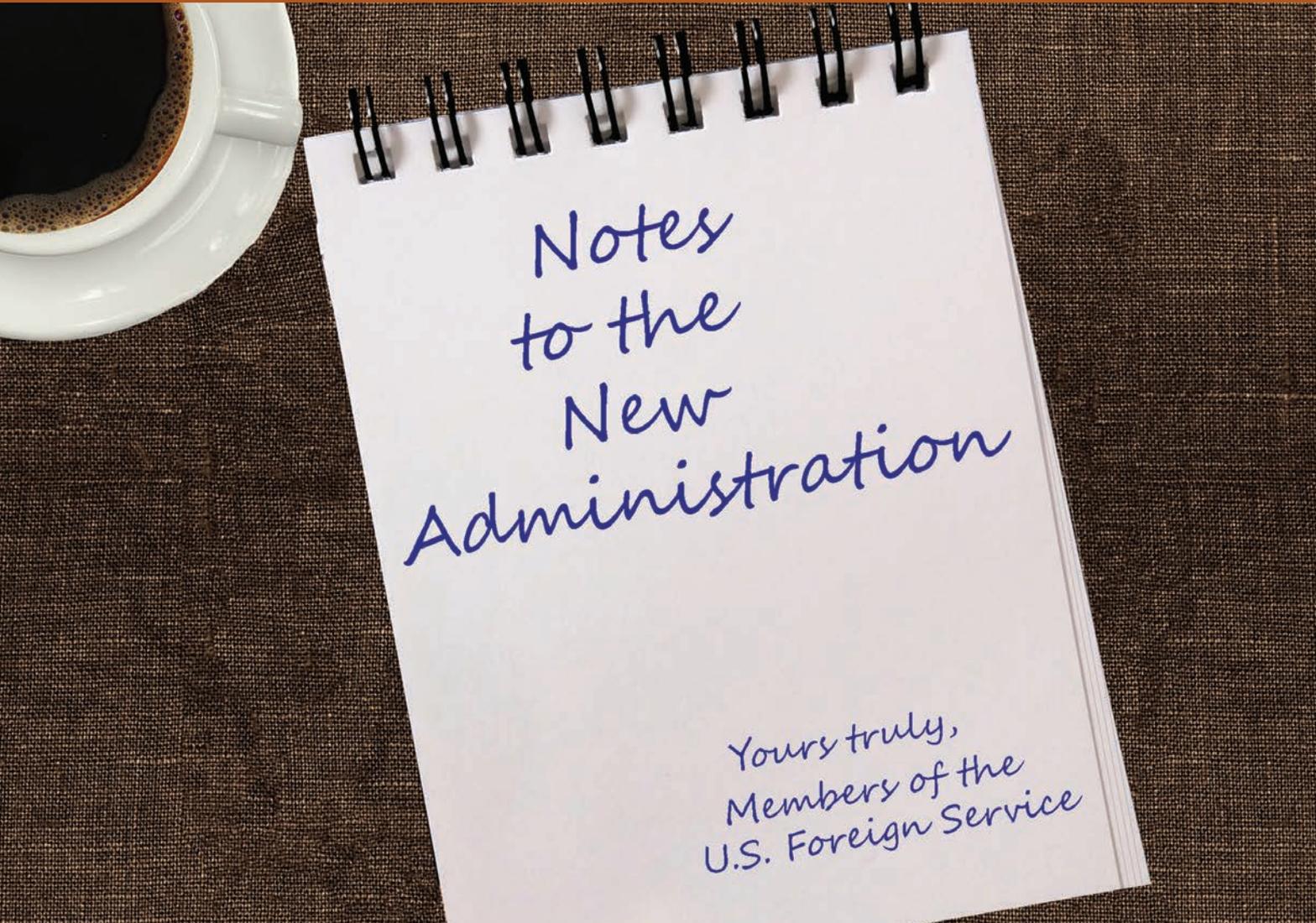


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# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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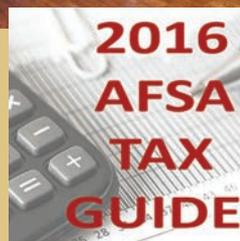
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# Dear S: You Can Count on Us

BY BARBARA STEPHENSON

**T**he focus of this month's *Foreign Service Journal* is "Notes to the New Administration." As I write, we are all awaiting word on the president-elect's choice for Secretary of State, and our Foreign Service colleagues at USAID, and in FCS, FAS, APHIS and BBG are similarly tuned to news of key appointments.

In short order we will introduce ourselves to our new "S" and a host of other new arrivals to explain who we are, what we do and why it matters.

I want to get this right and, in doing so, encourage the new administration to rely heavily on us, the career professionals, to advance American interests. Here is what I plan to say:

Congratulations on your appointment to lead the State Department, consistently rated one of the best places in the federal government to work. I, myself, am a Foreign Service officer, and I hail from the part of State's workforce that deploys worldwide to protect and serve America's people, interests and values. Like most of my Foreign Service colleagues, I have spent about two-thirds of my career posted to American embassies and consulates overseas.

Like nine in 10 Americans, I support strong American global leadership. In fact, I am passionate about it, absolutely convinced that the work we do is a huge benefit to U.S.



*Ambassador Barbara Stephenson is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*

## I want to encourage the new administration to rely heavily on us, the career professionals, to advance American interests.

interests writ large and to Americans from all walks of life.

Like the majority of Americans, I support sharing the burden of that global leadership. I have spent a good part of my career persuading other countries to pitch in and lighten the load on American taxpayers.

I am honored to lead the American Foreign Service Association, the voice of the Foreign Service. (Almost 80 percent of active-duty members of the Foreign Service choose to join AFSA and stay with us throughout their careers, and many remain members in retirement.)

As Foreign Service professionals, we are proud of our rigorous selection process (which whittles down some 15,000 applicants each year to 375 candidates for new, entry-level officer positions).

In the Foreign Service, you will have a corps of career professionals who are second to none in their grasp of how to get things done in the near- and far-flung places where we are deployed. And you can count on us to call it like we see it, to give you our best advice.

Sometimes you will love our reports and our advice, as we chart the course for achieving an American goal that you might not have thought possible, might not have seen if you didn't have members of the Foreign Service on the ground, working in the local language, searching out these

opportunities. Sometimes you may not like our reports and advice so much, when we must advise you that something just won't fly, when even asking would carry a heavy cost.

We are hard-wired to give you an unvarnished reality check. It starts with the oath of office we take on entering the Service—to protect and defend the Constitution. Our commitment to honest judgment is reinforced with the annual evaluation cycle, which requires us to demonstrate that we can "discern when well-founded constructive dissent is justified" and "advocate policy alternatives." Evaluations matter, because we are rank-ordered each year for promotion, and those who do not get selected for promotion on time are forced to separate from the Service.

As a way to remind members of our duty to call it like we see it, AFSA gives annual awards for dissent. In fact, we are calling for award nominations now. (For more on dissent and information on how to nominate a colleague for an AFSA award, please go to [www.afsa.org/dissent](http://www.afsa.org/dissent).)

Again, congratulations on your appointment! I hope you will be proud of the extraordinary career professionals in the Foreign Service who stand ready to serve on your team. Count on us and use us fully as we support you in delivering the global leadership Americans want and the world needs. ■

# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

**Editor in Chief, Director of Publications**  
Shawn Dorman: [dorman@afsa.org](mailto:dorman@afsa.org)

**Managing Editor**  
Susan Brady Maitra: [maitra@afsa.org](mailto:maitra@afsa.org)

**Associate Editor**  
Gemma Dvorak: [dvorak@afsa.org](mailto:dvorak@afsa.org)

**Publications Coordinator**  
Dmitry Filipoff: [filiipoff@afsa.org](mailto:filiipoff@afsa.org)

**Ad & Circulation Manager**  
Ed Miltenberger: [miltenberger@afsa.org](mailto:miltenberger@afsa.org)

**Art Director**  
Caryn Suko Smith

**Editorial Intern**  
Katherine Perroots: [fsjedit@afsa.org](mailto:fsjedit@afsa.org)

**Advertising Intern**  
Eka Cipta Putera Chandra: [adintern@afsa.org](mailto:adintern@afsa.org)

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Steven Alan Honley

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## CONTACTS



[www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org)

**AFSA Headquarters:**  
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**State Department AFSA Office:**  
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# The Diplomacy Brief

BY SHAWN DORMAN

**B**y all indications, many in the incoming administration will be new to public service. Will they realize that diplomacy is managed and foreign policy implemented by professional public servants, members of the Foreign Service who have sworn an oath to the U.S. Constitution?

Hopefully, yes. And, hopefully, they will turn to the professionals staffing the foreign affairs agencies and U.S. embassies and consulates around the world and welcome their input, value their experience, and utilize their deep knowledge and understanding.

To help orient the newcomers, we have reached out to the Foreign Service community for this month's special focus on "Notes to the New Administration."

AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson opens by introducing herself, the association and the Foreign Service to the new Secretary of State, in "Dear S: You Can Count on Us."

In "Mr. President, You Have Partners at State to Help Navigate the World's Shoals," Foreign Service Officer Keith Mines calls on the new president to have a conversation with the American people about America's place in the world, reaffirm the leadership role that the United

States plays globally and reassure allies of that commitment.

Ambassador (ret.) Prudence Bushnell shares valuable lead-

## Will the Trump team realize that diplomacy is managed and foreign policy implemented by professional public servants?

ership lessons learned through handling tragic crises overseas. She advises that leadership is "not about you"; that the best strategies result from asking the best questions; and that you must take care of your people and yourself, and persevere.

In "Time to Sharpen a Vital Diplomatic Tool," development expert Thomas Adams takes a serious look at how to improve the effectiveness of U.S. foreign assistance. He argues for rebuilding USAID's capacity and consolidating development functions there, while more closely integrating foreign assistance and foreign policy.

We went out to the members of the Foreign Service to ask for brief notes on what they want the Trump administration to know about the role of the Foreign Service. We received 38 thoughtful responses and share them all in this issue.

Several themes come through loud and clear: Know that we are the *professional* Foreign Service, *your* Foreign Service, serving the United States all over the world. We are the face of America abroad, a bridge to the world. We understand the local situations at our posts and offer honest reporting that you need in order to formulate policy.

Last, but not least, you have an opportunity to turn away from the practice,

unique to the United States, of rewarding campaign donors and bundlers with ambassadorships, and turn to the career Foreign Service for the expertise needed for these positions.

In this month's Speaking Out, Ambassador Edward Peck expands on that particular message, laying out the case against "pay to play" ambassadors and in favor of career diplomats for those critical posts.

This issue also features the dry but essential annual AFSA Tax Guide, spelling out what you need to know as a taxpayer in the Foreign Service. In addition, you'll find an engaging pitch for developing better "followership" at USAID from retired FSO José Garzón; and, in a Reflections piece that will surely resonate with many, writer and FS spouse Donna Gorman offers a glimpse of the challenges of coming "home."

This double issue will be followed in March with a look at "Diplomatic Security at 100," and in April we ponder the future of Europe and the transatlantic alliance.

Please keep writing for the *Journal* in mind. Share your reactions to articles in Letters, ideas for how things could be done better in Speaking Out, stories in Reflections, as well as feature articles on the policy and practice of diplomacy based on research or your experience.

This is *your* magazine. ■



Shawn Dorman is the editor of The Foreign Service Journal.

## Patience First

For the first time since retiring I'm glad I'm retired. The reason is Donald Trump.

If the president-elect acts on his campaign rhetoric and scuttles trade deals, ignores Article 5 of the NATO charter, begins deporting Hispanics by the millions, encourages countries to acquire nuclear weapons and condones territorial aggressions, then I'm happy to be here on Cape Cod rather than in one of our embassies or consulates.

