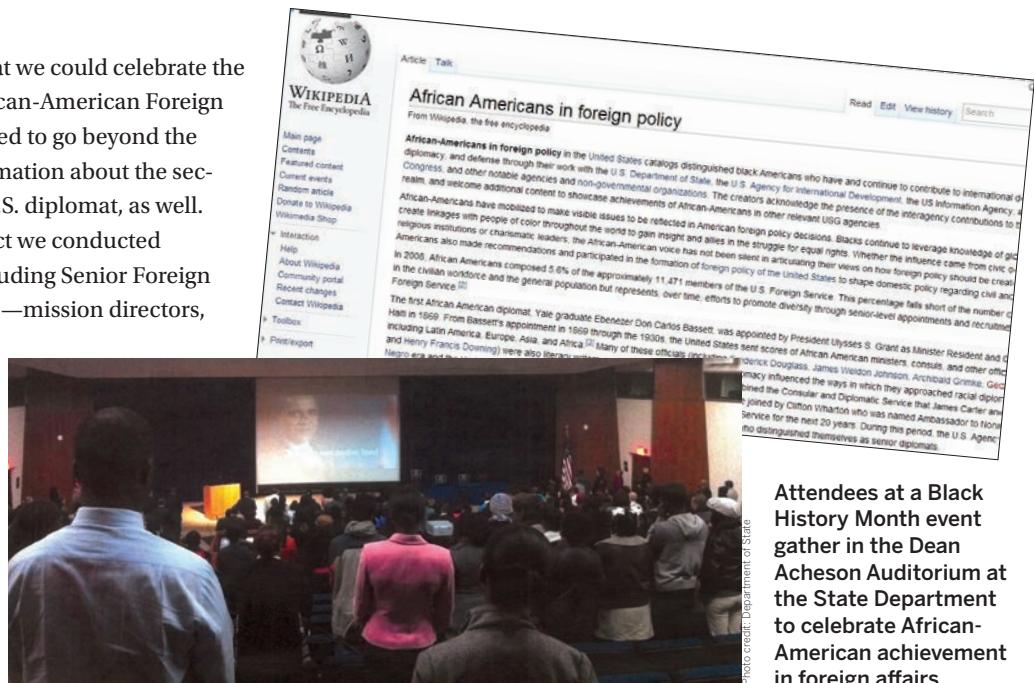
has waned—both overseas and in Washington—compared to the relatively high level maintained from the 1860s through the 1930s. USAID, in particular, has seen low numbers of African-Americans in leadership positions. Of course, State has been around for more than two centuries, whereas USAID is barely 50 years old. So perhaps the disparity shouldn't be that surprising.

### **Publicizing Our Findings**

Now that we had aggregated a critical mass of information, we wanted to share it with others. Throughout this process, the team remained in contact with USAID's and State's public affairs teams. Both were excited about the project's potential and offered to host the findings on their respective Web sites as part of their February 2012 Black History Month celebrations.

While we appreciated that offer, we instead decided to post the data on Wikipedia (see above). Our page, "African-Americans in Foreign Policy," makes the information available permanently, and also allows anyone with a bit of HTML experience to contribute names and edit the listings. We invite current, former and aspiring FSOs to review it and contribute to it.

Our database has already proved beneficial. First, it is something tangible that a young African-American can point to and say, "Yes, we can." It also fills an information gap about the Foreign Service that has existed for decades, especially in our schools. And it is a useful reminder for State, USAID and other foreign affairs agencies not only of the progress they've made on



Attendees at a Black History Month event gather in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the State Department to celebrate African-American achievement in foreign affairs.

diversity, but the work that remains to be done.

For that reason, it would be useful, even eye-opening, for other minority groups at State to conduct similar research.

## The Payne Fellowship Program

Motivated by a desire to recruit a more diverse work force, both State and USAID have steadily improved their outreach to historically black colleges and minority-serving institutions. One recent example of this—part of a larger Diversity Engagement Program USAID is pursuing—is the Payne Fellowship Program, designed to attract outstanding young members of minority groups to careers in international development.

Modeled after the Rangel Fellowship at the Department of State, the program is named in honor of a longtime champion of USAID, Representative Donald M. Payne, D-N.J., who passed away last year. Launched in March 2012 at Howard University, the fellowship encourages members of minority groups, especially those with financial need, to pursue careers in international development, where they have been historically under-represented.

This year, the program plans to award two fellowships valued at up to \$45,000 annually for two years of graduate study. It also has a dual summer internship component, requiring fellows to gain legislative experience working on international issues for a member of Congress, and to pursue an overseas internship in a USAID mission.

Fellows who successfully complete the program and USAID Foreign Service entry requirements will receive appointments as Foreign Service officers. The fellowship—which combines graduate school, internships and professional development activities—is a unique pathway into the USAID Foreign Service.

Valuable as initiatives like the Payne and Rangel Fellowships are, waiting until the university level to start introducing minorities to the career potential of the Foreign Service may be too late. Sharing the stories of these trailblazers, and those of more recent government professionals, with high school students (and even those in junior and elementary schools) can only improve our chances of increasing diversity within the ranks of the foreign affairs agencies.

### Influencing the Next Generation

President John F. Kennedy famously observed that those who look *only* to the past or present are certain to miss the future. With that cautionary note in mind, I believe publicizing

**Our Wikipedia page, "African-Americans in Foreign Policy," not only makes the data widely accessible, but allows anyone to contribute names and edit the listings.**

the contributions African-Americans have made to U.S. diplomacy and development work over the years can help attract young, diverse talent to careers in international affairs.

This is especially true in tough economic times, when financial strains are a potential barrier to joining the Foreign Service. Many aspiring professionals can make lots of money in the private sector, so forgoing those opportunities for a less lucrative career in public service can be a tough sell.

To help them make that choice, we need to demonstrate that it has been done—and beyond that, who did it. In many instances, understanding who came before can influence those who come next. ■

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# HOW ARE FS WOMEN AT STATE FARING?

**The importance of State's mission demands  
that we ensure talented female FSOs  
have the opportunity to reach for,  
and grab, the brass ring.**

BY MARGOT CARRINGTON

A FSA State Vice President Louise Crane posed a provocative question in her January 2005 *Foreign Service Journal* column: "How Are Foreign Service Women at State Faring?" Her findings indicated women were being promoted within the Senior Foreign Service at rates equal to those of men, yet proportionately fewer women than men were being selected for chief-of-mission positions.

*Margot Carrington is an FSO on assignment in the Office of Rightsizing. A public diplomacy officer, she previously served in several posts in Japan and Malaysia. While serving as the first female principal officer with children in Fukuoka, she was a frequent speaker on women's issues. During her 2010-2011 Una Chapman Cox Sabbatical Leave Fellowship, Ms. Carrington researched issues related to women's advancement, and was State's Fellow to the International Women's Forum Leadership Foundation. She is also a board member of Executive Women at State and a founding member of Balancing Act. The views expressed here are her own.*

At the time Ms. Crane wrote her commentary, women represented 30 percent of the Senior Foreign Service. Eight years later, that figure has barely budged, and women continue to be underrepresented among the ranks of principal officer, deputy chief of mission and chief of mission positions. Therefore, the question must be asked again: How are Foreign Service women at State faring?

After starting from a low base (due, in part, to a longstanding policy requiring female FSOs to resign upon marriage), by 1990 women comprised just 13 percent of the Senior Foreign Service—even though they represented 25 percent of the Foreign Service generalist corps. The proportion of women in the senior ranks gradually rose, but took until 2005 to break the 30-percent mark. The number has hovered there ever since, even though women now make up 40 percent of Foreign Service generalists.

Fortunately, the State Department is making significant efforts to create a more diverse environment. Our recruiters and Diplomats in Residence strive to attract new recruits who better reflect the face of America, as mandated by the Foreign

## The Foreign Service has nearly achieved gender parity in terms of new hires. But the picture at the top is less bright.

Service Act of 1980. Those efforts have paid dividends in terms of attracting more diverse candidates, who are then evaluated by Board of Examiner assessors who themselves reflect America's diversity.

Thanks to these measures, the Foreign Service has nearly achieved gender parity in terms of new hires. Staff members in the Office of Civil Rights conduct Equal Employment Opportunity training worldwide and address cases of employment discrimination, supported by Foreign Service staff in our embassies, who take on EEO responsibilities as collateral duty. Our yearly employee evaluations are screened for discriminatory language and our promotion precepts demand compliance with EEO principles.

With these measures in place, it would seem that women are being evaluated on the basis of merit alone and have a fair shot at grabbing the brass ring. Yet promotion into the Senior Foreign Service remains elusive for far too many female FSOs.

In an effort to find out why, I applied for an Una Chapman Cox Sabbatical Leave Fellowship. My overseas tours had driven home the extent to which women in other countries are being held back from achieving their full potential, and my return to Washington three years ago seemed the ideal time to research the policies and practices used by American employers of choice to propel women to the leadership ranks. A far more complex picture emerged than I had first imagined.

While it is indisputable that outright discrimination is no longer tolerated, and that some women appear to have found the right formula to shatter the glass ceiling, senior leaders of organizations in nearly all sectors of American life continue to be predominantly male. The unimpeded rise to the top of talented women that many expected has simply not occurred.

Experts in women's advancement agree that the three primary factors holding women back are insufficient work-life integration programs; the dearth of executive sponsors

for women who wield influence within the organization; and incomplete talent strategies that fail to give women the breadth of experience necessary for senior assignments. (It should also be noted that female candidates with the needed qualifications often fail to throw their hats into the ring.)

The current situation has important implications for State, where it is clear we have yet to fully utilize the talent of women in our ranks.

### **The Strategic Imperative for Gender Diversity**

For starters, it is high time we took a cue from the business world, which has made maximizing women's talents an imperative. Corporations are keenly aware of the need to recoup their significant investment in hiring and training women by ensuring they retain them. They are also interested in benefiting from the superior decisions that research has shown emerge from diverse organizations, and in developing sustainable work models for a world in which female participation in the work force will surely continue to increase.

These organizations are also responding to a generational shift that has seen the coming of age of a younger work force with differing notions about work and life. Men increasingly want to play a greater role in the home, and are joining female colleagues in voicing the need for more flexible workplace models and more balance.

Interestingly, companies with a large number of female employees who initially lacked diversity policies are the ones who have led the charge for creating these new workplace models. After determining that not having these policies was sorely hurting their bottom line in terms of high attrition and low employee engagement, these companies have been at the forefront of new efforts to carefully unearth the internal factors that can impede progress by women (as well as other groups) and develop thoughtful policies to overcome them. In other

The proportion of women in the senior ranks took until 2005 to break the 30-percent mark, and has hovered there ever since.

words, these employers have created a map to allow women to find their way through what some experts have called “the labyrinth of leadership.”

### Guides, Not Quotas

Employee groups also have an important role to play. For example, Executive Women at State has played a key role in providing career guidance to women through various programs, including mentoring workshops. A recent program about the deputy chief of mission/chief of mission selection process led one female attendee to apply for a DCM position she had not considered because she'd assumed she wouldn't be selected. She went on to secure the position and is thriving in the assignment—proving that targeted programs of this nature are both needed and effective.

Importantly, these policies do not in any way resemble quotas. Moreover, even though this article is focused on gender diversity, it should be clear that all groups would benefit from the establishment of a more diverse and inclusive organizational culture. Although the scope of this article does not allow me to review the policies in detail, they are outlined in full in my end-of-year report, along with a list of specific recommendations for State to consider (please see the sidebar on pp. 42-43).

Broadly, these policies fall into the categories of professional and talent development, work-life integration, and networking and mentoring. Leading organizations provide training to help women hone their communication, negotiation and self-advocacy skills to overcome the gendered norms of leadership that research has shown continue to favor male leaders.