If implemented, these positions will have no justification, no defense. They are wrong. Since the Truman administration, practitioners of American foreign policy from both major parties have worked to build a structure of defensive alliances and trade agreements that ensures our safety and prosperity.

Although my contemporaries and I—unlike Dean Acheson—were not present at its creation, we took seriously the legacy of American internationalism, our security commitments and the promotion of democracy, human rights and individual freedoms. We were confident in these policies, proud of the values they expressed and comfortable in advocating them.

Despite some egregious failures, which President-Elect Trump has gleefully noted, we have largely succeeded. The United States and the world are better off as a result of our efforts.

I therefore must ask: Does Mr. Trump really want to turn seven decades of effective American diplomacy on its head? If so, he will undermine our safety and prosperity and tarnish the image of the United States.

But what if—as is often the case during an electoral campaign—his words were just so much fodder for the voter, no more sincere than Don Juan's profes-

sions of true love? After all, the office of the president does have a tendency to sober a man. It makes him realize that his decisions will have consequences, and that history will sit in judgment of his actions.

It does appear, at least on a few issues, that the president-elect has reconsidered some of his stated positions and hedged a bit on his more provocative promises. Is this cause for hope, or wishful thinking?

I imagine that many members of the Foreign Service and their Civil Service colleagues are nervously asking themselves this very question. We are a professional Foreign Service, committed to serving the nation and supporting each administration's policies, no matter the party in power or our personal preferences. Most of us, I would think, have at one time or another advocated for a policy we found mistaken, misguided or myopic. The State Department could not function otherwise.

For those reasons I think that we owe the Trump administration sufficient time to develop and deploy their foreign policies. If we were to act precipitously, if we failed to give the president-elect the same consideration that we have given his predecessors, we would betray our pledge to serve the nation irrespective of partisan politics. We would weaken America.

But this patience and, if it comes to it, this willingness to support policies with which we personally disagree must have its limits. During the conflict in Vietnam, I have been told, many officers resigned in protest. Some resigned during the Balkan crisis of the 1990s and the Second Persian Gulf War.

There comes a time when conscience and principle, both subjective tests, make continuing to serve personally dis-

tasteful. Then, we confront the dilemma: Do I resign, forsaking a career I cherish? Or do I continue to serve? If the latter, then we, as professional diplomats, owe the full measure of our energy and intellect to the enterprise.

Perhaps it will never get to that point. But if it does, I'm glad I'm retired.

*Robert Callahan*  
Ambassador, retired  
Centerville, Massachusetts

## The State of Writing

I agree with Paul Poletes' thoughtful piece on the state of State writing ("Getting Beyond Bureaucratse—Why Writing Like Robots Damages U.S. Interests," *Speaking Out*, November 2016 *FSJ*).

As a long-time newspaper reporter who joined the Foreign Service in 2011, I was surprised to find State writing so cumbersome. During my first tour, while serving as a consular officer, I found my writing skills to be in demand to draft articles and edit colleagues' EERs to make them clearer.

To use Poletes' words "wordiness, empty jargon, wishy-washy prose and a near total lack of human touch" do not make us sound smarter. "Bureaucratse" confuses the reader and leads to ineffective communication of policy.

In writing, less is more. Clear is beautiful. We owe simpler, more effective writing to our colleagues and ourselves. ■

*Sarah Talalay*  
FSO  
Arlington, Virginia



## Obama's Record on Political Ambassadors

At the end of his two terms on Jan. 20, President Barack Obama's record on politically appointed ambassadors is on par with his predecessors. Of his ambassadorial appointments, 70 percent were members of the career Foreign Service, while 30 percent were political appointees.

Over the course of his two terms, President George W. Bush named career FSOs to 68 percent of the ambassadorships he filled during his eight-year term, and President Bill Clinton appointed career officers to 72 percent of the ambassadorial slots he filled.

Obama's record is also similar to his recent predecessors in terms of total number of ambassadorial appointments: He made a total of 419 appointments. By comparison, Bill Clinton appointed 417 ambassadors, George H.W. Bush appointed 428 and Ronald Reagan appointed 420.

Obama appointed more political appointees than any Democratic president since 1974, when AFSA began recording these statistics. The Obama administration's record represents a 2-percent increase over Clinton and a 4-percent increase over Jimmy Carter.

Notably, however, Obama appointed the highest number of female ambassadors of any previous president—134. Thirty-two percent of his appointments were female.

President-elect Donald J. Trump's first nominations have already been made, with South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley proposed to be ambassador to the United Nations and Iowa Governor Terry Branstad for China.

You can follow President Trump's ambassadorial appointments on our website at [www.afsa.org/ambassadorlist](http://www.afsa.org/ambassadorlist).

—Kellen Johansen,  
Communications Intern



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The exterior of the fake U.S. embassy in Accra, Ghana.

## The Sincerest Form of Flattery?

On Dec. 2, *Al-Jazeera* reported that with the help of U.S. officials, authorities in Ghana busted a fake U.S. embassy that for a decade issued illegally obtained authentic visas.

No one is known to have entered the United States on visas from the fake embassy, the State Department has said.

The real U.S. embassy in Accra is a prominent, heavily fortified complex in Cantonments, one of the capital's most expensive neighborhoods. Lines of people queue outside each day for visa appointments and other consular business.

Until a few months ago, however, it had competition from a rundown, two-story pink building with a corrugated metal roof. That facility flew a U.S. flag outside every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 7:30 a.m. to 12 noon, but otherwise kept a low profile. It did not take walk-ins.

Inside, visitors saw a portrait of President Barack Obama, along with signs assuring them they were in the right place. But Ghanaian and Turkish crime rings actually ran the operation,

and the "consular officers" were Turkish citizens who spoke English and Dutch. (The ringleaders also ran a fake Dutch embassy.)

Confirming news reports, State's Diplomatic Security Bureau noted that the takedown was part of a broader "Operation Spartan Vanguard" initiative, which DS special agents in Embassy Ghana's Regional Security Office launched to address trafficking and fraud concerns in the region.

The sham embassy advertised its services through flyers and billboards in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. Some of the services it offered its customers, whom it shuttled to and from the site, included issuance of fraudulently obtained but legitimate U.S. visas, counterfeit visas and false identification documents, for up to \$6,000 each.

According to the *Washington Post*, when the task force raided the place, they arrested several suspects and collected evidence that included a laptop computer; smart phones; 150 passports from 10 countries; counterfeit identity documents and legitimate and counterfeit visas from the United States, the Schengen zone, India and South Africa.

## Contemporary Quote

“ I am still here. I am real. I am still fighting for my children’s life. We are not propaganda. We are real people. We are — we are Aleppo’s people. ”

—*Fatemah Alabed, mother of Bana, the 7-year-old tweeting from Aleppo, speaking via skype to CNN on Dec. 11.*

Though most of the ringleaders fled the country, the RSO in Ghana reports that as a result of this and other raids, the export of fraudulent documents has decreased by 70 percent in West Africa.

—*Steven Alan Honley, Contributing Editor*

## State Department Facilitates World Nomad Games

In September 2016, the World Nomad Games were held in the Kyrgyz Republic. More than 62 countries competed in unique events, including horse riding, falconry and kok-boru—a game played on horseback with a goat’s carcass.

The State Department sponsored several cultural ambassadors, including

U.S. wrestlers and the first-ever U.S. kok-boru team. The United States team ended the games with four medals—two silver and two bronze, according to the official World Nomad Games website.

U.S. Embassy Bishkek supported the games with an American Corner showcasing U.S. talent and providing information about USAID programs in the Kyrgyz Republic.

The Regional Security Office at Embassy Bishkek was also instrumental in the success of the games, travelling frequently to the event sites in the Issyk-Kul Lake region of the Kyrgyz Republic to check route safety and hotel security, liaise with host nation police and government officials and plan security for VIP visitors from the United States.

A suicide car bomb attack in Bishkek just days before the opening ceremony made the security situation more complex, but the good relationships that RSO Bishkek had built with local law enforcement officials enabled all parties to work together to keep the games on track.

—*Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor*

## Native Americans in the Foreign Service

In recognition of Native American Heritage Month, the Native American Foreign Affairs Council held an event on Nov. 14 at the State Department to bring awareness to challenges Native Americans face in fostering inclusion.

Featured speaker Jody Tallbear addressed the topic of misrepresentation of Native American culture in mass media. There are 562 federally recognized Native American tribes in the United States, with a population of 4.5 million (1.5 percent of the total U.S. population).

A lively question and answer session allowed Ms. Tallbear to elaborate on the involvement of American Indians and Native Alaskans in the Foreign Service. Members of NAFAC report that the number of self-identified Native Americans/Alaskans falls below 1 percent of the State Department’s workforce.

Because the majority of issues faced by Native Americans and Alaskans are domestic, those who choose to apply for federal jobs generally select positions in the Tribal Offices, where they can best help their communities.

Ms. Tallbear suggested that a lack of self-reporting, as well as difficulty in recruiting in Native Indian/Native Alaskan communities is also to blame for their low representation at the State Department.

NAFAC members discussed possible solutions to these issues, including



Falconers compete with golden eagles in the hunting portion of the World Nomad Games.

## SITE OF THE MONTH: [ourworldindata.org](http://ourworldindata.org)

**O**ur World in Data is an online publication that shows how living conditions are changing worldwide. The aim of the creators is to give a global overview of how the world is changing over the long term, showing where changes are coming from, the current status and trends looking ahead.

OWID provides the data they gather in two forms—charts and maps, and academic research on global development. The publication is produced by the University of Oxford and covers many topics across a broad range of disciplines including trends in health, violence, culture, education and climate change, to name a few.

Covering all of these aspects



of human civilization in one place underlines the interlinkages among the long-term trends that are observed.

The data used on OWID comes from three sources—specialized institutes, published research articles and international institutions or agencies, such as the World Bank and the United Nations.

The entire publication is available for free and all data published on the website is available for download and use.

increased advertising in veteran circles and Native American/Native Alaskan communities, as well as better understanding of what constitutes a true Native Indian.

Despite historically low numbers, there are Native Americans and Native Alaskans currently serving and those who have served in the past. AFSA wishes to honor their legacy and commitment to the Foreign Service.

—Rebecca Yim, Executive Intern

## Think-Tank Thoughts for the New Administration

**F**or this issue of the *Journal*, we invited members of the Foreign Service (active-duty and retired) to offer advice to the new administration on the role

of diplomacy and the Foreign Service. But there is a wealth of foreign policy advice being offered by think tanks and other organizations during this transition season. Here is a selection of such recommendations to the new president and his staff.

The **Center for Strategic and International Studies** published a commentary on President-elect Trump's security policy needs and recommendations for building his administration. CSIS sees the national security portion of the FY2018 budget, problems in the Afghan war, key decisions on U.S. involvement in Syria and Iraq, and a commitment to dealing with the Iranian threat as the top priorities.

The **Atlantic Council** created a NATO



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agenda for President-elect Trump, which lists priorities for policy on the alliance. The AC reminds the president that, in his first national security speech as the Republican nominee, he pledged to convene a NATO summit. The council recommends that he use that summit to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to defend Europe.

Earlier, the Council released a “foundational” proposal to reform the National Security Council. The seven-point proposal is based on extensive analysis and interviews with more than 60 senior foreign policy, defense and intelligence leaders who share a bipartisan concern that structural and personnel failures in the critical National Security Council system are an important factor in the strategic confusion and poor execution that have led to serious mistakes in foreign and defense policy during the past two decades.

**The Carnegie Corporation** and *The National Interest* commissioned a multi-part symposium to attempt to answer questions regarding the future of U.S.-Russia relations under the new administration. This series of essays from policymakers, think tanks and academics offers analysis and possible steps the new administration can take to achieve détente.

The **Stimson Center** has compiled the 2017 Presidential Inbox series, featuring contributions from experts analyzing the major challenges Pres. Trump will face in his first 100 days in office. Among the top challenges are improving the U.S.-China relationship, combatting returning foreign terrorists and a strategy for transatlantic trade. The nonpartisan series aims to “break the artificial boundaries that inhibit smart policymaking and promote division,” such as the divide between Republicans and Democrats.