Women's career development is then carefully charted. A strong mentoring program is established to overcome the tendency for male leaders to expend political capital to help

male mentees get ahead, in spite of the fact that they may also be mentoring women.

After all the care we take to recruit minority candidates, I can't help but feel we then leave them to fend for themselves in a complex system of bidding rules and programs, like the Career Development Plan, that put the onus on employees to chart their own way to the Senior Foreign Service. It's easy to see why those outside established networks will be at a disadvantage in such a system, and why they need a guide through the labyrinth.

Equal emphasis should be placed on raising awareness among managers of the ways unconscious biases can disadvantage women—to ensure that their work performance is rated on purely objective criteria—and building metrics related to diversity and inclusion goals into performance evaluation. Some organizations rate managers and executives on their involvement and performance as mentors, thereby ensuring that this key executive responsibility receives its due.

Many organizations include the establishment of a more flexible work environment as a specific goal for managers. Parallel with that effort, however, they put measures in place to ensure that those who avail themselves of flexible work arrangements do not put their career advancement at risk, thereby avoiding the dead end of a “mommy track.” As things currently stand, our system is set up in such a way that FSOs (female and male) are discouraged by the bidding and promotion process from seeking out flexible arrangements.

For employers of choice, inclusiveness is intrinsic, and policies are developed in close consultation with women in the organization and the employee groups that represent them. Frequent opinion surveys and the convening of focus group discussions are the norm, with collected data used to calibrate ongoing programs in areas that range from training and career development to work-life programs.

# Learning from Best Practices

**M**y September 2011 report, "Advancement for Women at State: Learning from Best Practices," includes the following recommendations to transform State into a more female- and family-friendly organization. I strongly recommend that State, with support from the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, create a commission or contract with an outside organization to study the gender problem holistically.

Someone within the Office of Human Resources or the Office of Civil Rights should be given explicit responsibility for ensuring the success of women, working closely with groups such as Executive Women at State. The Office of Global Women's Issues should also pay greater attention to how women within State are faring.

The following measures would help transform the department into an organization more sensitive to the needs of women and make State a model for other foreign affairs agencies to emulate. At the same time, this would enable the department to better embody the empowerment of women that it is promoting abroad:

- Begin collecting detailed attrition data on female Foreign Service employees, and conduct exit interviews to better understand the factors leading to attrition and retention.
- Request that the Office of Personnel Management break out Foreign Service employees' responses in next year's Employee Viewpoint Survey, with answers to specific questions by gender. This would provide an excellent snapshot of how both female and male Foreign Service employees feel about State policies, particularly when it comes to work-life balance and family friendly policies.
- Construct any future survey State conducts on issues related to quality of life so that the views of Foreign Service employees, broken out by gender, can be analyzed.
- Consider undertaking focus group discussions within State on work-life balance and family-friendly policies. Of particular use would be surveys to determine what employees value when it comes to work-life

benefits, and what they would be willing to trade off to achieve a better balance.

- Analyze the Women in International Security study to identify areas that merit follow-up. The study is available on the WIIS Web site.
- Survey women in the Foreign Service to determine how widespread forms of non-overt bias are and what policy response might be required.
- Include a discussion of non-overt forms of gender bias in training for supervisors and all State leadership training.
- Follow up such training with action plans for employees to use to recognize and overcome biases. Tie success in accomplishing these goals to performance evaluations.
- Task the Federal Women's Program and Equal Employment Opportunity officers with disseminating information on gender bias and holding programs on this topic in Washington and overseas.
- Determine whether demand warrants an expansion of the Diplotots and Foreign Service Institute child-care facilities, and whether assistance should be provided for emergency child-care needs.
- Publicize the services available through State's Employee Assistance Program. In particular, include information on the check-in sheet given to all Foreign Service employees reassigned to Washington, since this is a time when many employees are in need of such assistance.
- Survey the Foreign Service population to get a clearer picture of how concerns about spousal employment affect employees' bidding/assignment decisions.
- Ensure the Family Liaison Office has adequate funding to expand initiatives to help spouses/partners secure local employment or develop portable careers. Such efforts should include identifying work opportunities with locally based multinationals.
- Learn more about the efforts of other agencies with an overseas presence, such as the Central Intelligence Agency.
- Redouble efforts to secure bilateral work agreements to facilitate the local employment of spouses/partners.
- Modify FLO programs to take into greater account

## The Federal Women's Program in our overseas posts also needs more care and feeding from Washington. This might include something as simple as creating a platform for sharing ideas and program resources.

the needs of male spouses and partners.

- Consider allowing greater flexibility in planning the timing of overseas assignments, as this may help spouses to develop and sustain viable careers.
- Institute specialized leadership training for women that focuses on how to navigate situations where they encounter gender bias, how to become aware of gender differences in communication and negotiating styles, and how to communicate and negotiate more effectively.
- Design training to help women identify ways to highlight their unique leadership style and their successes and accomplishments as leaders.
- Provide training and other assistance to women to help them learn to network more effectively and solicit sponsors to help them in their career development and advancement.
- Assist women in identifying the specific training and skills development they need to further advance. Make access to specialized training available to those who need to focus on specific skill sets.
- Task the Federal Women's program with carrying out training modules for women on these topics.
- Identify State Department resources that could be deployed to help build a formal network of women that could operate on a virtual platform, so as to be accessible by women in Washington and overseas. Such a site could help identify training opportunities and provide relevant online training, as well as allow for the sharing of ideas and resources and facilitate mentoring/sponsorship matchups.
- Institute a mentoring requirement for all SFS officers, and make them accountable for their performance as mentors.
- Include modules on effective mentoring in our leadership training, highlighting differences between mentoring and sponsoring.
- Provide training to women so they can leverage their relationships with mentors and build stronger networks of support within the organization.
- Assign all incoming female Entry-Level Officers both a senior female mentor and a male mentor, so ELOs can benefit from both perspectives.
- Pair female Foreign Service employees planning a family with more experienced female officers who have successfully juggled work and child-care responsibilities.
- Determine where the use of Flexible Work Arrangements could be expanded, both in Washington and overseas; identify barriers to their use; and learn from current best practices to overcome such barriers. (In the case of Foreign Service employees, the fear of missing out on promotions or good follow-on assignments may be a significant barrier. Moreover, an employee interested in an FWA is currently forced to ask for such an arrangement when bidding on a position, making it likely the employee will be passed over in favor of another bidder not asking for what is still considered a "perk" or "special consideration.")
- Allow for an open discussion of concerns about FWAs among middle managers and employees, and make use of tools provided by the Office of Personnel Management and others for this purpose.
- Develop and implement metrics for FWA work output to reassure managers that work goals are being met and to ensure that employees' evaluations properly recognize the work being performed remotely.

— Margot Carrington

*All groups of employees would benefit from the establishment of a more diverse and inclusive organizational culture.*

### **Increasing Accountability for Gender Diversity**

Usually, all of these efforts are coordinated by an office within the organization with specific responsibility for the gender portfolio. But we lack such a unified approach at State, where responsibility is shared among State's Office of Civil Rights, the Family Liaison Office, various divisions of HR and other offices, with no one clearly accountable for achieving greater gender diversity. The Federal Women's Program in our

overseas posts also needs more care and feeding from Washington, which might include something as simple as creating a platform for sharing ideas and program resources.

FLO is under-resourced to provide the type of assistance needed to tackle a problem that directly affects female FSOs: spousal employment. A growing number of global organizations provide various types of assistance to spouses and partners of employees sent overseas as an inducement for the



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employee to accept the overseas assignment. But they often extend such assistance to creating employment opportunities or outright remuneration for the spouse or partner to make up for the loss of income inherent in the employee's accepting an overseas assignment. Although this approach may be hard to envision in our current budgetary environment, it's a tool we may need to add to our arsenal if we want to facilitate women's advancement at State.

To find out more about how all of these factors affect female FSOs, we should emulate the best practice of other employers by soliciting employee opinions about these matters. In 2010, women at State were polled by a group called Women in International Security (now based at the Center for Strategic and International Studies) for a study on "Women in Peace and Security Careers" that sought to improve the recruitment, retention and advancement of women at State, the intelligence agencies and the Department of Defense.

Women at State (both Civil and Foreign Service) reported being forced to make difficult tradeoffs between their professional and personal lives, including turning down career-enhancing opportunities for family reasons. Others felt that they had been passed up for assignments based on their gender and/or family status, while women without children reported that they more than likely would not have achieved their career success had they not been childless.

While some might argue that these are common challenges for working women, the authors of the study reported to me that the morale of women at State seemed to them to be lower than that of their counterparts elsewhere in the federal work force. The most alarming of the WIIS findings was that women were leaving State just when they had the most to offer us, often for reasons that could be addressed through the types of policies outlined here.

Given our experience gap at the mid-level and the substantial taxpayer investment in hiring and training female FSOs, we need to pay greater attention to how they are faring and bring our policies into greater alignment with today's best practices. With women now outperforming men in earning post-secondary degrees, we should expect ever-greater numbers of talented women to join our ranks.

The importance of State's mission to help build a more democratic, secure and prosperous world demands that we ensure talented Foreign Service women live up to their full potential—and have the opportunity to reach for, and grab, the brass ring. ■

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# FIDEL CASTRO AS MOBY DICK: DISPATCHES FROM THE COLD WAR

**In this reminiscence, an FSO traces U.S. policy in the Americas from the 1950s through the 1980s.**

BY PAUL D. TAYLOR

**T**ike Captain Ahab's preoccupation with vanquishing Moby Dick, the threat posed by Fidel Castro drove U.S. policy in the Americas throughout the Cold War.

My own involvement with Castro began as an undergraduate and continued through two tours in the Atlantic as a Navy officer and 31 years in the Foreign Service. Those years spanned most of the Cold War and included four assignments in Latin America, as well as a stint as a deputy assistant secretary in what was then the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs.

As in the case of Ishmael's *Pequod*, the ship of state on which I sailed pursued an obsession. I kept bumping up against events

and threats that seemed to be Castro's doing. Indeed, reflecting on my Foreign Service experience, it appears that no figure loomed larger in the formulation of U.S. policy in the Americas than Castro, our great white whale, against whom so much U.S. policy reacted. For our nation, locked in a global struggle with the Soviet Union, his improbable success in ousting a corrupt and harsh leader threatened to spread to other countries of the Americas, most of which had similar political and social problems.

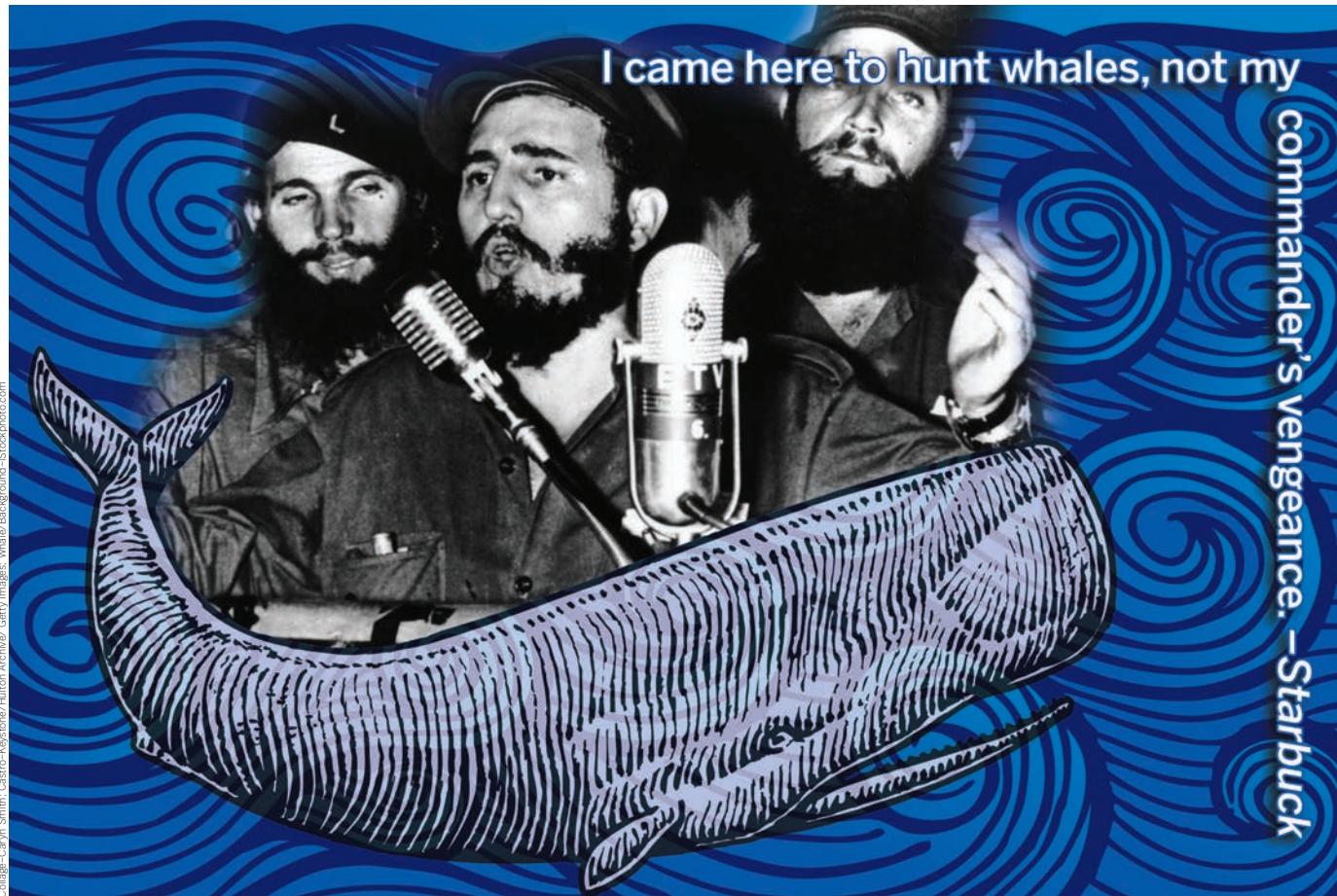
Unlike Ahab and the *Pequod*, however, the United States survived the encounter—but so has the whale. In retrospect, the U.S. diplomatic, economic and military reactions to Castro and his allies throughout Latin America turned out well. Democracy and economic development now thrive widely. Our policy's biggest failure, in my judgment, was in Cuba itself, where it helped perpetuate the Castros' authoritarian regime.

## **"Communism Will Be Dead"**

Like others of my generation, I welcomed the arrival of Fidel Castro in January 1959. In reasoning that is echoed in reactions to the Arab Spring, it seemed to me that any alternative to the unsavory dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista would be an improve-

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*Paul D. Taylor's 31-year Foreign Service career (1963-1994), spent mostly in Latin America, included appointments as ambassador to the Dominican Republic and as deputy assistant secretary in the Inter-American Affairs Bureau (now the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs). Prior to joining the Foreign Service, he was a Navy officer during the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Since retiring from the Service, he has taught strategy, international economics and Latin American affairs at the Naval War College.*



Collage—Caryn Smith; Castro—Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images; Whale—Background—Stockphoto.com

ment. Reporting, especially Herbert Matthew's *New York Times* dispatches from the Sierra Maestra, portrayed a young, daring and educated guerrilla leader who would usher in a new era of enlightened governance for an island nation plagued by corruption, repression and U.S. meddling. The ease with which Castro's motley band brought about the collapse of the Batista government offered confirmation.

So when Castro planned a visit to the United States as a guest of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, I was pleased, in a fit of undergraduate audacity, to invite him to visit Princeton on behalf of the American Whig-Cliosophic Society and its subsidiary International Relations Club, of which I happened to be president. He accepted, but ultimately gained more official sponsorship for this visit to campus.

My notes from his remarks record him seeking a middle way between communism and capitalism, one that neither "sacrifices freedom" nor fails to meet "the needs of the people." He advised us "not to worry about communism in Cuba [because] when our goals are won, communism will be dead."

Castro must have said something similar in his three-hour meeting with Vice President Richard Nixon, because Nixon commented that Castro was "either incredibly naïve about communism or under communist discipline." In *Fidel: A Critical*

*Portrait*, one of the more important books about Fidel Castro, Tad Szulc wrote that on this trip Castro "had engaged in deception [and] that Fidel had initiated secret coalition talks with the old communists at least three months before his American trip."

Nixon's phrasing reflected the prevalent view in Washington: world events should be seen in the context of an existential struggle with the Soviet Union. Events in Cuba moved rapidly to concentrate the Eisenhower administration's mind. By the time Ike ceded the presidency to John Kennedy, Castro's show trials of his opponents, his expropriations and Nikita Khrushchev's embrace of the Cuban Revolution had convinced Washington to side against Fidel.

President Kennedy rapidly executed Eisenhower's plan to support an invasion by Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs. That effort was a well-known fiasco, and undoubtedly helped persuade Castro that he would be more secure with Soviet missiles positioned in Cuba. Taking up my appointment as a Foreign Service officer in September 1963, I would soon become engaged with initiatives the Kennedy administration undertook to counter Soviet influence and the threat of Castro-style revolutions in the Americas, which risked moving the region out of the U.S. orbit and into the Soviet camp.

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## For Latin Americans, Castro's insurgent model offered something new: an asymmetrical approach that could not easily be countered by the overwhelming military superiority of the United States.

something new: an asymmetrical approach that could not easily be countered by the overwhelming military superiority of the United States. Castro was a charismatic leader who had stood up for social justice and against the United States in the name of independence. Soon after taking power, he brought operatives from other Latin American countries to Cuba for ideological and guerrilla warfare training, then offered them help as they returned to their homelands to engage in sabotage and terrorism to establish Marxist governments.

### The Peace Corps Is Born

In response, Kennedy undertook three initiatives designed to counter Soviet expansionism generally, and to engage Castro head-to-head in the Americas with a vision of progressive democratic reform against violent revolutionary upheaval. The most enduring of these was the Peace Corps.

In November 1963 I was enrolled in the A-100 Basic Officers Course, in which two-thirds of the men were military veterans, when the news broke that JFK had been fatally shot in Dallas. Soon thereafter, my wife, Dorcas, and I were off with our infant son to Quito, where I was to serve as an FSO on detail to the Peace Corps staff.

As one of the poorer countries in the hemisphere, Ecuador was also a prime candidate for assistance under the Alliance for Progress. Peace Corps Volunteers there registered mixed success. Those trying to complete a physical project, such as a footbridge to link an isolated community with a feeder road, were often frustrated. But those who worked to change the "invisible" lives of Ecuadorians through teaching or developing credit unions, for instance, often left more lasting effects.

By living at the level of their counterparts, frequently in conditions of hardship, many volunteers broadened the image of the United States in a region where, for many, military interventions had been the most vivid symbols of U.S. interest. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Peace Corps was one envisioned by its founders, but given only tertiary prominence as an objective: the impact on the United States and, particularly, on our style of diplomacy. In my last two overseas assignments, in Guatemala

and Santo Domingo, ex-PCVs held some 40 percent of the officer positions in the diplomatic missions.

Looking back, I see a similar outcome in the massive assistance program that was the Alliance for Progress. Launched just one month after the Bay of Pigs, it was the most ambitious U.S. program of foreign assistance in the Americas before or since.

### An Uneasy Alliance

Its results fell short of its primary objectives: accelerated economic development and democratic reform. In the first instance, expectations were unrealistically heightened, based on the success of the Marshall Plan in bolstering economies and halting a slide in Western Europe toward communism.

Because Europe already had a rich reserve of human capital in place with organizational, technical and professional expertise, the task there, while daunting, was a good deal easier. The economic challenge in Latin America was different: to build vibrant and prosperous economies where none had existed, rather than rebuilding economies devastated by war.

The democratization objective also eluded U.S. policy in the Americas until late in the Cold War, as the overwhelming focus on security fostered a tolerance for undemocratic governance. Between the mid-1960s and the late 1980s, military regimes came to govern a majority of Latin Americans through coups that were justified to counter Marxist insurrections, without objection and sometimes with support from Washington.

In one respect, though, the Alliance for Progress contributed substantially to the resurgence that many Latin American economies experienced after the Cold War. By the early 1990s, 16 out of 18 finance ministers in the largest Latin American economies had lived and studied in the United States, often under educational programs of the Alliance. They served elected governments that had emerged during the previous decade, in part because military governments had failed to manage their economies well, and U.S. policy had come to oppose authoritarian governments of both the left and the right. Conditioned by their experience in the United States, these leaders enacted market-oriented reforms focused on international competitiveness.

## **Countering Military and Security Threats**

To counter Cuban support of guerrilla warfare, Kennedy rebuilt the Army Special Forces and authorized them to don the green beret as their distinctive mark. The Special Forces' most prominent achievement against Castro-supported revolution was to come in 1967 when they helped Bolivian forces find and eliminate Che Guevara, who had been having little success igniting revolution in the Andes. Che's death weakened the revolutionary threat in the region, but contributed to an aura that made posters of his likeness the most popular decorations for U.S. college dorm rooms for more than a generation.

In a later assignment, Dorcas and I arrived in São Paulo with two preschoolers in 1969—just after Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick had been kidnapped and was being held hostage by Marxist guerrillas. At the urging of the Nixon administration, the Brazilian government met the kidnappers' demands and released 15 jailed leftists into exile abroad.

A few months later, the killing of the Marxist guerrilla Carlos Marighela by Brazilian security agents, down the street from the

consulate general on a weekday afternoon, provided another reminder that we were immersed in a war zone. Marighela's *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla* had complemented Mao's writings on rural guerrilla warfare. The following year, Curtis Cutter, principal officer in Porto Alegre, heroically avoided kidnappers by driving forcefully through the roadblock they had set for him. The guerrillas wounded him with a shot through his back, but he and his wife made it to safety and a full recovery.

During our time in Brazil, President Nixon adopted a policy of refusing to negotiate with terrorists. It seemed initially that he was throwing diplomats to the wolves, but in retrospect the policy seems to have protected them by removing the rewards that kidnapping diplomats might produce. Unfortunately, this effect was not immediately appreciated. When the demands of Marxist Tupamero guerrillas in Uruguay were not met, they murdered Dan Mitrione, a U.S. public safety adviser they had kidnapped.

In 1981, I was posted as deputy chief of mission in Guatemala, where John Gordon Mein had earlier become the first U.S. ambassador assassinated while in office. Men belonging to the

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## Perhaps the greatest irony of all is that U.S. Cold War policy had its most glaring failure in Cuba itself.

Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (Rebel Armed Forces) apparently intended to kidnap him in order to negotiate an exchange, but instead shot Mein when he attempted to escape.

The 1979 victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua had heartened Marxists elsewhere in Central America and afforded them new opportunities for logistical support and training. On my first weekend as chargé d'affaires, guerrillas attacked the chancery on a Saturday just before 10 p.m. At that hour, their 28 rounds of automatic weapons fire were intended more to make a statement than to kill Americans, but an 18-year-old Guatemalan security guard died in the incident.

In a later attack, a rocket-propelled grenade penetrated two offices just after close of business, but injured no one. Later, a small bomb at my family's residence created more drama than damage.

In this situation, some of the greatest dangers were posed by the reactions of edgy Guatemalan security personnel. Our 17-year-old son, for example, was interrogated at gunpoint on the way home from school by a squad of security agents. They may have been suspicious of his backpack and the carton of yearbook proofs he was carrying, documents that could have looked to them like terrorist dossiers.