**The American Enterprise Institute’s** Derek Scissors hopes that Pres. Trump will usher in a new era of bilateral rela-

## 50 Years Ago

### Toward A Stronger Association

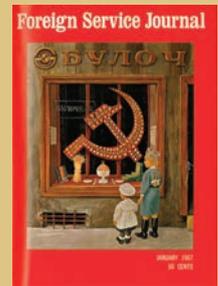
It is fitting to open the New Year with a reference to our membership. As a general musters his force before he contemplates an action, so the Foreign Service Association must know its strength if it is to be active and productive.

The Association cannot progress if large numbers of potential members stand aside. Every added member means added strength—financially, of course—but most importantly in terms of brains and energy. It is a sad fact that many who take pride

in their profession do not vote in the elections of their professional Association and do not participate in efforts to strengthen

professional skills, improve working conditions, assist our children and protect our widows and retired personnel.

—Excerpted from the Editorial,  
Foreign Service Journal,  
January 1967.



tions with China as an economic partner and recommends that the United States start by reforming its domestic economic policy for a stronger long-term relationship with China.

The **Heritage Foundation** has published the *Mandate for Leadership* series, offering conservative policy recommendations to the new administration. Part 1 addresses the 2017 Congressional Budget. Part 2 offers a policy agenda to achieve long-term goals, such as balancing the budget and welfare reform, and Part 3 details priorities for the incoming president and steps to achieve them.

The **German Marshall Fund** collected recommendations for the new administration from its policy experts in various European countries.

The **Asia Foundation** released a report, “Asian Views on America’s Role in Asia: The Future of the Rebalance,” outlining 10 top foreign policy recommendations in Asia for the Trump administration. These include maintaining a strong

presence in the Asia Pacific, rethinking strategy on Korea and ratifying TPP.

On its “Transition 2016” page, the **Council on Foreign Relations** presents 11 major foreign policy issues, from China and Cuba to the Islamic State and trade, bringing together Donald Trump’s stated views and CFR backgrounders on each issue.

Also available are podcasts called “The President’s Inbox” on defense and building an administration, videos on climate change and how to stop the Islamic State, and the latest CFR analysis on various topics.

The **Foreign Policy Research Institute** released “8 Foreign Policy Questions Trump Needs to Ask” to formulate his policy and shape conversations with foreign leaders. The questions lead with: “Why has the best-funded and most professional military in U.S. history been unable to translate tactical victories into strategic success in Afghanistan?” ■

—Katherine Perroots, *Editorial Intern*

# Why U.S. Ambassadors Should Be Career Professionals

BY EDWARD L. PECK

The United States is unique among developed nations in that nearly a third of U.S. embassies—and more than 60 percent of those located in major developed countries—are headed by political appointees without experience in diplomacy. Though some governments do send political appointees to represent them in Washington and other key capitals, the vast majority of their missions are headed by trained career diplomats.

Without a doubt, the ability to raise millions of dollars for a presidential campaign is a valuable skill. But rewarding a fundraiser or “bundler” with the job of heading a U.S. embassy reveals total ignorance of what the job entails. Almost unknown outside diplomatic circles, an ambassador’s responsibilities are numerous, complex and important—sometimes critical. And, as with any and all top management positions, they cannot be effectively carried out by beginners.

Moreover, selling an important federal position in this manner impedes attainment of our international objectives, violates the basic principles of good governance, ignores existing law and is understandably resented by the nations

on the receiving end of such appointments.

I do not mean in any way to cast aspersions on the abilities, character, successes, skills, patriotism or other commendable attributes of the nominees. But as a new administration takes office, I submit that it is high time to abolish the spoils system once and for all, for U.S. diplomacy. America does not benefit from this practice.

## The Chief of Mission Mandate

In the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-465), Congress spelled out what chiefs of mission are expected to do, as well as the qualifications required. Section 207, Responsibilities of the Chief of Mission, merits a close reading:

“Under the direction of the president, the chief of mission to a foreign country: (1) shall have full responsibility for the direction, coordination and supervision of all government executive branch employees in that country (except for employees under the command of a United States area military commander); and (2) shall keep fully and currently informed with respect to all activi-

ties and operations of the government within that country, and shall insure that all government executive branch employees in that country (except for employees under the command of a United States area military commander) comply fully with all applicable directives of the chief of mission.”

These explicit and extensive responsibilities also appear in the letter of instruction each COM receives from the U.S. president on appointment: “As chief of mission, you have full responsibility for the direction, coordination and supervision of all United States government executive branch employees (except for employees under the command of a United States area military commander).” The letter ends with, “As chief of mission, you are not only my personal representative, but that of our country.”

The COM’s mandate encompasses a massive list of activities to direct, coordinate and supervise. More than two dozen agencies with active roles in foreign policy formulation have personnel operating programs abroad; predictably, these are most numerous in the more important (read pleasant) countries sought by most political appointees. Since agencies cannot instruct each other, effective management of manifold overseas activities is often difficult from Washington, requiring careful coordination.

But foreign policy is only an expression of intentions until it is implemented, and that is an effort that takes place over-



*Edward L. Peck, a Foreign Service officer from 1956 to 1989, served as chief of mission in Mauritania and Iraq, among many other assignments including postings to Sweden, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt. Ambassador Peck later served as executive secretary of the American Academy of Diplomacy. In that capacity he prepared evaluations on the qualifications of more than 150 political and career nominees for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, using the same materials those nominees had submitted to the committee.*

seas. The COM needs to be able to inject a critical level of control and coordination into the implementation stage of foreign policy on the ground. This requires a firm grounding in the byzantine workings of the domestic interagency arena. Applying the level of control expected by Congress and the president also demands knowledge of agency mandates and what they are actually doing.

Expecting a novice ambassador to perform these tasks effectively ignores the universal requirement of experience for the senior position in any operational entity engaged not in establishing strategic objectives but in producing the desired results. Our embassies are the diplomatic equivalent of “boots on the ground,” endeavoring to implement Washington’s decisions. There is no time for on-the-job-training program for the boss of such missions, who must thoroughly know the business in order to direct it.

## The Job Outside the Embassy

Section 304 (a) (2) of the Foreign Service Act specifies that “positions as chief of mission should normally be accorded to career members of the [Foreign] Service, though circumstances will warrant appointments *from time to time* of qualified individuals who are not career members of the Service” (emphasis added). Further, nominees “should possess clearly demonstrated competence to perform the duties of a chief of mission, including ... useful knowledge of the language ... and understanding of the history, the culture, the economic and political institutions, and the interests of that country.” The law also states: “... contributions to political campaigns should not be a factor.”

COMs have two basic external functions. First, they must keep host

governments informed about American opinions, interests and objectives. Second—equally important, but sometimes more difficult—they are to report local reactions to U.S. initiatives back to Washington and analyze them.

The recipients of such reporting at the White House/National Security Council, the State Department and other agencies should be able to rely on the COM’s previous diplomatic experience and knowledge, as stipulated in the law, and thus his or her ability to present a complete and rational picture. In that regard, it is useful to bear in mind that career diplomats work seamlessly for administrations of either political party, while political appointees are closely tied to the party in power, a bond that can influence their reporting.

## Why “Pay to Play” Does Not Hold Up

Despite the irrefutable logic concerning the advantages of relying on experienced professionals for top jobs in every line of endeavor, advocates of political appointees for top diplomatic positions put forward the following arguments in support of novice U.S. ambassadors.

**Presidents can choose anyone they want.** Wrong. They can nominate whom ever they want, but the Senate has a constitutional “advise and consent” role. The only criterion for confirmation should be the expectation of high-level performance. Yet with rare exceptions even the egregiously unqualified are confirmed, since both parties relish their turn to reward bagmen or bagwomen (aka “bundlers”). (It is worth noting that political nominees seldom purchase an embassy with only their own money. Much of what they donate is collected from others.)

**Other nations welcome political appointees.** Nope. Celebrities may thrill

part of the population, but host governments do not want to discuss complicated, important issues with a neophyte, especially one representing a superpower. Consider: Anyone with a health issue would prefer to consult a medical school graduate who earned an M.D., rather than someone handed the degree in return for a large donation.

It is true that few governments publicly complain about such appointees, but editorials in local media make their true feelings about unqualified U.S. ambassadors quite clear. To put it bluntly, sending a beginner with no connection to the host country instead of a trained diplomatic professional is correctly seen as demeaning.

**Businesses do the same.** Wrong. No company puts a manufacturing facility—the operational equivalent of an embassy—under a neophyte. Embassies are engaged in the hands-on tactics of implementation, not headquarters’ formulation of strategy.

**The political appointee can raise issues directly with the president.** Conceivable, but highly doubtful. Even if a chief of mission is a friend of the president they might not get through the White House switchboard, let alone broach an arcane subject. And even if they did, an end-run around established communication channels would be more likely to backfire than succeed.

**Political appointees can bring fresh perspectives.** Inexperience is not a qualification. Dealing with the interests of other nations, often involving contentious, convoluted, long-standing issues, can make new approaches irrelevant or worse. Fresh ideas, if needed, can come from Washington.

**The same approach is employed in the Defense Department.** Wrong. The COM is equivalent to a field commander.

No civilian commands troops, planes or ships. The U.S. military used to sell commissions, until familiarity with warfare was recognized as a better qualification than money. Generals do not command aircraft carriers; admirals never lead infantry divisions.

**COMs only need a good deputy chief of mission and staff to do an effective job.** Blatant sophistry. If anything, this argument describes a figurehead ambassador, whose most meaningful contribution would be to do as instructed and stay out of the way. If it were true, anyone could be given a title like “Performer of Open Heart Surgery.” Good deputy: “OK, now you can snip off the little ... No! Not that!”

*There have been some excellent*

**political ambassadors.** True, but this underlines the fundamental problem: nominees are not chosen on the basis of qualifications or anticipated performance. And even if they occasionally perform well, the accolades should go to their deputy chief of mission and staff. The usual result is the installation of non-performers, at best, and genuine embarrassments at worst.

### The Smart Money Is on Career Professionals

America has at least some interests in every country in the world. Maintenance and advancement of those interests requires the presence of diplomatic professionals.

No law of nature automatically makes

career ambassadors more capable than novices, but they know the business, have been tested and proven deserving of increased responsibility. A political appointee may possess numerous commendable and meaningful skills, but those often have little to do with the specialized work of an ambassador, both in terms of managing the embassy or conducting outreach in the host country.

The smart bet would be to stop placing responsibility for managing our day-to-day bilateral relations in the hands of neophytes. Instead, presidents should turn to the men and women of the Foreign Service, who are ready, willing and able to represent America across the globe, to carry out that function. ■

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# MR. PRESIDENT,

## You Have Partners at State to Help Navigate the World's Shoals

**The new administration's challenge is to sustain U.S. leadership in an increasingly unhinged world.**

BY KEITH W. MINES

**F**or the past two years, we have engaged in a raucous national debate on the state of the world and America's place in it, all against a dramatic backdrop that includes the rise of radical Islamism, the collapse of nations, a resurgent Russia, unprecedented refugee flows and a more assertive China. History, it would seem, has returned with a vengeance.

Your challenge boils down to engaging an ambivalent U.S. public to take on the task of sustaining American leadership in an increasingly unhinged world. I offer the following assessment of that challenge, and some thoughts on how your partners at the State Department can help.



*Keith W. Mines is a Senior Foreign Service officer currently serving as an Interagency Professional in Residence at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, he was a U.S. Army Special Forces officer. He has served throughout the Western Hemisphere, as well as in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Africa and Europe, in diplomatic, United Nations and military assignments. The views expressed here are the author's alone and not necessarily those of the U.S. government.*

### Shoring Up the Home Front

Before getting too far along, you will need to have a conversation with the American people about our place in the world. The election showed that Americans are skeptical of our engagement abroad and unclear about our interests. As Robert Kagan recently put it, "They favor the liberal order in so far as they can see how it touches them. But they are no longer prepared to sacrifice much to uphold it."

This shows up most clearly in the debate over globalization, of which *The Economist* has written: "There is a widespread sense that an open economy is good for a small elite but does nothing for the broad mass of people. ... The storms inflicted by a more integrated economy were underestimated, and too little effort went into helping those who lost out." The editors also remind us, however, that "half of America's exports go to countries with which it has a free-trade deal, even though these countries account for less than a tenth of global Gross Domestic Product." You'll need to implement domestic programs to help globalization's losers and enable all Americans to compete more successfully, all the while expanding access to the global markets that will be at the heart of export-led economic growth.

In the security arena, the American people feel similarly betrayed, primarily by the uneven progress in Iraq and Afghani-

stan where we have invested so heavily. You will need to earn back their trust, again with some early wins, a lot of open and frank discussion, and the development of a strategy and framework that is comprehensible to the average citizen. It will be more FDR in 1939, cajoling a reluctant America, than Bush in 2002, channeling the unbounded energy of an America seized with a global mission.

Seized or not, that global mission remains. There is simply no one else positioned, resourced and able to lead the free world. As Australian Prime Minister John Howard told the Canadian Parliament in 2006, at a time when many were tempted to seek a world without American leadership: “Be careful in what you wish for, because a retreating America will leave a more vulnerable world. It will leave a world more exposed to terrorism and it will leave a more fragile and, indeed, dangerous world.” The American people must be convinced that a world without America will not just be poorer and more conflicted for others, but for them.

### Toward a Post-Cold War Doctrine

One thing that would help is a strategic framework for dealing with the world, something we have not had since the end of the Cold War. Your last three predecessors had an aversion to post-Cold War doctrine, fearful it would miss something in an increasingly complex world, while limiting their operating space. This aversion has probably run its course.

One such framework would divide the world into Westphalian and post-Westphalian spheres. The Westphalian world, enshrined in 1648 to end the horrific violence of a Europe that had completely unraveled, is one in which the state has a monopoly on the use of force within its borders, and each state’s sovereignty is respected by other states. This now defines most of the world, and the global systems for trade, travel, diplomacy, conflict resolution and deterrence are all dependent on the core ability of states to function effectively.

With the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, U.S. and world attention focused increasingly on the many countries and regions that had entered a kind of post-Westphalian existence in which governance broke down, or was so weak as to be irrelevant. Somalia collapsed into a non-state haze of anarchy in 1991. It was for a time the anomaly, but then Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Afghanistan, Sudan, the Central

African Republic and a dozen other states joined the club to varying degrees and in differing conditions. Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Syria are the most recent additions.

But the post-Westphalian world is more than just the collapse or weakening of states. Adding fuel to the fire are the forces of modern technology, globalization and religiosity. Today criminal

groups can amass capital on par with Fortune 500 companies, who themselves are as wealthy as some nations; insurgents and drug traffickers can outfight their state counterparts; and religious fanaticism can electronically jump borders to inspire violence with an

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There is simply no one else positioned, resourced and able to lead the free world.

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image or an appeal.

Larger threats loom, too: cross-border pandemics that can kill thousands, terrorists with advanced weaponry. Managing the challenges within the nation-state system while working to return failed and fragile states to that system is an operating concept around which a robust new strategy could be built.

### Managing the Westphalian World

The orderly part of the world will require undistracted focus, new resources, a shared vision and assertive U.S. leadership to maintain course. Here are some things to consider as you look at the globe:

**Europe** remains the primary champion of international order and the postwar liberal order, and our most stalwart ally on most issues. But it has rising demons and fundamental challenges. The Balkans will deserve special attention, as will the steady flow of forced migration, which is testing European solidarity as the continent faces its worst migration crisis since the Second World War. Europeans need to know we are in this together.

Brexit will continue to reverberate—the European Union was the mechanism by which the continent ended its long civil war and became a major force for good in the world. It is in our interest to keep the project of European integration alive and healthy.

Fear of **Russia** continues to be a big part of Europe’s equation, and the Atlantic Alliance has never been more important in the post-Cold War era. Containing and reversing Russia’s expansion and unhelpful meddling, while keeping the door open to collective work with Moscow on shared interests, will be key to regional stability. We need to constantly update and expand NATO’s capacity, and take seriously our longstanding issue of burden-sharing, while recognizing the burden NATO members

have continued to shoulder alongside us in Afghanistan, Iraq and throughout the Sahel.

The **Asia-Pacific** region contains a challenging mix of threats and opportunities. A more domestically palatable Trans-Pacific Partnership with a safety net for its losers would help maintain momentum in a region with tremendous potential for American exporters. China's increasingly assertive presence in the region will grow our list of potential partners, and North Korea will require special attention. As with Russian President Vladimir Putin, it is likely that Democratic People's Republic of Korea President Kim Jong-un will test you early; the best way to avoid getting to the worst-case scenario is being visibly prepared for it. Asia also has tremendous potential for the emergence of a moderate version of Islam that we should continue to engage.

In **this hemisphere**, you will have some digging out to do after some toxic campaign comments. After shoring up our popular image and reassuring trading partners, there will be a temptation to leave the region on autopilot as you turn your attention to the more dramatic parts of the planet. This would be a mistake, however, given the tremendous untapped economic potential so close to home—starting with a reform-minded Mexico and a Canada with whom we already have the largest trading relationship of any two nations in the world. A rational immigration policy also starts with good relations with the rest of the hemisphere.

**South Asia** remains one of the few parts of the world where a nuclear conflagration could ignite, and is also one of the most likely regions to spread nuclear technology and know-how. But India, in particular, has immense trading potential. Indeed, as foreign policy commentators Kim R. Holmes of the Heritage Foundation and Will Inboden of the University of Texas, Austin, put it: "Our burgeoning strategic partnership with India has the potential to fundamentally transform the international order of the Indo-Pacific region."

**Africa** meanwhile has come alive, and we deserve some small credit for its "renaissance" (if not too premature a label), given our partnerships with its many struggling states. But progress is fragile and incomplete and, like Latin America, it is an easy place to neglect. There are more opportunities than risks in Africa, espe-

cially for commerce, and there are 50 states in the African Union whose collective diplomatic clout is not insignificant. But many parts of the continent suffer from terrorism and violent extremism, as well as civil wars and ethnic conflicts that cry out for the stronger institutions that America has become better at nurturing.

Finally, the **Middle East** is either in collapse or skittish, and badly in need of attention and reassurance. Whether fair or not, old allies feel abandoned, and the region believes our attention has gone elsewhere (the danger with pivoting somewhere is that it implies pivoting away from somewhere else). This is not the time for a major push on the Middle East peace process, but it is a time for putting American influence behind measures to ensure the two-state option remains viable.

With Iran, we have a good-enough agreement in the Iran

nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action), but it requires assertive management of Tehran's regional meddling. The biggest challenge in the Middle East, however, is getting states to an orderly place individually, and building a stable regional order among those states. Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq are the tests of our ability to successfully shepherd failed states to stability; the key in each of them is reaching an agreement on an inclusive

national political system, however imperfect and compromised—a daunting task we have avoided fully getting behind.

To manage all of this, we will need to strengthen relationships broadly, moving away from the transactional arrangements we have fallen into since 9/11 and back to the more fundamental alliances and regional arrangements of a previous era. We also need to do more to develop with other global leaders a clear vision and action agenda for global order, because—as former U.S. ambassador and strategic thinker Carlos Pascual puts it—"This is simply too big for one country."

You should consider ways to formalize all this in a new global architecture, such as the "Group of 16" idea the Brookings Institution has proposed. With the United Nations' architecture impossible to quickly enhance, the G-8 out of date and the G-20 never really taking off, a G-8 plus Brazil, China, India, South Africa, Mexico, Indonesia, Turkey and Nigeria might be the way to broaden participation and commitment on a full range of global issues.

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Americans have developed a love-hate relationship with nation-building, with the result that we have never developed the tools to address the "fragile state" phenomenon adequately.

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## The Larger Challenges in the Post-Westphalian World

Getting the Westphalian part of the globe back on track is a tall order. But the work will only be complete if you are able to restore some order to the failed and fragile states that make up the post-Westphalian world. We need a return address for threats, and we need partners.

Americans have developed a love-hate relationship with nation-building, with the result that we have never developed the tools to address the “fragile state” phenomenon adequately. In reality, there have been more successes than most Americans are aware of—some a result of United Nations action (Mozambique, El Salvador, South Africa), some from regional actors (Australia in East Timor), some bilateral (the United States in Colombia or the United Kingdom in Sierra Leone) and some hybrid (the United States, U.N. and E.U. in the Balkans).

What they all have in common is a focus on the political structure that makes up a nation and the institution-building that strengthens the supporting state. Both are essential. The U.S. government has little to offer either in terms of developing political structure or building institutions that is not simply an ad hoc application of people and resources pulled from various institutions.

You might consider developing the means to more actively influence political transitions and democratic consolidations, and a more systematic means of delivering civilian security assistance and institution-building (e.g., police, courts, ministries and anti-corruption measures). Some of this would come from fully implementing and further evolving the recommendations of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense and Development Review (*Leading Through Civilian Power*), while drawing from the many other ideas out there. You could start with the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Center for a New American Security and the Carnegie Institute’s *U.S. Leadership and the Challenge of State Fragility*. (The work of Rufus Phillips at the National Strategy Information Center, *Fostering Positive Political Change*, is also worth your time.)

There may be states that are destined to fail, but there are a host of others that can avoid failure. And there are some failed states that can undoubtedly be brought back to health.

## Your Partners at State

Through all of this, your Department of State employees will remain on the front lines. Here are some of the places where we can actively support your work on this daunting agenda:

- *Calling Mr./Ms. X*: The originator of the containment doctrine, Foreign Service Officer George Kennan, had an unusual

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ability to distill his decades of work in Russia into a new doctrine that guided the country through the Cold War. There are similarly talented individuals in State today whose deep experience abroad is matched by analytical capacity and who could be uniquely qualified to help develop your new strategy.

- *Eyes and Ears on the Ground:* State Department reporting provides the broader context to round out the more targeted reporting you will get from the intelligence community and the military. It is often the most complete and clearest reporting you will receive on a situation. This reporting can especially provide warning signs when things are about to go sideways. The Foreign Service will need top-level cover to take the inherent risks to achieve this.

- *Your Personal Representatives:* Ambassadors abroad are your personal representatives, and their credibility becomes your credibility. You can enhance their effectiveness by choosing those with a clear capacity for complex interagency leadership, appropriate language and cross-cultural skills, and the ability to clearly convey our values and positions to a foreign audience. These traits are

found across the career Foreign Service, and on limited occasions outside of the Foreign Service.

- *Getting to Yes:* While there is a temptation to bring in the big names for negotiations, don't forget that Foreign Service officers have conducted foreign negotiations for their entire careers. It is second nature to them, and they are very good at it.

- *Experts for Niche Issues:* Today's State Department is very different from what it was 30 years ago, with experts on health, energy, arms control, oceans, biotech and a host of other issues. It can deliver the expertise to manage the increasing complexity of your global agenda.

- *Connecting with the Heartland:* Your diplomats know their overseas beats well, but they also all come from all over the United States. They can help build grassroots U.S. support for your international agenda through speaking tours and op-eds in local media.

We are here for you, Mr. President, and we are in this together. We will often be the first ones to see the opportunities and help you avert the risks as we re-hinge the world, and re-establish our nation's place in it. ■



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# One Story, Two Events, SEVEN LEADERSHIP LESSONS

**Policy crises and human crises in faraway places—the stuff of diplomacy today—offer compelling lessons in leadership.**

BY PRUDENCE BUSHNELL

**W**elcome to the new team. Whatever happens under your leadership and on your watch, you can count on policy crises and human crises in faraway places. During my own career, the 1994 Rwanda genocide and the 1998 al-Qaida bombing of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania left compelling leadership lessons that may be useful to you.