Fortunately for the Guatemalan government, the Marxists' effort was divided among four separate, competitive guerrilla groups. A lack of coordination frustrated their work, and Castro tried in vain to force them to unite in exchange for his support. Two military coups and repeated human rights violations pushed the U.S. government away from an intimate relationship with Guatemala in the early 1980s.

### Promoting Democracy

By then, U.S. policy in the Americas had evolved to emphasize democratic governance and economic growth through trade. The Reagan administration focused on elections as the best antidote to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, crafting the Caribbean Basin Initiative to foster private-sector investment and growth through preferential access to the U.S. market. These initiatives were the most innovative in the Americas since the Alliance for Progress. Again, U.S. obsession with Soviet expansionism, personified by Castro's threat, served as the driver.

Subsequently, as a deputy assistant secretary in the Inter-American Bureau, I co-chaired the CBI Policy Committee and saw Guatemala and the Dominican Republic begin to prosper through enhanced trade opportunities, often with the contribution of U.S. investors who provided the technology and organizational expertise that the Alliance for Progress had lacked.

During this assignment, I accompanied Vice President George H. W. Bush to Guatemala in January 1986 for the presidential inauguration of Vinicio Cerezo. By then, military governments throughout the hemisphere had permitted elections, and popularly chosen presidents had succeeded them. The occasion was full of democratic euphoria. Among the attendees, however, was Fidel Castro, the longest-serving dictator in the hemisphere. What still strikes me as perverse is that Castro was the man most of these elected presidents wanted to stand with for photographs. He remained a celebrity, apparently admired for resisting the United States.

Assigned to the Dominican Republic as chief of mission in 1988, I found a country without a significant terrorist threat and an opportunity to wrap up one legacy of the Cold War. After gaining the presidency, Juan Bosch had been seen as too cozy with Castro. He was overthrown in a coup d'état supported by Washington in 1963, and had remained off limits to the embassy.

By the time we arrived, U.S. policy in support of democracy as a counter to Marxism had pushed for the ouster of Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay and Augusto Pinochet in Chile. If for no other reason, consistency required recognition of the right of the Dominican people to choose their leaders without a U.S. filter, and the diminished threat of Soviet interference in the region made this possible. So we were able to resume contacts with Bosch on the same basis as those with other politicians.

### Time to Declare Victory

The captains of the U.S. ship of state did not follow their obsession, like Ahab, to their own destruction. Were they, nonetheless, mistaken to be so preoccupied by Castro? Perhaps the United States exaggerated the challenge, but policymakers faced

with an existential threat can be forgiven a certain zeal to avoid defeat.

By the end of the Cold War, the major U.S. objectives of democracy and development in the Americas were prospering. As the threat of the Soviet Union wound down, Castro's violent revolutionary alternative lost its allure, and U.S. policy was able to return to a balanced reflection of our values fostering democracy and protecting human rights. An interesting twist to the history of the last decade is that people who were either engaged as allies of Castro in the militant left or openly sympathetic to his approach have succeeded in achieving their aspirations for political power through elections in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador and Uruguay.

Perhaps the greatest irony of all is that U.S. Cold War policy had its most glaring failure in Cuba itself. Our attempts to isolate Castro and to thwart or punish him through economic sanctions continue, but they have persistently isolated the United States and given Havana an excuse for the failure that its economic model would have produced without our help. Our policy also strengthens hardliners reinforcing a fortress mentality.

On a recent visit to Cuba, I was struck by the contradictory appeal of the Cuban model. A country that has achieved practically universal adult literacy maintains totalitarian controls on what its ordinary citizens are allowed to read, in print or on the Internet. The secret to survival in its tightly regulated economy seems to be adopting a highly entrepreneurial approach to combining meager salaries with remittances from Miami, and earnings from such grey-market activities as selling snacks to tourists.

Cubans receive admirable health care, but most Havanans crowd into crumbling buildings that look like they have not been improved or even maintained since 1958. Decent highway networks stay uncongested because few Cubans own vehicles. A government in a permanent state of struggle presides over a country populated by people who are friendly to Americans. I even saw one of the ubiquitous pedicabs flying a U.S. flag while working Havana's streets.

Now Fidel has reached his twilight years, and the threat from Cuba requires no obsession. So, like Starbuck, I argue that it is time to desist:

*Oh! Ahab, not too late it is, even now, the third day, to desist.  
See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly seekest  
him!*

Normalization of relations could raise the standing of the United States in the Americas while eroding the siege mentality in the Cuban psyche and exposing more Cubans to an alternative worldview. ■



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## Together We Grieve for a Young Foreign Service Officer

BY DONNA AYERST, AFSA NEWS EDITOR

In March 2010, Anne Smedinghoff joined the other members of the Department of State's 151st A-100 class (an orientation program for new Foreign Service officers) at an AFSA recruitment luncheon in Washington, D.C. Typical of these events, the room was filled with conversation, questions and excitement as she and her classmates embarked on their new career.

On April 6, a little more than three years later, Anne, 25, was killed in Afghanistan, along with other Americans and Afghans, by a suicide bomber as they attempted to deliver books to a school in Qalat, a town in Zabul province.

While on a diplomatic mission in Istanbul, Secretary of State John Kerry said, "Our State Department family is grieving over the loss of one of our own, an exceptional young Foreign Service officer. A brave American who was determined to brighten the light of learning through books written in the native tongue of the students that she had never met, but whom she felt compelled to help. And she was met by cowardly terrorists determined to bring darkness and death to total strangers." Secretary Kerry had met Anne during his visit to Kabul only a week before.

After high school in Oak Park, Ill., a village adjacent



PHOTO BY TOM SMEDINGHOFF

On April 6, Foreign Service officer Anne Smedinghoff was killed by a terrorist attack in Afghanistan. Below, a woman signs a memorial board at AFSA.



PHOTO BY ANAHU HUSTON

to the west side of Chicago, Anne attended Johns Hopkins University, where she graduated with a degree in international relations. She joined the Foreign Service shortly thereafter. Her first posting was Caracas, and before the end of her tour of duty there, she volunteered for a public diplomacy assignment in Afghanistan, where she was serving as an

assistant information officer at the time of her death.

"For Anne, the Foreign Service was a calling," said her parents, Tom and Mary Beth Smedinghoff, in their statement after her death. "She particularly enjoyed the opportunity to work directly with the Afghan people, and was always looking for opportunities to reach out and help to make a difference in the lives of those living in a country ravaged by war. We are consoled knowing that she was doing what she loved, and that she was serving her country by helping to make a positive difference in the world. She died doing a job she thought must be done."

AFSA President Susan R. Johnson added, "During the past year the Foreign Service family has suffered great losses. We grieve today

*Continued on page 56*

## CALENDAR

5/1/2013  
12:00 - 2:00 PM  
**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**

5/3/2013  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Foreign Affairs Day/AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony**

5/5/2013  
8:00 AM  
**Public Service Recognition Week 5K Run/Walk**

5/22/2013  
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM  
**AFSA Book Notes: "Master Class"**

5/27/2013  
**Memorial Day: AFSA Offices Closed**

6/2 - 6/7/2013  
**AFSA Road Scholar Program**

6/5/2013  
12:00 - 2:00 PM  
**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**

6/6/2013  
9:00 AM  
**Deadline for Completing AFSA Governing Board Online Election Ballot**

6/7/2013  
12:00 PM  
**Luncheon: Incoming FCS Class**

6/27/2013  
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
**2013 AFSA Awards Ceremony**



## All Overseas Positions Should Be Language Designated

Rickie Ricardo, the Cuban bandleader character on the "I Love Lucy" television show, spoke fluent English. He ran a business in New York City, spoke English with his wife and friends, and read an English-language newspaper. But when he was upset, or counting beats, or discussing a matter with his band members, he spoke his native Spanish.

Why? Because when people are emotional, or lost in thought, or sharing a private thought with someone from their own native country, they speak their own language. Moreover, where cultures differ significantly, there are often terms or even whole concepts that can get, as they say, "lost in translation."

Foreign Service members perform the bulk of their service overseas, in countries where, for the most part, host country nationals speak a language other than English. Accordingly, the ability to speak a foreign language is a primary skill requirement for Foreign Service officers, and a core precept for retention of all FS members, regardless of cone or skill code.

However, because language training costs money and can sideline an employee for months, deciding who needs what language—and to what degree—has become one of the most contentious issues affecting an employee's career. It is a primary

factor in allegations of elitism by some FS groups when compared to others, a primary factor in low morale for many, and an issue that has been flagged by Congress as a weakness in our Service.

Still, every position in an embassy or consulate requires some degree of interaction with host-country counterparts. Officers and specialists alike are required to negotiate in a foreign language and maintain working relationships with their local contacts as a basic component of the job. Yet for a variety of reasons, the department is reluctant to designate language designated positions.

First, there is the assumption that because an embassy's locally employed staff speak English, a foreign language is not required in the office. That may be true in some instances. However, during my management career, I have fired LES members for malfeasance, detected only because I understood statements they made in the office in their native language.

In addition, an LES member's ability to translate could be hampered by limited English-language skills or lack of technical knowledge. We have all been in the position of listening to a host-country interlocutor speak energetically for two or three minutes, only to have the entire speech sum-

marized as "He disagrees." Even professional translators sometimes have difficulty doing simultaneous translation, while technical jargon outside their field may be unfamiliar to many.

Another reason is staffing. Designating a position as LDP requires that priority be given to those who already speak the language. (Indeed, those who do not already have the language cannot list those positions as core bids.) At posts that are already hard to staff, or for positions in skill groups with a small number of members, that requirement can severely limit the ability to staff those jobs.

Because the department makes decisions about language training based on the number of LDPs in each language and skill group, and the percentage of qualified applicants who are available to bid on those jobs, this becomes a vicious circle. Reducing the number of LDPs translates into a reduction of resources for training in the relevant language, eventually reducing the number of speakers of that language among the skill group associated with the job. This can lead to a cycle of further reduction in LDPs, because there are not enough language-trained applicants to fill them.

Language training requirements in the career development plans for Office Man-

agement Specialists, among others, have been reduced in part because so few OMS positions are language designated. This affects decisions about Language Incentive Pay, as well. Both of these issues are currently under discussion between AFSA and management.

If the department were serious, it would require language skills as a requirement for every job, and ensure that every member, regardless of skill code, learn a language before tenure. It would use the current LDP process solely to designate levels of proficiency required for each position.

State should also make the language designation process completely independent of resource or staffing factors, basing it on actual desk audits and observation of the full range of an employee's activities. Does failure to speak the language hamper daily activities? Does it make the employee or family members more vulnerable to terror threats or crime?

Those factors, and those factors alone, should result in not just a recommendation, but a determination, that a position should be designated at a given level. Only then will we be able to fully engage both diplomatically and socially overseas, and meet our stated goal of truly representing the United States around the world. ■



Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA FCS VP.

## Farewell

My four-plus years as your vice president have proven to be busy, fruitful and meaningful. I hope I have done well. Serving during an interesting period (to cite the Chinese curse) has been a heavy responsibility and an honor. I thank you all and the Good Lord (many of you know He had to go out of his way to make it happen!) for having given me the chance to serve.

Together, we have done a lot (see [www.afsa.org/FSJ/0313/index.html#/49/](http://www.afsa.org/FSJ/0313/index.html#/49/)). But I think our most important role has been to protect the Service within the building, the administration and on the Hill. I spent much of my time developing and maintaining a relationship with Congress, where there is a real appreciation for what we do and its importance. During these last four years, that appreciation has grown, even though it has been difficult to translate into budget advances. We did get an extra \$15 million added to our budget in Fiscal Year 2012, much of it due to the support and relationships we have developed which, despite tough times, continue to benefit FCS.