I witnessed the genocide from a policy chair as a deputy assistant secretary in the Africa Bureau and experienced the



*Prudence Bushnell's career in the Foreign Service included leadership positions as deputy assistant secretary of State for African affairs (1993-1996), ambassador to Kenya (1996-1999) and Guatemala (1999-2002), and dean of the Leadership and Management School at the Foreign Service Institute (2002-2005). She now promotes the practice of leadership through talks and workshops among a range of people, including senior executives and college students. In 2012, Ambassador Bushnell founded the Levitt Leadership Institute at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York.*

bombing when I served as U.S. ambassador in Nairobi, Kenya. Neither event provoked congressional hearings or interagency after-action reviews. The political imperative is to move swiftly past failure, and the Department of State lacks the tradition of appreciative inquiry.

It took the 9/11 attacks to reveal national security and law enforcement weaknesses that could have been addressed in 1998. Echoes of the report of the Accountability Review Board's limited scrutiny of the East Africa bombings can be found in the Benghazi Accountability Review Board's 2013 report, including the need for better leadership at several levels.

I joined the Foreign Service with a background in management training and left as a leadership practitioner with strong field experience. I continue to promote leadership in federal government and refer to Rwanda and Nairobi as events that shaped me as a leader. Here is what I learned.



**1** **Leadership is not about you.** From a top spot in a hierarchical organization known for its “kiss-up, kick-down” culture, it was tempting to think I was practicing leadership by showing up and issuing brilliant commands. Especially as ambassador, it was easy to make the job all about me. However, if I wanted an effective team capable of applying individual and



U.S. OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

A view of the wreckage after the Aug. 7, 1998, terrorist bombing of U.S. Embassy Nairobi that left hundreds dead and wounded.

agency talents and resources toward shared goals, the focus had to turn outward. Before the bombing, transforming policy into results meant disciplined use of people's professional skills, not their staff assistant abilities.

The bombing showed that our Embassy Nairobi Country Team was in fact a team, not just another name for senior staff. We suffered a 50-percent casualty rate in the chancery on Aug. 7, 1998. Forty-six employees died, among them 12 Americans, and literally no one escaped without wounds, many of them life-changing. Yet it never occurred to any of us to close down operations. Most American employees decided to remain at post following the bombing. Kenyans had no choice but to stay.

The lesson that practicing leadership means getting over yourself to focus on others came as a whack upside the head a few weeks after the attack. I was asked to speak at an unexpected remembrance ceremony for a beloved colleague. I was burned out from funerals, memorial services, anger and sadness. Physically and emotionally exhausted, I actually felt a stab of resentment. Whack: This is not about me!

During the Rwandan genocide, it was all about us. Washington policymakers acknowledged that we were the "world leader" in the international arena, but when it came to this crisis, practicing leadership was the last thing we did. We spent almost all of our time talking about "us"—i.e., what the U.S. government could/should/would not do. Instead of harnessing our brainpower to come up with innovative ways of halting a

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I could not heal a wounded community, but I could help create an environment in which healing was possible.

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genocide absent military boots on the ground—if such a thing is possible—we argued. Meanwhile, more than 800,000 children, women and men were massacred. When the U.S. did practice leadership—the Marshall Plan is a good example—results were transformative. This was not the case in Rwanda, and President Bill Clinton later apologized.

**2** *The best strategies come from asking good questions and listening, especially to dissent.* I learned the importance of good

questions while doing evacuations and crisis work in the Africa Bureau. When we were bombed, I had no idea what people needed in order to survive at ground zero. I was in the building next door and then at our crisis control center. The survivors who turned themselves into first responders were the ones with the information. My job was to understand their reality and represent their needs. That part never stopped over the next 10 months.

Leadership is "the process whereby one individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal," according to Peter Northouse in *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Sage, 2013). I saw it practiced at every level; and at mine, I needed

to get accurate information and honest feedback. No one seemed to have a problem with that, and as a result, we avoided important mistakes.

Near the end of my tour in Kenya, I had to inform my colleagues that we had lost the argument with Washington to create a park on the site of the bombed embassy. It was

leased property from the Kenyan government and would have to be returned, I advised.

"You can't do that!" came a voice from the other side of the room. "Land grabbers will plant another building on the busy corner," he continued. "And there will be nothing to commemorate what happened."

Everyone in the room knew he was right. We made a plan, encouraged private means to build and maintain a park, and I lobbied President Daniel arap Moi's government to donate the

land. In 2016, President Barack Obama laid a wreath in that peaceful place. What if no one had said, “You can’t do that”?

Could we have picked up warning signs of a pending genocide in Rwanda had we asked good questions and listened? For my part, I was delivering *démarches* in the country until two weeks before the slaughter began; and I can attest that we and other foreign governments were continuing to press our policies as plans for the slaughter unfolded.

**3** *Grow teams and develop trust through meaningful goals.* When violence erupted in the streets of Kigali, the interagency crisis team in Washington worked night and day to help American citizens leave Rwanda safely. We had concrete goals, realistic evacuation strategies designed by the people on the ground and a worldwide team. Once Americans were out and U.S. interest evaporated, we morphed into a cantankerous policy working group without goals, direction or authority. As thousands of people died, we tasked one another with reports.

In Nairobi, before the bombing, the country team had set challenging goals to address corruption and promote peaceful presidential elections in 1997. The experience of interagency and Kenyan and American work teams pursuing those goals together literally saved lives on Aug. 7-8. For the first 48 hours, we were on our own. As rescuers dealt with transport problems, Kenyan-American teams tended our wounded, assisted devastated families and combed hospitals, morgues and neighborhoods to locate the missing. When the senior team developed mission goals after the bombing, we published them in the embassy newsletter. “Put people first” headed the list of objectives, and we accomplished all of them.



The Memorial Park at the site of the embassy bombing in Nairobi was opened in 2001 to honor those who were injured and killed in the terrorist attack.

**4** *Nurture a culture of leadership and mind your leadership business with passion.* My business was to multitask the issues that helped others get their jobs done. If I got my job right—from getting the resources to overseeing the many moving parts of our reconstruction, policy and law enforcement efforts—everyone else did, too. Decisions got pushed down, and leaders emerged at every level. A military post-office team that was in town to reconsider our mail privileges on the day we were blown up stayed to re-establish mail services in our office

parking garage. No one asked them; they just did it. With not a dime of extra money—Congress was very specific about this—our U.S. Agency for International Development colleagues took on the creation and management of \$30 million in assistance to Kenyan victims of the bombing even as they themselves were recuperating from it.

I could not heal a wounded community, but I could help create an environment in which healing was possible.

That was a good part of my

business. So was visibility. I could not take away anyone’s anger or loss—Kenyans experienced both—but I could validate it. That meant showing up. To rebuild our organization and community, we asked for a lot of outside help and got it. Another piece of business was to ensure that “they” became “we.” Reminders of what we were accomplishing and celebrating milestones

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After 1998, the failure to review intelligence practices and policy failures meant that nothing would change in the way we were collecting and sharing intelligence—until al-Qaida attacked the homeland.

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helped. When I was in leadership mode I was thinking strategically, acting intentionally and behaving with the integrity people demanded. Nothing just happened.

**5** *Take care of your people, and the rest will take care of itself.* This piece of advice from Ambassador Don Leidel, a former boss and mentor at the Foreign Service Institute, popped into my head 24 hours after the bombing in Nairobi, at a moment when I was bombarded with conflicting demands. It became my mantra and leadership philosophy, but it was not easy. It meant addressing poor performance and people suffering post-traumatic stress disorder, challenging archaic department traditions and regulations, and creating waves to make change. But Don was right. We overcame extraordinary challenges, and we did it together.

I saw what can happen when we do not take care of people, particularly the people we employ locally. When I returned to Rwanda shortly after the killing had stopped, I represented Washington at the memorial service for colleagues who died in the genocide. I was keenly aware that we had agreed to bar Rwandan citizens from our evacuating diplomatic convoys in order to ensure safe passage for U.S. passport holders. I understood the bargain, and as I stared into the stoic faces of the survivors I also understood their sense of betrayal.

I felt it myself when, after 9/11, I learned how much vital information about al-Qaida activities in the 1990s had been withheld from me by colleagues in other agencies when I was chief of mission in Nairobi. Afterward, the failure to review intelligence practices and policy failures meant that nothing would change in the way we were collecting and sharing intelligence—until al-Qaida attacked the homeland.

**6** *Take care of yourself.* My body needed rest and exercise, my mind needed distraction, and my spirit needed healing. I confess I was a good role model, intentionally taking time out and demanding that others do so, as well. No one declared World War III. Stiff upper lips, overworking and sleep deprivation could not produce the leadership style of energy and optimism I wanted to convey and nurture.

**7** *Persevere.* During the early days of the Rwandan genocide I spoke several times with one of the senior perpetrators, demanding that the killing stop and eventually advising him he would be held personally accountable for his role. He obviously did not listen, and Washington colleagues mocked me for my attempts. But at least I was doing something, and I never regretted the effort. That individual is now serving a life sentence in prison.

Rwanda taught me to leave no stone unturned or cage unrattled if I wanted to understand local events or get unpopular decisions made in Washington. I tried for two years in Nairobi to get attention paid to the security vulnerabilities of our chancery and failed. But I did try. And that made all of the difference for me after 213 people died and thousands of lives changed forever.

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The so-called “long war”—which the East Africa bombings presaged—will not likely end under this administration’s time in office. Nor will globalization, poverty and climate change—or, for that matter, the State Department’s need for sustained, effective leadership at all levels.

Since leadership training at mid- and early senior levels became mandatory a decade ago, energetic, ground-up initiatives like iLead (a group of State employees dedicated to improving leadership at State) and activities like the Bureau of Consular Affairs’ peer training programs have grown. They persevere in transforming a culture that valued individual achievement, conformity and hierarchy to one that respects team work, diverse perspectives and shared goals. The quality of our nation’s international activities rests in the capable hands of the diplomats of the State Department and USAID; and they need intentional leadership at the top, not just among themselves. That does not just happen.



These are my lessons, my story. Others have much more to share with anyone who wants to ask, listen and act. Action is, after all, the essence of leadership. I wish you a legacy that history, and your great-grandchildren, will find positive. ■

# FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

## Time to Sharpen a Vital Diplomatic Tool

**Here are eight recommendations to rationalize U.S. foreign assistance and, thus, greatly increase its effectiveness.**

BY THOMAS C. ADAMS

**W**hen the U.S. Agency for International Development was established in 1961 during the Kennedy administration, the idea was to create a skilled and muscular foreign aid agency out of an existing apparatus that had become bureaucratically fragmented and not particularly effective. Evidence of the importance that Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson assigned to

this effort can be seen in their selection of USAID's second Administrator, David Bell, who left his job as director of the Bureau of the Budget for what he considered a far more important position: USAID Administrator.

In the last three decades, however, we have returned to a highly fragmented system of foreign assistance, with some 20 agencies managing what are in many cases overlapping programs. The next administration has a good opportunity to rationalize the way the United States administers its foreign assistance and, thus, greatly increase its effectiveness.

Every president wants to have a strong foreign policy. Though many in Congress seem utterly hostile to foreign aid, the reality is that behind closed doors there is broad bipartisan support for foreign assistance as a key element of advancing U.S. foreign policy goals. And with the American people increasingly wary of large-scale military intervention, there is a desire to use diplomatic tools over military ones.

As these leaders recognize—fallacious or under-informed critiques of “nation-building” notwithstanding—U.S. foreign aid programs that build effective governments, reduce rampant disease, offer education and hope for the future, increase



*Thomas C. Adams is a retired Senior State Department official who spent more than 40 years in government service, including 11 years in the Foreign Service with assignments to Zanzibar, Brussels and Budapest before converting to Civil Service. During most of his government service, he was engaged in managing foreign assistance. As a member of the Senior Executive Service, he served as coordinator of assistance to Europe and Eurasia, and as Haiti special coordinator.*



One wing of the Presidential Palace in downtown Port-au-Prince collapsed during the January 2010 earthquake.

agricultural production and provide essential services from water to energy can reduce the conflicts and ungoverned spaces that threaten U.S. security, in addition to reflecting the humanitarian instincts of the American people.

### U.S. Smart Power Undermined

The fragmentation of U.S. foreign assistance has been the result of congressional actions—particularly the efforts of Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) after the Republicans gained a majority in the U.S. Senate in 1994—as well as actions by recent administrations.

Helms failed in his goal of abolishing USAID, but he and others succeeded in weakening its capacity so that by the end of the George W. Bush administration in 2008, USAID had only a little more than 1,000 Foreign Service officers—less than half of the professional diplomatic staff it had 20 years earlier. U.S. assistance was further fragmented during the second Bush administration with the creation of large new assistance programs, such as the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (known as PEPFAR) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, outside of USAID. It was

reader of the law might wonder how anything at all can get done. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted in 2007 (in his Landon Lecture), after the end of the Cold War the United States “gutted” its civilian foreign affairs agencies, especially the State Department and USAID, and thus its smart power. Rebuilding these institutions takes time.

When the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq called for massive foreign assistance to stabilize these countries after U.S.-led

invasions, the result was limited achievement at a very high cost, due largely to the fact that there was no single, robust assistance agency with the kind of staffing needed to take on urgent and complex reconstruction tasks. A secondary problem was a lack of understanding by senior policy-makers of what foreign assistance can accomplish and the timelines involved. At times State and the Department of Defense seemed interested only in maxi-

mizing the amount and speed of money going out the door.

Things have gotten better since then under the Obama administration, but only marginally. Congress has made more funding available in flexible accounts and USAID staffing has increased, although not to the levels needed.

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With the American people increasingly wary of large-scale military intervention, there is a desire to use diplomatic tools over military ones.

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USAID provided materials for temporary shelters for many of the more than one million Haitians left homeless following the 2010 earthquake.

## Steps to Improve Foreign Assistance

Here are eight recommendations for the next administration on how to improve foreign assistance:

### 1. Select the leadership of USAID carefully.

The USAID Administrator and his or her top subordinates have extremely difficult jobs. The next administration should insist on hiring only top-flight political appointees to staff senior positions at USAID, men and women with the same résumés they consider for the top positions at State and the Defense Department. In particular, there is a special need at USAID to appoint individuals to senior positions who understand how to work with Congress. Equally important, the political leadership must have both an understanding and a willingness to represent the development-foreign policy linkages. Things do not go well in the agency when its leaders view themselves only as technicians.

### 2. Keep rebuilding USAID's capacities.

Although the staffing increases sought at the end of the Bush administration and throughout the Obama administration have increased USAID's capacities, the agency still needs more employees in the field and in Washington designing effective programs, contracting, and handling grants, inspections, evaluations and other inherently governmental functions. Due to personnel shortages, too many of these duties have been ceded to



COURTESY OF THOMAS C. ADAMS

contractors, resulting in some embarrassing failures. In addition to hiring more staff, training needs to be increased, and the limits on using program monies for operating expenses should be abolished by Congress. Foreign Service officers at both State and USAID still only receive a fraction of the professional training that their military counterparts receive. And a necessary functional skill that all USAID officers must have is technical oversight, which requires training, experience

and mentoring. Increased training needs to be geared to produce 21st-century foreign aid officers who, for example, better understand how to meld governmental and private-sector resources for optimal impact.

### 3. Begin consolidating functions.

With few exceptions, the next administration

should migrate all assistance programs back to USAID for implementation. This will take some time to accomplish, but the benefits of having all health, democracy, rule of law, economic growth, environmental and other programs in one place will result in economies of scale for back-office functions such as procurement and contracting—which are often lack-

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Our best global friends and partners are countries that have received U.S. assistance since 1945.

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Feed the Future, the U.S. government's world food security initiative that is led by USAID, helps empower women in Guatemala to increase agricultural production and earn more for their families.

USAID/AGEEXPORT

ing at other agencies—and make coordination easier. There are some exceptions such as military assistance programs, since the Department of Defense has robust capacity to implement these in coordination with State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. The U.S. military should also continue to deliver a narrow set of emergency humanitarian and relief operations. But its recent uneven efforts to directly administer other types of foreign aid and its discomfort in so doing are another argument for a more robust USAID. This will require greater coordination between the two agencies, which has already begun.

Exactly how the MCC, the Trade and Development Agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the functions of several State bureaus should be rejoined with USAID needs careful analysis, but the trend must be toward harmonization rather than fragmentation. The next administration, moreover, should examine whether Treasury's carefully guarded management of the U.S. government's relationship with international financial institutions should not more appropriately be managed through USAID, as well.

**4. Integrate foreign assistance and foreign policy.** Those involved in defining policy at State and USAID need to be better integrated at all levels. Ideally, State and USAID desk officers would be located near each other and jointly participate in planning with DOD and other counterparts. And

of our changing political and economic goals by country and region. This needs to be done both in Washington and abroad. Exchanges of officers would be useful in this regard, but State officers have been reluctant to go on detail to USAID for fear that such service would not be career-enhancing. One way to accelerate such details would be to take a page from the Goldwater-Nichols Act on DOD's joint assignment requirements and require interagency experience, including at the National Security Council, for promotions to FS-1 and GS-15 and above for career officers in State, USAID and DOD.

When smart, knowledgeable people put their heads together, good policy is made, but this takes a lot of time and effort to achieve. More training designed to foster this type of coordination is needed. How will the budgeting and allocation of funds be handled with this type of coordination? There are many ways and models, but this should be left up to the Secretary of State to ultimately decide, in consultation with Congress. Above all, however, senior foreign policy officials need to make sure that the views of assistance professionals are taken into consideration.

**5. Get USAID a regular seat at the National Security Council.** As a non-Cabinet agency, USAID often struggles to get its development perspective heard at the most senior policymaking bodies. While a full-fledged seat for USAID at the NSC might not be in the cards, we at least need to eliminate

the respective State and USAID policy shops need to work to ensure that their approaches are mutually reinforcing.

State officers need to better understand how foreign assistance really works; and USAID's officers need to be kept abreast

With few exceptions, the next administration should migrate all assistance programs back to USAID for implementation.

the confusing current arrangement under which the USAID Administrator never knows until the last minute whether they will be invited to NSC meetings. In its first National Security Policy Directive, establishing the shape of the NSC, the next administration should make it clear that USAID will be a regular attendee at NSC meetings whenever development, disaster or crisis management topics are discussed.

**6. Strengthen the partnership with Congress.** Congress has a key role in making sure that our foreign assistance is effective through its budgeting and authorization process. Over the years Congress has added additional hoops that the administration must jump through to implement programs, forcing USAID to add steps to an already lengthy process. Streamlining is needed. Other politically sensitive barriers to effective foreign assistance need to be addressed, such as standing up to the farm lobby and the American shipping companies to move all food aid to cash and do away with dumping commodities in countries (which has the risk of ruining local markets and agricultural production).

Congress should be encouraged to reduce the practice of earmarking funds for certain programs and countries. While, for example, setting a high earmark for education may seem like a great idea, the reality is that education is a popular target for many other donor countries' assistance monies. U.S. funding might be more needed in a particular country to deal with inhumane prisons, or some other pressing need that typically does not attract donor funding.

USAID needs to strengthen its Office of Legislative and Public Affairs and not be so reticent about engaging with the Hill. In dealing with Congress it is important not to overpromise, to quickly admit mistakes and to be ready to brief on any issue of concern at the drop of a hat. In my experience, staff and members are reasonable, and once they know that there is method to the perceived madness of the administration, they are usually willing to go along.

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U.S. Army logistician Terri Mcfadden (center) consults with USAID logistician Kelly Bradley (right) at a World Food Programme warehouse in Harper, Liberia, on best ways to transport supplies to U.S.-supported Ebola clinics.

CAROL HAN, USAID/OFDA

rule of law, and giving people who live in countries captured by kleptocratic dictators the means to choose leaders who will provide citizens with basic services and create conditions that promote economic growth and opportunity.

**7. Educate the American public.** Polls show that the American public thinks that as much as a quarter of our national budget goes to foreign aid (the true figure is about 1 percent), and that much of this is wasted. The many and continuing success stories need to be presented—from Plan Colombia and the rebuilding of Europe after World War II, to the fact that Vladimir Putin fears U.S. and other assistance to promote Russian democracy more than he fears NATO. They need to know that world health is improving, and poverty is declining. Our best global friends and partners are countries that have received U.S. assistance since 1945. It is ironic that the USAID brand is better and more favorably known overseas than in the United States. Outmoded, Cold War–legacy provisions in the Foreign Assistance Act that prohibit USAID from telling its story to the American public need to be removed.

**8. Get ready for the changing world.** Creating a robust assistance agency will help the United States and our partners better address the two most pressing problems we face in international affairs: using our assistance to promote the

This will require developing more programs that can be deployed effectively in nonpermissive environments. Large assistance flows from private foundations and investors present increasing opportunities for partnerships between government aid and these sources of funding.

Americans are a generous people. We should be proud of our assistance that has saved lives, made possible many accomplishments and created a more stable and prosperous world. When I talk with nongovernmental assistance providers and ask

them which national aid agencies are the best, they uniformly cite USAID as having some of the most knowledgeable and dedicated staff, both Americans and foreign nationals, who regularly provide innovative and effective assistance under difficult and often dangerous conditions. We owe it to these hard-working professionals to create the conditions for their continued success. ■

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It is ironic that the USAID brand is better and more favorably known overseas than in the United States.

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# Notes to the NEW ADMINISTRATION

Following the U.S. presidential election and by way of welcoming the new administration, *The Foreign Service Journal* invited Foreign Service members to share their suggestions for how diplomacy and development practitioners can best serve and advance America's foreign policy interests during the coming months and years.

In a Nov. 10 AFSAnet, we asked for concise answers to this question: "What is the one thing you want the new administration to know about the role—or potential role—of the Foreign Service?"

Here are the suggestions from the U.S. Foreign Service for what the Trump team should know and do.

—The Editors

## We Are *Your* Foreign Service

The Foreign Service is your presence overseas. We implement your foreign policy. We sell your foreign priorities. We build and maintain foreign networks to help achieve your objectives and represent you to nearly 200 countries.

So please integrate us into the decision-making ranks. Reduce the number of politically appointed ambassadors—we are thousands of trained, seasoned, top-notch diplomats ready to carry out your vision. We speak every official language in the world. We have worked in every country with which the United States has diplomatic ties. Reduce the number of special envoys, special advisers and special representatives—and instead recognize that we are capable, trustworthy and good stewards of taxpayer money.

We would not expect nearly 40 percent of military leadership to be politically appointed; and neither should nearly 40 percent of America's diplomatic leadership be politically appointed.

In short, let us be the powerful force for peace that we were designed to be, and make great use of us. Don't marginalize us. We are, after all, *your* Foreign Service.