I have discovered that this office, and the wider AFSA connection on the Hill, is a very powerful tool for the well-being of the Service. At times, I found AFSA's voice to be at least equal to that of the administration and the

leadership at Commerce. Much of this is because the Hill really does value the work that you do, as does the administration and our stakeholders. Never underestimate what AFSA can do for you and how important it is in these times.

No one knows what is ahead on the big questions we have wrestled with together: economic statecraft, consolidation and government sequestration, and downsizing. What you can be sure of is that you will be better off, through all of it, with AFSA at your side. I have no doubt that my replacement will continue to ably fill that role.

I would also like to recommend that you consider the AFSA FCS vice president and representative positions at some point during your career. The 100-percent freedom that the VP now has is empowering. You are free to make your own schedule and determine—outside priorities and restraints of management and the rush of the moment—what the long-term, most important issues are. You bring an absolutely vital perspective to the management process both as a partner and as a kind of “watchdog.” You engage in the most important issues of our Service, while becoming better acquainted with our colleagues and find special ways to help people. It is a truly rewarding experience

(while earning time in class and time in service).

I also want to take a moment to thank our leaders, Acting Director General Chuck Ford and Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Moore, along with Bill Zarit, Karen Zens and Carmine D'Aloisio (all previous deputy assistant secretaries for international operations) before them. Without their hearts being in the right place, we could not have been safe. I am grateful for the rare opportunity to have served with Chuck, whose dedication, perseverance and care, have proven to be a once-in-a-career boon for us in this time of need. I know he will continue to work for the

good of the Service.

Equally important, but less seen by FCS, is the incredible support we have gotten these past four years from AFSA President Susan Johnson. She has never hesitated to give us unqualified support when we had to fight to be recognized. Thank you, Chuck and Susan.

It has been said man's feelings are purest in the hour of farewell. And that great philosopher, Dale Evans, said it's the way you ride the trail that counts. I sincerely hope I was helpful and that I may continue to be so down the dusty road. Thanks for the chance to serve and God bless. ■

### NEWS BRIEF

#### Notice: Death of Michael Drabin

It is with great sadness that the ICASS Service Center reports the death of our dear colleague and friend. Michael passed away on Friday, March 29, after a long battle with cancer.

Michael served as a Financial Management Officer in Antananarivo from 2005 to 2008; and in Pretoria from 2008 to 2009 before coming to the ICASS Service Center.

He lived life to the fullest and passed with faith, dignity and courage. He is survived by his loving wife, Somsawalee, and his sweet daughter, Sofia.

In lieu of flowers, family and friends have asked that memorial donations be made to a 529 education trust for Sofia at [sofiadrabin.com](http://sofiadrabin.com). Sympathy cards may be sent to the following address: Somsawalee Drabin, 5744 Calais Blvd., #6, St. Petersburg, FL 33714.



## RETIREE VP VOICE | BY MEG GILROY

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA Retiree VP.

## AFSA NEWS

# Getting What You Need

How many of us really paid attention to all those briefings on retirement benefits and forms? How many of us actually know what office to contact when an end-of-life issue arises for a spouse or parent or friend? How many of us have up-to-date wills, powers of attorney and medical directives?

Those of you who answered yes to those three questions should feel free to move on to another article in the *Journal*. But those who answered no to one or more of them might want to consider reading further.

Entry-level professionals are overwhelmed with information on what to do, when to do it, whom to contact and how to find all this information on their agency's intranet. Active-duty personnel, even if on detail to another agency, can always find someone in the executive office or human resources to answer a benefits question or put you in search of someone with the answer. But once you're retired, finding the right person to answer your questions becomes a little more complicated.

As an AFSA member, one of the best sources of information is found in the first 30 pages of the annual *Directory of Retired Members*, a hard-copy manual mailed to all retiree members in good standing at the beginning of each calendar year.

And AFSA's retiree services page ([www.afsa.org/retiree](http://www.afsa.org/retiree)) contains up-to-date information on almost every subject of possible interest or use to retired members.

Beyond AFSA, the department's Office of Retirement's RNET ([rnet.state.gov](http://rnet.state.gov)) provides information and guidance for current and future Foreign Service retirees, not just for State but also the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the International Broadcasting Bureau and the Peace Corps. Everyone who receives their annuity check electronically should already have an ID and password to log-in for Employee Express at [www.employeeexpress.gov](http://www.employeeexpress.gov). And the Thrift Savings Plan Web site at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) not only contains information about your TSP account, but links to the forms necessary to make a change of address or beneficiary.

All of this information is incredibly useful, but when an emergency arises, it is best to have it easily accessible. Use it to prepare a list of offices, with phone numbers and e-mail addresses, to contact when you have a problem with your Foreign Service annuity, an insurance issue or need to report a death. Update it once a year and e-mail it to a friend or family member. You (or they) will need it one day. ■

## NEWS BRIEF

### AFSA Welcomes New Advocacy Intern to the Team

AFSA recently welcomed Shaye Huggins as the new advocacy intern. She joins our legislative and advocacy team, working on campaigns, legislation, grassroots efforts and stakeholder engagement strategies.

In addition to her work at AFSA, Shaye is a marketing intern for the non-profit organization, Kids Play International, which organizes youth sports programs and funds women's education in Africa. In July, she will travel to Rwanda to meet the children in her program.

Shaye is a graduating senior at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she is a double major in global studies and Spanish. She studied at the University of Barcelona during her junior year.

Shaye can be reached at [laintern@afsa.org](mailto:laintern@afsa.org) or (202) 944-5516.

Anne continued from p. 53 for Anne Smedinghoff, the talented, dedicated, poised and courageous young Foreign Service officer and AFSA member who lost her life in a terrorist attack in southern Afghanistan. Anne demonstrated enormous promise and the qualities of character and thought that we value highly in America's diplomats. Our heartfelt condolences and prayers go to her parents and family, as well as to the families of those other brave individuals who perished or were injured."

A memorial service was organized by some of Anne's A-100 classmates at the Foreign Service Institute on April 13. On the same day, her colleagues from Caracas gathered at AFSA headquar-

ters to remember Anne and pay tribute to her.

AFSA President Susan R. Johnson joined others from the department in Oak Park, Ill., at Anne's wake on April 16, and at her funeral in River Forest, Ill., the next day.

Anne's name will join seven others, including those killed in Benghazi on Sept. 11, on AFSA's Memorial Plaque at a ceremony on May 3 in the Department of State's C Street lobby.

For information on donations to charities in Anne's name, the Smedinghoff family has created a Web site, [annesmedinghoff.com](http://annesmedinghoff.com), in remembrance of their daughter. ■

# AFSA President Addresses World Affairs Councils

BY TOM SWITZER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

On March 14, AFSA President Susan R. Johnson addressed the Savannah Council on World Affairs at the Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah, Ga. Johnson's lecture tour is another example of AFSA's outreach efforts to educate people on the critical role diplomacy plays in the world.

Johnson's presentation centered on "The Demands of Contemporary Diplomacy." Her presentation featured two themes: "What is the role of diplomacy in an increasingly complex world driven by demographics, technological and information revolutions, globalization and the phenomenal increase in global interaction," and "How can the United States build an effective diplomatic cadre to serve the 21st century needs of U.S. diplomacy and advance the global role and responsibilities of the United States?" Her talk resonated with the more than 100 mostly retired professionals in the audience.

Following the presentation, Savannah Council President Justin Godchaux said, "We tend to think of the U.S. Diplomatic Corps as a selection of cushy jobs in exotic locales, but Susan Johnson gave us a new and powerful perspective on the critical and difficult role that a diplomat plays. She also underscored the rigorous training that diplomats of



AFSA President Susan R. Johnson, flanked by World Affairs Council of Hilton Head program committee member Claudia Kennedy and WACHH President Blaine Lotz, during her presentation in Savannah, Ga.

other countries are likely to receive and contrasted that with the high level of political patronage assignments and casual training that many U.S. diplomats receive. She addressed the point that effective diplomacy can avoid the need for military force, a belief that is strongly supported by the U.S. military itself. It was a powerful lecture."

Johnson's talk can be heard on [www.savannahcwa.org](http://www.savannahcwa.org) on the monthly newsletters page.

The following day, the AFSA president addressed the World Affairs Council of Hilton Head, S.C. She covered the same topics, but to an audience of more than 400. After her talk, WACHH President Blaine Lotz congratulated her and conveyed the audience's reaction by saying, "Thanks for your visit and your outstanding, cogent and exciting presentation; new and revealing for all of us. Our speakers program continues to be the hallmark of our WAC activities and

your participation in it has raised it a notch further."

The World Affairs Councils of America, located in Washington, D.C., and founded in 1918, has 83 member councils in 40 U.S. states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, with approximately 80,000 members. working to engage Americans in international affairs and foreign policy. To find a council near you, please visit [www.worldaffairscouncils.org](http://www.worldaffairscouncils.org). ■

## NEWS BRIEF

### Notice: AFSA Officer Election

The 2013 AFSA Officer and Governing Board election is underway. Details about the election including the rules can be found at [www.afsa.org/elections](http://www.afsa.org/elections).

Members will receive candidates' campaign literature with the ballot and may also view it on the AFSA Web site. Campaigning through an employer e-mail by any member is prohibited with the exception of the three pre-approved candidate e-mail blasts.

- **Ballots:** Ballots were mailed on or about April 15. If you did not receive a ballot by May 6, please contact [election@afsa.org](mailto:election@afsa.org).
- **Ballot Tally:** On June 6, at 9 a.m., the printed ballots will be picked up from the post office in Washington, D.C. Only printed ballots received in the post office will be counted. Online voting will be available until 9 a.m. on June 6, after which point the voting site will close.
- **Election Information:** Written requests for a duplicate ballot should be directed to [election@afsa.org](mailto:election@afsa.org) or AFSA Committee on Elections, 2101 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20037. Please include your full name, current address, e-mail address and telephone number.

## Benefits Speaker Series: Focus on Geriatric Care

BY MATTHEW SUMRAK, ASSOCIATE COORDINATOR FOR RETIREE COUNSELING AND LEGISLATION

On April 10, AFSA hosted the fifth session in its speaker series on federal benefits. Carol Kaplun, a nurse care manager at Iona Senior Services, spoke about geriatric assessment, services and care management, a topic important to everyone, especially those with aging parents or who have already retired. As the baby boomer generation hits retirement age, and people alive longer, demographic trends suggest that this issue will affect more and more individuals and families in the coming years and decades.

As Ms. Kaplun noted, Iona is a nonprofit located in Washington, D.C., and has provided essential services to older adults, their family members and caregivers in the metropolitan area since 1975. It came about because three local churches—St. Columba's Episcopal, St. Ann's Roman Catholic and Elbrooke United Methodist—joined forces to create a center that would provide information to people in need. As most of the requests for information were coming from people over the age of 60, Iona's board voted to focus on serving older adults, regardless of their ability to pay.

Iona offers an array of services, including expanded adult day health wellness and arts care, workshops and

caregiver education classes, support groups, fitness classes, consultations, care management, counseling and much more. It also established an Artist in Residence program, which honors the creativity of a local artist aged 60 and over, through exhibitions of their work in Iona's gallery.

For those who live outside of the D.C. area, Iona offers a live question-and-answer helpline for support with an aging parent, and is staffed by nurses and social workers. The helpline can be reached at (202) 895-9448. Iona's Web site, [www.iona.org](http://www.iona.org), offers even more information.

After her presentation, Ms. Kaplun answered questions from the audience on a variety of topics. She advised those considering geriatric care management, that it is important to have an in-home assessment—in collaboration with a social worker, nurse, family or friends—to maintain the health and safety of the patient. Most individuals tend to refuse geriatric care services, which is why a collaborative effort is important. This can help when there are differences of opinions between family members or friends on what is the best approach. The goal for most services is that patients can stay in their homes for as long as possible.

Other questions focused

on long-term health insurance and nursing homes. When considering insurance, Kaplun stressed the importance of speaking with a financial adviser to determine if the cost is feasible. After doing a cost/benefit analysis, and looking into the insurance company's financial stability, you will be better prepared.

When deciding on a nursing home or life-care community, do your homework by consulting watch groups who monitor and provide accreditation for such facilities like the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. You can find a list of questions to ask when visiting a nursing home, assisted living facility or life-care community on their Web site [www.carf.org](http://www.carf.org).

Ms. Kaplun reminded the audience that an aging parent suffering from memory loss can be taken advantage of, even by friends. So make sure a family member or reliable person is looking out for them and put other protections in place to prevent this. In particular, establish a joint bank account with your parent and execute a power of attorney agreement should you need to sign legal documents or have access to the account without your parent's signature.

Finally, as you age, remember that one of the best gifts you can leave your loved ones is making sure everything is in order and ready for any scenario. A video of the event is available for viewing at [www.afsa.org/AFSAvideos.aspx](http://www.afsa.org/AFSAvideos.aspx). ■

### NEWS BRIEF

#### AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony May 3, Foreign Affairs Day

On May 3, AFSA will hold its 80th annual Memorial Plaque Ceremony, honoring eight fallen Foreign Service personnel who gave their lives in service to the United States and the American people.

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. in the C Street lobby of the Department of State. Due to space limitations, attendance at the ceremony is limited to the honorees' family and friends. Please do not go to the lobby to view the ceremony.

You may view the ceremony on the department's BNet or in the Dean Acheson Auditorium from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m.

# FS Books: Something for Everyone

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## The Mini Page

The April 21 edition of **The Mini Page** (a newspaper insert for kids that appears in approximately 300 Sunday newspapers across the U.S.) focused on U.S. diplomats. **The Mini Page** editor found *Inside a U.S. Embassy* a useful resource, and when asked, we gave permission to excerpt one of the day-in-the-life entries from the book, along with two of the book's photos. In addition, *Inside a U.S. Embassy* Editor Shawn Dorman answered a

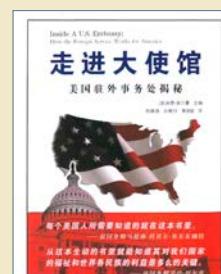
set of questions for their background information. Dorman also arranged for a Q&A with the Foreign Service child of one of the book's contributors, which was printed along with a picture provided by the family. Visit the book page for a link: [www.afsa.org/inside](http://www.afsa.org/inside).

## The AFSA History Book Project



The AFSA History Book Project is moving along well. Author and former FSO Harry Kopp began work in October 2012 and has submitted the first two chapters in

draft. The first chapter looks far back in history at diplomacy before AFSA (think Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson), and how the consular and diplomatic services were created and evolved through the nineteenth century and up until the Rogers Act of 1924, which created the Foreign Service. The second chapter takes on "The Birth of AFSA, 1924-1946." An article based on his research appeared in the April *Foreign Service Journal* for the focus on AFSA's 40th anniversary as a union.



## Walk into the Embassy!

The Chinese edition of the 2005 *Inside a U.S. Embassy* has been published in China and is available through some of the largest online shopping sites in the PRC, including taobao, dangdang and 360buy, as well as on Amazon China ([amazon.cn](http://amazon.cn)). The initial print run was 2,000 copies, and the price is 24 RMB (\$3.86). Embassy Beijing is purchasing copies for their use. See Talking Points (p.11) for details and links.

## Outreach to Universities



As part of the March launch of the AFSA partnership with the University of St. Thomas, AFSA gave out 28 comp copies of *Inside a U.S. Embassy* to professors and deans from various Texas universities.

In March, Shawn gave a presentation on the Foreign Service career to graduate students from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (above). This is the fourth year that students from retired FSO Charles Skinner's "Foreign Policy and Diplomacy" course have visited AFSA during a trip to Washington, D.C.

## Outreach to High Schools

Embassy Risk Management, a company that provides international property and auto insurance to members of the Foreign Service and other U.S. expatriates serving overseas, has given a grant to AFSA for \$6,000. This will fund the purchase (at cost) and distribution/mailing of approximately 700 copies of *Inside a U.S. Embassy* to U.S. public inner-city and lower-income-area high schools (a traditionally underserved demographic), to promote awareness of the Foreign Service among young Americans.

## ACTIVE AFTER ACTIVE-DUTY

# Finding Roots After a Life in the Foreign Service

BY CHRISTOPHER HENZE

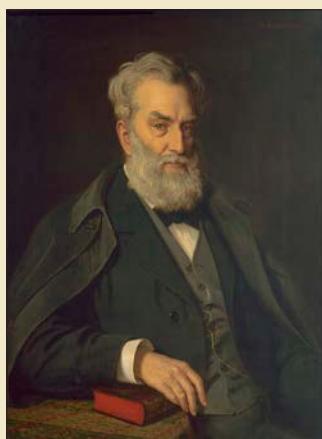
Retirement has given me the chance to do something I've wanted to do for a long time: research my family's genealogy. The Internet proved to be a wonderful tool for this endeavor. The more I got into the subject, the more passionate (my family might say obsessed) I became. It was like a treasure hunt—nothing exciting for a while, then Eureka! I would discover a small nugget that would lead me down a new path.

After more than a year of e-mailing with German contacts to prepare for a pilgrimage to Saxony, my sister and I only recently made the trip. Our great-grandfather, Robert Henze, was a rather prominent sculptor in Dresden. We believed that all his monumental sculptural works were destroyed during the Allied firebombing of February 1945, as was his graveside (which we had helped to restore). Dresden has been beautifully rebuilt, although grim reminders of the firebombing of "Florence on the Elbe" remain. Each Feb. 13, precisely at 10 p.m., all of the city lights go out and all of the church bells ring.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that was not the case. For instance, his depiction of a golden goddess continues to stand atop the dome of the Fine Arts Academy in Dresden.



PHOTO BY ROLF HENSE



With further research, we were able to locate many of his works and even found a street named after him.

Before leaving, we decided to show our appreciation to Saxony by donating our great grandfather's autobiography—a fragile document handwritten in old German script—to the Saxon State and University Library.

Going even further back

Robert Henze's golden goddess stands atop the dome of the Fine Arts Academy in Dresden—a landmark that miraculously survived the Allied firebombing in 1945.

**Below, portrait of revolutionary pastor Johann Friedrich Baltzer, 1802-1885.**

in our family's history, we discovered that the sculptor's father-in-law, our great-great-grandfather, Johann Friedrich Baltzer, had been a revolutionary pastor at St. Martin's Church in the village of Zwochau near Leipzig. He reportedly incurred the king's wrath for preaching in favor of democracy and was sentenced to four months in jail, which was increased to two years upon appeal. He fled and became a man without a country. Today, he is something of a local hero.

The only existing image of Pastor Baltzer we have found is a fine, large oil portrait which has been passed down in our family. My siblings suggested we put it up for auction after our parents died, since no one had a suitable place for it. I felt that would be a great pity and decided to contact the current pastor to

see if his church or the town council would be interested in receiving the painting as a gift.

The response from the pastor and a local historian was enthusiastic, so my sister and I added Zwochau to our itinerary. During a special service on St. Martin's Day, Nov. 11, the crate containing the portrait was opened in the presence of the pastor's Catholic counterpart, the mayor and the press. It was then that the pastor announced to all that the town council had decided to name the village's main street "Baltzerstrasse."

At this point in my children's lives, they have little interest in their family background. But I predict that when they have grandchildren of their own, they will be grateful to know more about their roots. I think it's important to preserve what we can for future generations. Otherwise, much will be lost. ■

*Christopher Henze served with the U.S. Information Agency in South Africa, Dar es Salaam, Ljubljana, Geneva and Paris. He retired in France, where he has worked as a consultant to the International Herald Tribune and at the press and publications office of the International Energy Agency.*

## THE FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY

# Remembering Carolina

BY AMANDA FERNANDEZ

Sitting at her memorial service, surrounded by her friends and family rocked with grief, I could not get one thought out of my mind: there's more to the story of the life of Carolina Handall Sanchez-Bustamante, and what we can learn from her example.

Carolina was impossible to forget, and those who memorialized her were too polite to say what was obvious to anyone who met her—she was stunning. Willow-thin, 5'9"; honey-blond long hair, chocolate brown eyes and an Anne Hathaway-sized smile. Yet for someone so physically striking, she was totally unassuming.

She was also exceedingly generous. A day after arriving in Quito, she called me, while I was surrounded by suitcases and toddlers bouncing off the walls. "I'm Carolina Sanchez-Bustamante, and I just wanted to welcome you to Quito!"

With her high-pitched, melodic voice, she provided helpful tips for finding child-care and housing and working outside of the embassy. She made sure I had all of her phone numbers and offered her assistance, day or night. In my many overseas tours, I had never received a similar call.

Carolina was always thoughtful. Two years later, before she left Quito for her

next adventure, she made the time—in between dating on her two girls, attending going-away parties, packing her house, undergoing hernia surgery and preparing for a new life in Africa—to call her friends to tell them how much their friendship meant to her. I was one of the lucky few on the receiving end of that phone call, and I will always remember the uniqueness of the experience.

She was always positive about her role as a Foreign Service spouse, and never complained publicly about the constant moves, the job search in each country or the new schools for her children. She wasn't naïve; she just didn't have the inclination to complain about things she couldn't change. Her positive attitude was contagious, and I often resolved after our conversations to be a better wife, mother and FS spouse. When I once complained to her how my father still corrected my Spanish, she responded, "I love it when people correct my English! Will you promise to correct me when you hear me make a mistake?"

During their tours in El Salvador, Ecuador and Ghana, Carolina accompanied her husband to hundreds of official events where she worked the room, met the important players and connected with people. She

didn't see participating as a burden imposed on her by virtue of her being a spouse of an embassy official, but rather, as an opportunity. She understood that she could play an important role in representing the United States just by being herself, and showing others that America had many talents and many faces.

In her final month to live, although private with her illness, she maintained her graciousness. She sent out dozens of supportive, life-affirming messages to her friends: "Have a great birthday!" "Beautiful work, congratulations my dear friend."

It is so easy to get caught up in life and lose focus of the things that truly matter. Carolina taught me that the Foreign Service is about people. The ones who serve

in it, their family members who share the experience, the ones we try to help, the ones who leave us far too early. I suspect we would have a happier and more productive Service if we all kept that approach in mind, and took the time to practice it the next time a new family arrives, a new policy is developed or a leave request crosses our desks. We lose nothing by trying. And we honor Carolina Handall Sanchez-Bustamante each time we do. ■

*Amanda Fernandez is a Foreign Service spouse and economic development consultant based in Washington, D.C. She has served overseas in Angola, Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Ghana.*

## NEWS BRIEF

### Support the New U.S. Diplomacy Center and Museum

The new U.S. Diplomacy Center and Museum will showcase the history and importance of diplomacy and development. A groundbreaking at the 21st Street NW side of the Department of State will take place this summer. AFSA strongly supports this project and is coordinating a donation campaign.

We invite every member of the Foreign Service to show support by making a secure, modest contribution at [www.afsa.org/usdc](http://www.afsa.org/usdc). To learn more about the USDC, please visit [diplomacy.state.gov](http://diplomacy.state.gov).

## THE FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY

**Husbands of Chennai**

BY SARAH TALALAY, VICE CONSUL, U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL CHENNAI

Looking for a sign that this is no longer your grandfather's Foreign Service? You can find one with a 365-day reminder on the desks at the U.S. consulate general in Chennai. The remarkable number of husbands trailing their Foreign Service member wives in South India practically burst from the pages of the third annual "Husbands of Chennai" desk calendar.