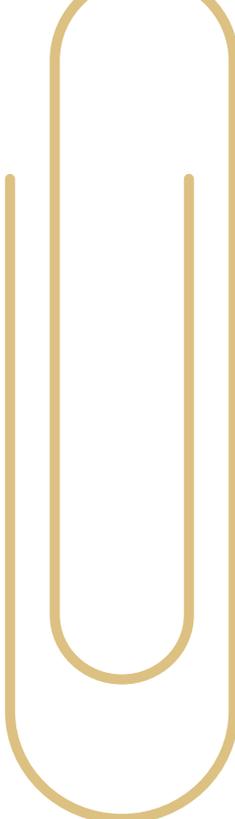
*Sandrine Goffard*

*FSO*

*Springfield, Virginia*

## Please End Political Corruption

You have a golden opportunity to fulfill your campaign pledge to put a stop to corruption, cronyism and "business as usual" in Washington: End the disgraceful practice of rewarding personal friends and donors with ambassadorships. Democratic and Republican presidents have been equally guilty in recent



decades of handing out many of these key diplomatic positions to individuals with no foreign affairs experience or qualifications whatsoever, often auctioning the cushiest ambassadorial posts off to top campaign contributors.

Being an effective ambassador is a serious, difficult job: ambassadors have to oversee large, multiagency embassies that manage complex relationships with foreign governments. If you are serious about defending U.S. interests in a dangerous world, put all of our country's ambassadorships back in the hands of our career

diplomats—the Senior Foreign Service officers who have spent decades acquiring expertise on a wide range of international issues, mastering foreign languages, immersing themselves in foreign cultures and developing the skills necessary to negotiate effectively with foreign officials.

We are the only government in the world that routinely sends out inexperienced novice appointees as our most senior representatives. They have a steep learning curve and must be guided every step of the way by their staffs, the people of the Foreign Service who are assigned to their embassies. Allies and enemies alike rarely take seriously these appointees, who often do careless damage to U.S. foreign policy.

It is time for a courageous administration to end this shameful form of political corruption.

*Steven Kashkett*

*FSO*

*Washington, D.C.*



## We Achieve Quietly

Like those in military service, we and our families make great sacrifices for the U.S. government because we believe that we can avoid costly and dangerous conflicts by achieving agreements, keeping up good relations, ultimately striving for peace. Our efforts and often our achievements are quiet—we never have and probably never will get the attention or praise the military gets. But we're still just as dedicated.

*Kristin M. Kane*

*FSO*

*U.S. Embassy Brasilia, Brazil*

## A Bridge to the World

Our security and prosperity depend on the world around us, and our diplomats are a bridge between the United States and the world—promoting our foreign policy, developing peaceful solutions in unstable situations that affect U.S. interests, understanding and shaping foreign perceptions of the United States, and generating the understanding and good will that form the bedrock of stable, strategic partnerships with all nations.

*Jeff Weinshenker*

*FSO*

*Arlington, Virginia*



## We Are the Face of America Abroad

The Foreign Service has often been the first face of America the rest of the world sees—whether it is at a time of crisis through humanitarian assistance, applying for a visa to visit this incredible country, or forming partnerships with other countries to achieve larger-than-life objectives such as elimination of extreme poverty. Every day, members of the Foreign Service demonstrate abroad what America means: diversity, equality, democracy, excellence and shared prosperity.

The Foreign Service must be allowed to continue to represent all of America with integrity and objectivity, which are core values of leadership. Because the world faces increasingly complex diplomatic and development challenges, with a wide range of stakeholders, a diverse cadre of professional diplomats must continue to serve in many different ways to find common ground and viable solutions.

We are needed on the ground to connect with diverse people of host countries and in various institutions to help shape policies. To effectively achieve the nation's objectives, the U.S. Foreign Service must be a model of diversity and mutual respect for the rest of the global community.

*Regina Jun*

*USAID FSO*

*U.S. Embassy Managua, Nicaragua*



## We Offer Honest and Clear Reporting

The Foreign Service is America's experienced voice with an open tradition of implementing America's foreign policy objectives abroad. The men and women who are selected to be Foreign Service officers are highly competent and loyal to the president

of the United States of America and have no other agenda but to serve the administration.

The Foreign Service's representational tradition is steeped in honest and clear reporting to the host government, as well as to the Department of State. This is the central focus of the Service; officers are trained to call it as they see it. Reporting in this manner provides the administration with a solid basis for making critical policy decisions that could impact U.S. interests in a foreign region.

*George V. Corinaldi*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Potomac, Maryland*



## Bridge Divisions

*E pluribus unum.* That is the motto that points the way to making America great again. Seek compromises that bridge the divisions in our society, not "solutions" that only make them worse.

On foreign policy, "offshore balancing" beats "right to protect" every time.

*Carleton S. Coon Jr.*  
*Ambassador, retired*  
*Woodville, Virginia*



## We Tell You What You Need to Hear

As your own foreign policy preferences have figured only minimally in your campaign, I hope you will give consideration to the views of the professionals in the U.S. Foreign Service who will be entrusted to carry out White House guidance.

*The Foreign Service is not stacked against you.* Career Foreign Service officers entered into public service not to promote a particular agenda, but to promote the considered goals of official U.S. foreign policy as determined by the president and foreign policy advisers. They want to serve their country, and they join the Foreign Service with the expectation that they will serve under various administrations with varying political goals and interests.

*The Foreign Service has a record of accurate reporting.* Do not be surprised if your Secretary of State tells you that the Foreign Service overemphasizes negative views. Traditional diplomacy effects change in incremental steps, and there are more than 190 countries that our diplomats will be informing of your wishes. They each have to be addressed in ways that will make them understand—and hopefully accept—any new directions you

wish to take; and, undoubtedly, there will be pushback, both from friends and from adversaries. When your embassies inform you of such pushback, please don't "shoot the messenger."

*The Foreign Service will tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear.* When Foreign Service officers suggest modifications or even changes in your policies, you will need to hear those points expressed loudly and clearly, and as accurately as possible. Such messages may be annoying, but they are essential to help you gain the full benefit of the Service's expertise in various substantive and geographical areas. As a matter of fact, we have institutionalized such disagreement with a "dissent channel." Our professional association, AFSA, can tell you more about this mechanism.

*Leon Weintraub*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Potomac, Maryland*



## We Are Not Your Enemy

In honesty, President Trump, you were not our choice. Hillary Clinton, despite the campaign hyperbole, was a reasonably effective Secretary of State—given that President Barack Obama essentially made foreign policy. But Secretary Clinton advanced U.S. interests in human rights and particularly women's rights around the globe. She paid more attention and gave more sympathy to Foreign Service personnel and issues than has often been the case for Secretaries of State. We appreciated her.

That said, however, it does not make Foreign Service personnel your enemies. We are professionals in assessing, analyzing, predicting and addressing the policies and attitudes of foreign governments, nonstate actors and those opposed to U.S. interests.

We want you to be successful. We want the United States of America to advance its interests with maximum effectiveness, leaving friends and allies reassured and enemies deterred from hostile action.

If you have a leaky basement, you call a plumber. If you have a pain in your gut, you see a doctor. If you want to build a house, you hire an architect. The plumber, doctor and architect are professionals; they don't care about your politics or personality.

You get the point. If you want foreign policy expertise, the Foreign Service consists of consummate professionals. Use us.

*David T. Jones*  
*Senior FSO, retired*  
*Arlington, Virginia*



## We Are Stronger for Our Diversity

The Foreign Service is stronger for our diversity. The State Department has worked hard to reduce barriers to LGBT diplomats and their families serving overseas. And in countries where the government won't accredit the families of LGBT diplomats, many still choose to serve, willingly facing the risk to work where being gay is criminalized, street harassment is prevalent and LGBT activists are regularly jailed. It is in these places that the governments and society most need to see our faces, to work alongside us in the missions and to sit across the table from us in bilateral meetings. This is how we make change, one diplomat at a time.

*GLIFAA President FSO Kerri Hannan and  
The GLIFAA Board  
Washington, D.C.*



## Diverse Foreign Service Talent Is Essential

The recruitment, promotion and retention of diverse Foreign Service talent is essential to advancing our national security and prosperity.

The Foreign Service benefits from advanced capabilities in interagency, intercultural and intergenerational planning and decision-making, allowing it to be a leader in tackling the most pressing global issues, even in the most complex environments.

*Morgan McClain-McKinney  
USAID FSO  
Washington, D.C.*



## We Are Your Foreign Policy Marketing Team

Your foreign policy team will have a marketing department of 3,125 people based in Washington, D.C., with branches in 188 other locations in the United States and abroad. Their job is to get out information and to leverage personal relationships in other countries that number in the millions.

This marketing arm is called public diplomacy, which is a function of the Department of State. Use it right and it will serve you well.

- It is illegal for these folks to target Americans in the United States. They focus on foreign audiences.
- A lot of them are very talented, and to advocate our interests they use every means of communication from Twitter to tours of the U.S.A.

• Promoting study in the United States is a big priority for them, because foreign students brought about \$30 billion into the U.S. economy in 2016.

• They do a lot of listening, and not just through polls. Some of the local employees are connected to very prominent people in their countries.

• At present, public diplomacy is focused on President Barack Obama's foreign policy and on the issues of importance to his administration, as it should be. After Jan. 20, it will need to pivot quickly.

Foreign leaders depend on public support, just as you do. The earlier your appointees focus on public diplomacy, the more success and influence you will gain with foreign leaders.

*Joe B. Johnson  
FSO, retired  
Public Diplomacy Instructor,  
Foreign Service Institute  
Arlington, Virginia*



## Reassure the World of America's Role

As diplomats, we have been asked innumerable times over the past year to explain the rhetoric emanating from this presidential campaign. It has not been easy reassuring people that the United States is the same country it has always been—welcoming of immigrants, a safe harbor for the poor and oppressed looking to build a better life, a nation holding as a core value that its strength is found in diversity.

As official representatives of the United States, we believe this. Our interlocutors believe that we believe this. But the deep uneasiness I see in their eyes reveals skepticism that the new presidential administration believes this.

The degree to which we, as the Foreign Service, can help you advance U.S. interests abroad correlates directly to your administration's ability to develop and effectively communicate a vision of America's role in the world that does not feed into a narrative of xenophobia, unilateralism and intolerance.

As the inauguration approaches, we—and the world—look forward to hearing directly from you in a way that reassures all that America will continue to play the productive, prominent, indispensable role it has historically played on the global stage; that it will remain committed to its alliances, champion human rights and work with allies on the very real threat of climate change; and that it will remain a force for peace and stability.

We take seriously the oath we swore to defend the Constitution, and we look forward to helping you uphold yours.

*Matt Keene*

*FSO, Consul General*

*U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*



## The Tip of the Spear

The U.S. Foreign Service and its 200-plus diplomatic missions around the world perform an array of duties and functions critical to the well-being of our nation. The Foreign Service acts not only as America's "eyes and ears" globally, but also has the very special responsibility to execute and make presidential visions real to a foreign audience—friends and foes alike.

America's success as a nation can be linked historically to the dedication, wise counsel and sacrifice made by members of the Foreign Service and foreign affairs agencies serving abroad. The Foreign Service stands ready as the "tip of the spear" in helping the Trump administration realize its vision of making America great again, both at home and abroad.

*Timothy C. Lawson*

*Senior FSO, retired*

*Hua Hin, Thailand*



## Public Service Matters

I would wish to make clear to the new administration how much work the Foreign Service is tasked with and completes on a daily basis at our embassies around the world, often putting themselves knowingly into dangerous or unhealthy environments.

We have become an expeditionary Foreign Service in many ways, while still carrying out support for congressional delegations (CODELs), staff delegations (STAFFDELS), Freedom Of Information Act requests and Secretary of State or presidential visits, as well as critical diplomatic efforts in addition to routine but important visa work to help promote freedom and democracy globally. I wish to convey my extreme pride in all of my colleagues—past and present, generalist and specialist—who have served or are currently serving proudly in the Foreign Service.

I would like to suggest that the inbound administration initiate a truly historical undertaking, much like a previous president with a vision for America did—I refer to John F. Kennedy's creation and support of the Peace Corps.