Over the past three years, the number of male Eligible Family Members at post has fluctuated from a low of nine, to as high as 13. No one knows if this is a record or just an interesting byproduct of the growing ranks of married women FSOs. Whatever, the husbands here are having fun, while raising a few rupees for charity.

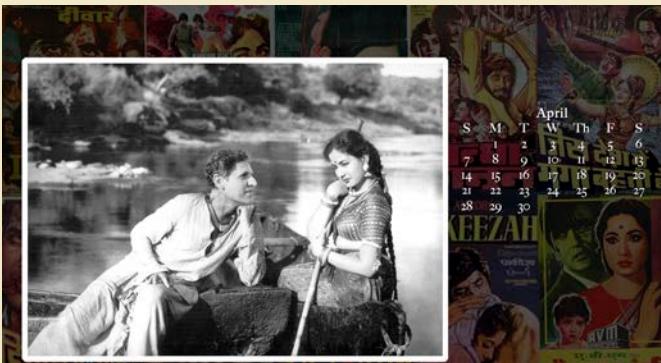
The idea for the first calendar came from a consular officer who, upon seeing an all-male calendar produced by a local nongovernmental organization, asked: "When are our husbands going to make their own calendar?"

"We did it as sort of a joke," said Paul Cohn, a photographer and the husband behind the calendar project.

The 2011 calendar served as the punchline to "What do a bunch of guys with free time do when their spouses are off at work?" It featured husbands doing, well, what they do: looking after their children, working out, barbe-

PHOTO MONTAGE BY PAUL COHN; PHOTOS BY COHN AND JAMES TALALAY

**Opening January 1**



cuing and walking the dog.

After the first edition, demand rose for a second calendar. By then, new husband James Talalay, another photographer, suggested that the 2012 edition show the husbands in front of uniquely Chennai settings—Marina Beach, a cluttered electrical shop, a stone sculpture of elephants pulling a chariot; that sort of thing.

The current calendar, inspired by Bollywood, is the group's most accomplished yet. Using stills from Indian films, Cohn and Talalay shot photos of the husbands' faces, then Cohn Photoshopped them onto the actors' bodies. The work takes on the campy feel of a Bollywood musical.

The calendars are printed in a limited run, with all

On the calendar's cover the husbands are identified above their heads. To the left, James Talalay (author's husband) is seen wooing a young beauty (with author's permission) in April.

proceeds going to charity. The husbands have raised between \$200 and \$300 a year for the Blue Cross of India Animal Hospital in Chennai, where several husbands volunteer to walk dogs.

It isn't clear if the project will continue in Chennai. The newest crop of officers includes fewer male spouses and the two resident photographers rotate out this summer.

Cohn, who will be following his consul wife, Abby Aronson, to Athens, says: "It just means we're going to be the Husbands of Vilnius or Athens or Djibouti."

## AFSA Book Notes Presents a Master Class

AFSA's popular Book Notes series continues on Wednesday, May 22, when we are pleased to present author Peter Spiers and his book, *Master Class: Living Longer, Stronger and Happier* (Center Press, 2012). Spiers is a senior vice president at Road Scholar, a Boston-based, not-for-profit organization dedicated to educational travel. AFSA has offered Road Scholar programs since 1996.

Road Scholar participants

can be seen in communities throughout the country—those amazingly hale, hearty and happy older folks who are having fun, have a million friends, are sharp as tacks and look like they'll live forever. Their secret is an active lifestyle that blends moving, thinking, socializing and creating.

Through inspirational stories from active seniors, supported by the latest research in the fields of psychology and neuro-science,

*Master Class* shows how to build an enriching lifestyle on a foundation of favorite activities. Spiers provides easy-to-follow charts that allow readers to break out of their daily routines by filling the gaps with a selection from 25 "Master Activities," such as learning a musical instrument, playing tennis or volunteering.

Spiers spent his childhood in the Foreign Service. His father, Ronald Spiers, served as U.S. ambassador

to Turkey, Pakistan and the Bahamas; assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research; and under secretary of State for management, among many other assignments.

The *Master Class* program will take place at AFSA, 2101 E Street NW, Washington, D.C., at 2 p.m., on May 22. Books will be available for purchase. Please RSVP to [events@afsa.org](mailto:events@afsa.org). ■

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## "Fallen U.S. Diplomats in Libya" Financial Aid Scholarship

An anonymous donor has made a substantial contribution towards establishing a scholarship in memory of Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty, who were killed in a terrorist attack in Benghazi last Sept. 11.

A need-based scholarship for college undergraduate study will be awarded in the 2013-2014 school year to a child of a Foreign Service employee who is an AFSA member.

To donate, please make your check payable to the AFSA Scholarship Fund, and indicate it is for the "U.S. Diplomats Scholarship" in the memo field. Please send it to: AFSA Scholarship Fund, 2101 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20037. For more information, please contact AFSA Scholarship Director Lori Dec, at (202) 944-5504 or dec@afsa.org.



As part of AFSA's efforts to keep members of Congress and staff up to date on our issues, (left to right) AFSA Advocacy Director Javier Cuevas, along with AFSA FCS VP Keith Curtis and AFSA Associate Retiree Coordinator Matt Sumrak, visited with (center) U.S. Senators Mark Warner (D-Va.) and Tim Kaine (D-Va.) as part of the Virginia Commonwealth Coffee series at the U.S. Capitol on Feb. 27.



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# FSJ's Guide to Extended Stay Housing

(with Foreign Service Clause Information)

Property/Web Address	Ad Page	Telephone	Location	Amenities*	Accept Pets	FS Clause
AKA Serviced Residences <a href="http://www.stayaka.com">www.stayaka.com</a>	2	(703) 294-6415	DC, VA, NY, PA, CA	BC, CC, CB+, FC, HSI, RD, WD, BC, CS	Varies	Yes
Arlington Court Suites Hotel <a href="http://www.arlingtoncourthotel.com">www.arlingtoncourthotel.com</a>	16	(703) 524-4000	VA	BC, CB, WDI, CC, HS, FC	Yes	Yes
Attache Corporate Housing <a href="http://www.StayAttache.com">www.StayAttache.com</a>	64	(202) 787-1885	DC, VA	Varies	Optional	Yes
Corporate Apartment Specialists <a href="http://www.corporateapartments.com">www.corporateapartments.com</a>	31	(703) 979-2830	DC, VA, MD	BC, CC, CS, FC, HSI, PG, RD, SP, WD	Yes	Yes
Courtyard Marriott <a href="http://www.marriot.com">www.marriot.com</a>	NA	(202) 296-5700	DC	BC, CC, FC, SP, HSI, WD	No	Yes
Pied-à-Terre Properties, Ltd. <a href="http://www.piedaterredc.com">www.piedaterredc.com</a>	64	(202) 462-0200	DC	Varies	Varies	Yes
Signature Properties <a href="http://www.sig-properties.com">www.sig-properties.com</a>	63	(888) 812-3545	DC, VA	Varies	Yes	Yes
Suite America <a href="http://www.suiteamerica.com">www.suiteamerica.com</a>	35	(877) 827-8483	DC, VA, MD nationwide	BC, CC, CS, FC, HSI, WID	Yes	Yes
TurnKey Housing Solutions <a href="http://www.tkhousing.com">www.tkhousing.com</a>	31	(703) 615-6591	VA, MD, DC	Varies	Yes	Yes

\* BC - Business Center, CB - Continental Breakfast, CC - Conference Center, CS - Concierge Service, DC - Day Care, FC - Fitness Center, HB - Hot Breakfast, HSI - High Speed Internet, PG - Playground, RD - Roof Deck, SP - Swimming Pool, TC - Tennis Courts, WD - Washer Dryer

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— James Yorke, AFSA Labor Management Specialist

# FSJ's Guide to Extended Stay Housing

(with Foreign Service Clause Information)

Property/Web Address	Ad Page	Housekeeping	Min. Stay	Bedrooms	Style*	Distance to State
AKA Serviced Residences dcruz@stayaka.com	2	Weekly	7 Days	1, 2 Bedroom	HR	8 Blocks
Arlington Court Suites Hotel john.malixi@snbhotels.com	16	Daily	1 Day	1, 2, 3 Bedroom	HR	2 Miles
Attache Corporate Housing info@StayAttache.com	64	Optional	30 Days	Varies	GS, HR, LR, TH	Varies
Corporate Apartment Specialists ned@corporateapartments.com	31	Optional	30 Days	Studio, 1, 2, 3 Bedroom	GS, HR, TH	Varies
Courtyard Marriott devin.denoncourt@marriott.com	NA	Daily	1 Day	Standard	HR	1 Block
Pied-à-Terre Properties, Ltd. info@piedaterre.com	64		60 Days	Studio, bd + den, 2 Bedroom	Varies	Varies
Signature Properties info@sig-properties.com	63	Optional	60 Days	Varies	Varies	Varies
Suite America info@suiteamerica.com	35	Optional	60 Days	1, 2, 3 Bedroom	LR, HR	Varies
TurnKey Housing Solutions eric@tkhousing.com	31	Optional	60 Days	Varies	GS, HR, LR, TH	Varies

\* GS - Garden Style, HR - High Rise, LR - Low Rise, TH - Town Home

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— James Yorke, AFSA Labor Management Specialist

## USIA: Gone but Not Forgotten

### The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency: American Public Diplomacy, 1989-2001

*Nicholas J. Cull, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, \$85, hardcover, 257 pages.*

REVIEWED BY ALLEN C. HANSEN

Near the end of his magisterial *The Cold War and the U.S. Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989*, the precursor to this work (see my review in the July-August 2010 *Foreign Service Journal*), Nicholas J. Cull observes:

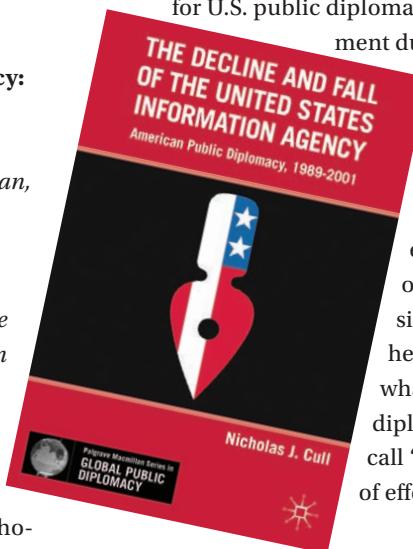
"U.S. public diplomacy had been an important tool for minimizing disasters like Watergate, managing relationships with allies, blocking the enemy's ability to win, and holding the imagination of the developing and nonaligned world until the American system had decisively passed the Soviet."

Yet as this companion volume documents, just a few years after that victory USIA was no more. Equally remarkable, it departed the scene essentially unnoticed and unmourned.

The story Cull tells in *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency: American Public Diplomacy, 1989-2001* will already be painfully familiar to many readers of the *Journal*, no doubt. But as we enter another era of tightening federal budgets and the continued absence of a constituency for diplomacy, it is well worth revisiting that dismal decade in these pages.

Cull, a professor of public diplomacy at the University of Southern California, frames the book by presenting, in

chronological order, the major international and domestic events that called for U.S. public diplomacy treatment during the period. Then, to assess how USIA handled each of those situations, he presents what public diplomats call "evidence of effective-



**As in his first volume, Cull documents the major contributions America's public diplomats have made to U.S. foreign policy.**

ness," drawing on statistical data. For instance, regarding the agency's International Visitors Program, he notes that as of last year, 37 countries around the world, including some major powers, were led by IV program veterans.

Although his account centers on the agency's headquarters, the input of Foreign Service officers in the field is well represented. As part of his prodigious research, he is generous in crediting the many books USIA veterans have produced over the years, such as Alan Heil's *Voice of America: A History* (Columbia University Press, 2003).

The VOA certainly receives its due in Cull's book, by the way. Unlike their colleagues, many Voice of America employees actually celebrated their emancipation from USIA in 1999.

Unfortunately, as Cull wryly comments, "No one seemed concerned that the VOA might have traded an old set of shackles for a new set marked BBG" (Broadcasting Board of Governors)—until it was too late.

Appropriately, Cull dedicates the book to Bernie Kamenske, who was chief of the VOA news division from 1973 to 1981. All who knew Bernie still recall his dedication to accurate, objective and comprehensive newscasts, and his defense of the high standards laid down in the VOA Charter. Despite periodic attempts by some ambassadors and officials to seek a less-than-objective view in Voice newscasts, he was adamant that the place for advocacy was in editorials or in clearly identifiable sources. Dedicated this book to him is a welcome tribute.

Reflecting on the handling of what many at USIA viewed as a "hostile takeover" by State, Cull joins many others in lamenting the cutbacks in spending for libraries, publications and research that followed the 1999 merger.

He rightly observes: "Part of the tragedy of the consolidation is that USIA's approach so often included the sort of innovative approach that is essential in the new era but was smothered at the Department of State. By 2012, the department was showing real indications that it had caught up, but half a generation had been lost while it learned on the job things that USIA had known all along."

Still, Cull cautions: "The lesson from the final years of USIA for America's current foreign policy is not that a separate agency should be constructed. ... The cultural function—which even within USIA was typically neglected by successive administrations, only to be acknowledged at the eleventh hour—might do

The background features a faint, circular watermark of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) logo. The logo consists of a stylized eagle with wings spread wide, perched atop a globe. The word "AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE ASSOCIATION" is written around the top of the globe, and the years "1911" and "1941" are visible at the bottom.

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**The story of USIA's demise will already be painfully familiar to many readers. But it is well worth recalling.**

better if firewalled off from those with other priorities. An independent cultural agency along the lines of Britain's British Council or Germany's Goethe Institute would be insulated from political tides and would also always be its highest priority."

Cull ends by observing that "America's public diplomats in the field were able to make a difference to the outworking of U.S. foreign policy. Much excellent work is still done today and will be done tomorrow, but how much more could be done if today's public diplomats were blessed with the sort of stable structure, energetic leadership and adequate budgets available in 1988 when Charles Z. Wick presided over an empire of communication called USIA."

Speaking of budgetary matters, there is no getting around the fact that at \$85, this hardcover "library" edition is expensive. But anyone interested in a scholarly, well-written, extensively researched history of USIA will find it worth the investment. And let us hope that a more affordable paperback edition will soon be forthcoming (as occurred with the first volume) so that this important book receives the widest circulation possible. ■

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*Allen C. Hansen, a 32-year Foreign Service veteran of the U.S. Information Agency, is the author of USIA: Public Diplomacy in the Computer Age (Praeger, 1989) and Nine Lives: A Foreign Service Odyssey (New Academia, 2007).*

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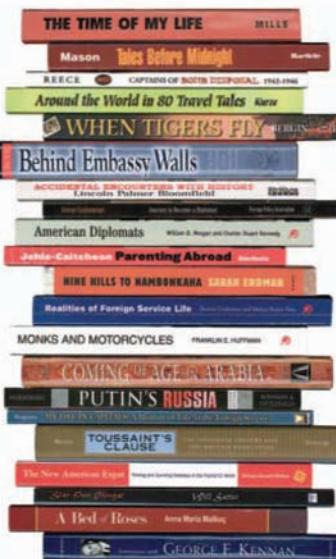
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FS authors whose books have been published in 2012 or 2013, and have not been previously featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author, to:

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**The Foreign Service Journal**  
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### CLASSIFIED ADS

Classifieds / 70, 71, 72

### FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND TAX SERVICES

Luxenberg & Johnson, P.C.  
/ 62

MCG Financial Planning / 51  
Shaw Bransford & Roth  
P.C. / 35

### HOUSING

AKA, Flexible Stay Hotel  
Residences / Inside Front Cover  
Arlington Court Suites / 16  
Attaché Corporate Housing / 64

### CAS-Corporate Apartment Specialists

FSJ Extended Stay Housing Guide / 65, 66

Pied-a-Terre Properties Ltd. / 64

Signature Properties / 63  
SuiteAmerica / 35

TurnKey Housing Solutions / 31

### INSURANCE

AFSPA-Term Life Insurance / 69

Clements Worldwide / 4

Embassy Risk Management / 52

Federal Employee Defense Services / 9

The Hirshorn Company / Back Cover

### MISCELLANEOUS

AFSA Memorial Marker / 49

AFSA Scholarship Fund / Inside Back Cover

Diplomatic Automobile Sales / 3

Education & Youth in the Family Liaison Office / 17

FSJ on Facebook / 45

Marketplace / 10

Tetra Tech / 20

### REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Cabell Reid, LLC / 76

Executive Housing Consultants, Inc. / 73

McEnearney Associates / 76

McGrath Real Estate Services / 73

Meyerson Group, Inc.,

The / 74

Peake Management, Inc. / 74

Promax Management Inc. / 75

Property Specialists, Inc. / 75

Stuart & Maury, Inc. / 73

Washington Management

Services / 75

WJD Management / 76

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Association for Diplomatic Study and Training (ADST) / 45

Calling All Foreign Service Authors! / 69

Change of Address / 72

Foreign Service Youth Foundation / 44

Join The Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board / 38

USAID Alumni Association / 51

VOTE in the AFSA Election! / 68

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# The Ties That Bind

BY LEAH EVANS

**F**oreign Service families are travelers and wanderers and storytellers. When I first began traveling, it was to see how different cultures can be. Today, after years of traveling and living abroad, I mostly see how similar cultures can be. After arriving in the strangeness of a new country, I wait for that moment when the pockets of familiarity jump out at me, and I realize that while this isn't home, it is so much like home.

I grew up in rural Ohio, on a 100-acre organic sheep and alfalfa farm in the heart of Amish country. Like many people, I found my childhood to be unique and beautiful. I expected in my travels as a Foreign Service family member to experience a new life, but I found instead echoes of my old one. Now, those formative years immersed in farm culture provide a foundation for most of my new experiences.

In Tbilisi, Georgia, the shepherds bring flocks of sheep to the outskirts of town to sell and butcher on the spot. A customer picks a sheep and, with an incredibly swift flick of the knife and twist of the torso, the sheep is killed, hung and cut into dinner-ready pieces. In my mind I see my Amish neighbor, Fanny, dispatching a chicken, then plucking and cutting to create a rich and savory meal on the spot.

In Oaxaca, Mexico, women sing and

## The sounds, smells and sights of life mirror each other from different hemispheres.

gossip as they cook great feasts over stone stoves to serve to anyone who comes to their table. People gather in groups of two or three to talk, while bending heads low to eat rolled tortillas stuffed with beans, sour cream and avocado.

In Wooster, Ohio, I stand in line during the county fair to buy fair fries and pulled-pork sandwiches, bonding with my friends and family over the foods that we identify as ours, just as such groups do all over the world.

In Kars, Turkey, the call to prayer flooded the small town as I ate olives, yogurt and honey in a seedy hotel with friends. That brought back childhood memories of Amish neighbors singing hymns in their old barn, flooding the valley that is our farm with their haunting melodies. After the singing, everyone would gather in clumps under shaded trees to eat pie, cakes and cookies.

In Quito, Ecuador, we always took visitors to Otavalo for the craft market. Across the street, the bustling livestock market burst with sheep, cows, chickens, guinea pigs and hundreds of bartering, gossiping, wandering farmers.

In Mount Hope, Ohio, the weekly livestock sale brings the same people in different clothes, comparing haunches of cows and wool on sheep. The sounds, smells and sights mirror each other from different hemispheres.

In Cairo, Egypt, the driver of a wagon full of sweet green hay leans back on his load while his donkey slowly lumbers up the green strip of lush farmland. I remember sitting on top of hay bales while our neighbor Roy called to the horses pulling the hay wagon from the field to the barn. The hay, the animals and the relaxation after hours of hard physical labor all reach across miles and oceans.

Of course, there are differences in social safety nets and human rights. There are differences in political corruption and a sense of hope. But at the basic human level of work, play and survival, there are so very many similarities.

The more I travel, the more I know I feel anew a part of the world, regardless of time and place. ■

---

*Leah Evans is a Foreign Service spouse serving in Kyiv.*



The Malecón (“Sea Wall”) in Havana tells a great deal about life in modern-day Cuba. Like much of the architecture that is its backdrop, the wall is something of an anachronism. Built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the first half of the 20th century, the four-mile-long esplanade is a popular social magnet, reflecting the many facets of the country’s society and serving as a gathering place where both Cubans and tourists interact.

As it has done for many decades, the Malecón continues to serve as a window into Cuba’s soul. ■

---

*Tim Bertocci is an FSO posted to Havana as a vice consul. It is his first overseas tour. He took this picture in the fall of 2012 with a Canon Rebel, with a Canon 70-200mm L Lens.*

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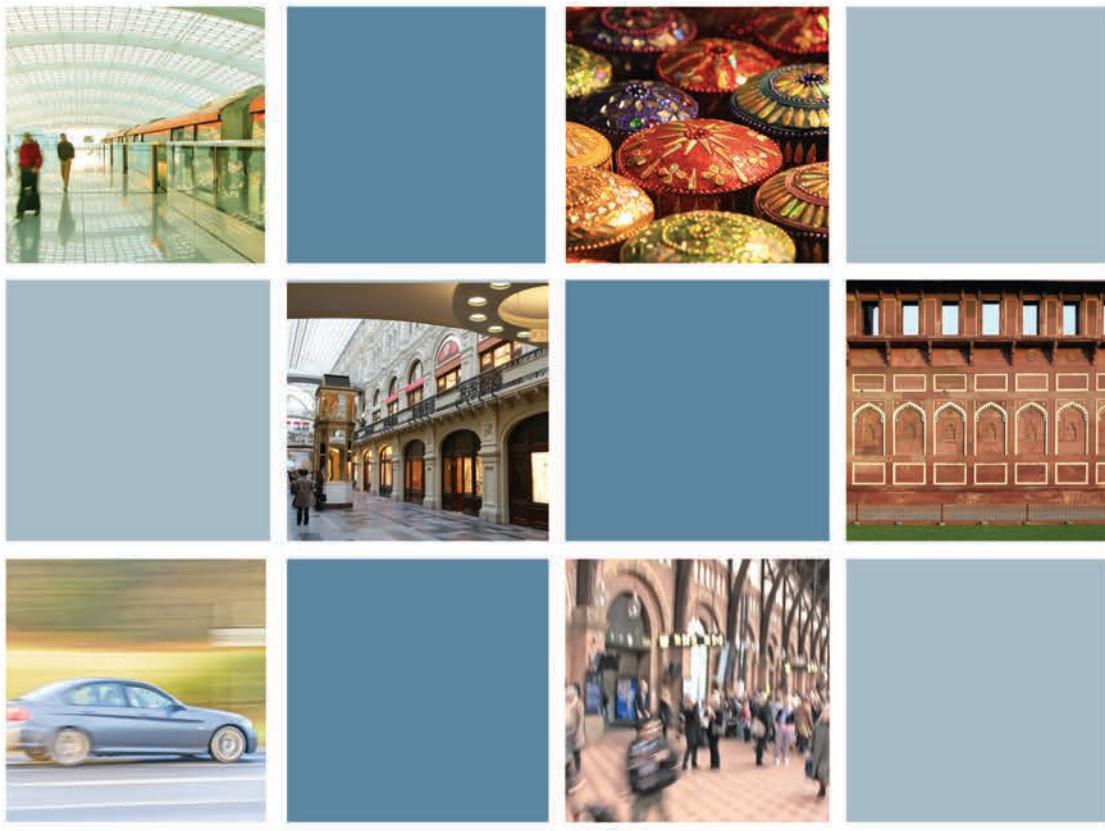
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