I urge this new administration to consider requiring two years of mandatory public service by all 18- to 30-year-old citizens. They could choose to serve with, for example, the armed forces;

in the State Department or the Forest Service; in hospitals, medical corps or hospice settings, or other public service venues. Social studies and civics training classes on our country's proud history and form of government would be integrated seamlessly into this service period, perhaps even affording college credits for completion.

Too many young people have no concept today of what it means to be an American citizen or the sacrifices that our fathers, mothers, grandparents and, of course, veterans and Foreign Service members have made in providing all of us a safe, free and prosperous America to live and thrive in.

Make public service great and meaningful again.

*Steven M. Mort*

*FS Information Management Officer*

*U.S. Mission Geneva, Switzerland*



## Please Listen to the Diplomatic Service

First of all, know that you have an elite diplomatic service at your disposal, one that certainly is among the best in the world. Don't be afraid to use us regardless of whatever contrary advice you may receive. We exist in large measure precisely to carry out and implement policies crafted and codified by you and your senior staffers, as articulated eloquently in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and previous legislation dating back almost a hundred years.

But, please, also listen to us carefully, as we have honed expertise of high value to you and our nation's foreign policy. For that reason, too, please consider raising the proportion of professional diplomats who will serve as chiefs of mission around the world to at least 70 percent. The Trump administration and our country will both be better for this cardinal step.

We have skills, knowledge and experience, as well as representing the full diversity of our great country to help execute the vision you espouse for the next four years.

*Vangala S. Ram*

*Senior FSO, retired*

*Arlington, Virginia*



## Protect Human Rights at Home

Countries around the world, their governments and people, pay attention to what is happening in the United States. It will be incredibly difficult to promote an agenda of diversity, equality, tolerance and human rights overseas if we do not practice them at home. Please protect the rights, safety and health of women, LGBTQI persons and people of color in the United States so we may continue to do so abroad.

*Katherine Tarr*

*FSO*

*U.S. Embassy Tegucigalpa, Honduras*



## We Reassure Allies and Communicate with Adversaries

Do not write off the entire Foreign Service as politically biased against you and not to be trusted. There is a wealth of expertise in the State Department that will make your foreign policy more effective. We each take seriously our responsibility to the U.S. Constitution, the American people and the president. You could have the most brilliant game plan in the history of mankind, but if you do not put your whole team on the field you are going to struggle.

We have a tradition of constructive dissent, which we will continue to exercise through appropriate channels, perhaps with historic frequency. A reasoned challenge to one of your policy proposals is not a personal attack on you; it is an argument in defense of the national interest. We probably will not change your mind often, but your effectiveness is certain to suffer if you disregard our counsel completely.

Your election has created tremendous uncertainty around the world, because this is your first public office and your style is ... unique. If you want to reassure allies and communicate clearly with adversaries, you are going to need the Foreign Service.

Modern threats to U.S. interests are too dangerous for any of us with any sense to wish for your failure. Your goal is to be a statesman. What possible purpose would it serve the Foreign Service to embarrass or undermine you? A safe and strong United States must have a successful president, and we will do our duty to support you.

*Brian T. Neubert*

*FSO*

*Director, Africa Regional Media Hub  
Johannesburg, South Africa*



## We Understand Other Countries

Foreign Service officers are seasoned professional listeners paid to interpret words, gestures, actions and the sometimes unstated messages behind these and other kinds of communications.

Sure, we also speak and deliver clear messages of our own—about the way we see the world, what we want to achieve and what we hope to avoid. We are and represent the American people, the United States of America, the U.S. government, the current administration and—bottom line—the principles embodied in the U.S. Constitution. (Our oath is to nothing else.) In delivering messages, we try to say exactly what we mean—no more, no less—to maintain focus on the issue at hand and to avoid unnecessary problems.

Some problems are unavoidable, of course, which is why we are paid to listen. Other countries and peoples don't always agree with our views. At a minimum, listening enables us to understand the reasons why. More broadly, a clear understanding of differences is the seed of any possible solution; and generating solutions—limiting disagreement and finding areas of agreement—is the purpose of diplomatic work.

So let us speak freely, including in communicating the contrary views of other countries or peoples. In doing so, whatever your view of issue X, you will be giving room for potential solutions and keeping at bay the kinds of problems that might be avoided. We have enough unavoidable problems as it is.

*Alexis Ludwig*

*FSO*

*Bethesda, Maryland*



## Consider History's Judgement

As a retired Foreign Service officer, I would like to tell you that the Foreign Service is proud of its profession and dedicated to the proposition that, to quote Churchill, "Democracy is the worst form of government except all others that have been tried from time to time." The Foreign Service must continually ask how history will regard what it tried to accomplish.

*Peter F. Spalding*

*Senior FSO, retired*

*Washington, D.C.*



## Appoint Professional Ambassadors

The one thing I would like to see the new administration focus on is to appoint only professional diplomats as American

ambassadors. That means Foreign Service officers, not wealthy puff bags who have no foreign policy experience or just represent foreign lobbies.

*Stephen P. Dawkins*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Key West, Florida*



## Foreign Assistance Represents the Best of America

Development through foreign assistance is an imperative of United States foreign policy. We showcase our values through this strategic outreach to the global community. Through our assistance, we demonstrate our kindness, generosity, goodwill and desire for all people to reach their highest potential. Foreign assistance represents the best of America. It promotes our vision of the world at its best—one with peace, equality and prosperity. One that benefits us all.

*Andrea P. Capellán*  
*USAID FSO*  
*U.S. Embassy Lima, Peru*



## Your Eyes and Ears Around the World

The men and women of the Foreign Service will be your eyes and ears for the next four years, carrying out and explaining your foreign policy. They will also collect and analyze local reactions to it, both at the official level and in the streets.

Sometimes you will not like what they report back to Washington, but I hope you and your appointees will not reject their findings out of hand—or, worse, shoot the messengers. You may decide for any number of reasons to disregard their advice and stay the course, but at least you will know the risks of proceeding.

*Steven Alan Honley*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Washington, D.C.*



## Set an Example of Respect for Diversity

USAID's workforce includes Americans of all races, religions, ethnic backgrounds, genders and sexual orientations, as well as immigrants who have chosen service to this country as their path in life. Our employees are the face of our country and our

most valuable resource. We must ensure that all are treated equally with respect and dignity, both at home and abroad inside and outside the workplace.

USAID employees have sacrificed their lives in service to this country, and we continue to place ourselves in harm's way in defense of our values of freedom, equality and basic rights for all peoples. Furthermore, more than 10,000 USAID employees are nationals of the countries in which we work, and put their lives on the line every day on behalf of the U.S. government. USAID literally would not function without the brave participation and unparalleled dedication, contributions and expertise of our Foreign Service National employees.

Foreign assistance is a crucial pillar of the U.S. government's strategy to promote national security, economic stability and goodwill overseas. A vital component of this is USAID's principled stance to advance women's rights; rights for marginalized ethnic, religious and racial groups; and LGBTI rights overseas. Where active civil society and human rights form the core of a country's foundation, peaceful societies thrive.

We must continue setting an example of respect for such values at home to maintain our credibility overseas and succeed in our mission of ending extreme poverty and promoting resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity.

*Michelle Dworkin*  
*USAID FSO*  
*Washington, D.C.*



## Choose Professional Diplomats

America is seen and judged by countries around the world through its ambassadorial appointments. There is a cadre of experienced, language-proficient professionals in our foreign affairs community ready to fill those jobs. To send unqualified political appointees to represent us abroad is, in many cases, not only disrespectful to our own system and the serious process of conducting diplomacy; it is insulting to the receiving country, as well.

I would hope your administration will look carefully at historical precedent and strive to use fewer, not more, political appointees to fill ambassadorships abroad and senior foreign affairs positions at home.

*Danny Root*  
*Senior Foreign Service, retired*  
*Bulverde, Texas*



## Call on Chas Freeman

Recruit retired Ambassador Chas W. Freeman Jr. as soon as possible for the transition team, and also for subsequent policy posts in the foreign affairs and/or national security fields.

*Helen Bridget Burkart and James E. Burkart*

*FSOs, retired*

*Bethesda, Maryland*



## Sustain the Peace Corps

Support and sustain the Peace Corps, a hallmark of America's engagement in the world that redounds to the betterment of all and pays dividends in terms of influence and access.

*Robert E. Gribbin*

*Ambassador, retired*

*Springfield, Virginia*



## The Rogers Act Established the Professional Foreign Service

The 1924 Rogers Act established the Foreign Service as a professional corps of commissioned officers approved by the Senate and serving at the pleasure of the president. In 1923 Representative John Jacob Rogers (R-Mass.) led the initiative to create and maintain a flexible and democratic diplomatic corps that would attract and retain the best people for worldwide duty on the basis of proven merit. Admission into the Foreign Service was based on a competitive examination, probationary assignments and merit promotion into the career service. This act was further strengthened by legislation in 1946.

The 1980 Foreign Service Act amended these previous laws and solidified anew that the Foreign Service is a professional corps of officers whose mission is to support the president and the Secretary of State in the conduct of U.S. foreign affairs. It further stated that this professional corps includes consular officers and agents, and that the Foreign Service is deemed essential to the national interest.

The long history of the Foreign Service and the names engraved in stone in the Department of State's diplomatic entrance of those officers who have given their lives in service to our country attest to the need to maintain the independent integrity of the Foreign Service and its personnel and promotion systems, apart from other U.S. government recruitment and employment systems.

Members of the Foreign Service include specialists in many

fields—all of them in the several foreign affairs agencies serve our government and the American people on the front lines of U.S. national security around the world.

*Bruce K. Byers*

*FSO, retired*

*Reston, Virginia*



## USAID Plays a Vital Role

Temperature extremes, more intense droughts and less predictable rains have had an impact on harvests, food security and livelihoods globally, with a potential to accelerate instability and conflict as resources become increasingly scarce. Through targeted programs and interventions, USAID Foreign Service officers have given communities and small-scale farmers the technology, information and skills to adapt crops and livelihoods to a changing climate, and to build resilience to natural disasters. Through a combination of early warning systems and natural resource management techniques that have evolved with a changing climate, these programs are supporting USAID's goal to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies to advance our security and prosperity.

*Ani Zamgochian*

*USAID FSO*

*U.S. Embassy Guatemala City, Guatemala, and*

*Janet Lawson*

*USAID FSO*

*Washington, D.C.*



## Make Fair Pay for Locally Employed Staff a Priority

Locally Employed (LE) staff members are the backbone of embassies and consulates around the world. Americans leave after a few years, but LE staff members stay in place, providing technical expertise, administrative support, security, language skills and host country expertise. Many of these dedicated professionals have died in the line of duty.

Yet the State Department has failed to provide fair compensation for these indispensable employees. A 2009 report from State's Office of Inspector General found that the LE staff compensation system is "inappropriate and inefficient" and "cannot be regarded as professional treatment of an irreplaceable, valued group of employees."

OIG found that lower-grade LE staff members in some countries were paid at a rate that fell below minimum living stan-

dards. After the report was issued, the situation became even worse as a result of the department-wide pay freeze that caused LE staff wages in high-inflation countries to plummet.

The State Department has been addressing this situation on a case-by-case basis, but a more comprehensive solution is needed. The effectiveness of our missions abroad depends on our ability to attract and retain talented local staff members.

I urge the new administration to make fair pay for our LE staff colleagues a top priority and to seek funding from Congress to make it a reality.

*Mary Grace McGeehan*  
FSO, retired  
Cape Town, South Africa

## America's First Line of Defense

The Foreign Service is America's first line of defense. Should the Foreign Service fail to resolve an existential dispute, the U.S. military then takes over. The Foreign Service and the State Department are de facto, and generally unrecognized, national security organizations.

*Langdon Williams*  
FSO, retired  
Reston, Virginia

## Recognize the Service in Foreign Service

We understand that many Americans don't have a clear understanding of what we do—at home or abroad—compared to our fellows in other agencies and departments.

My colleagues—whether Foreign Service or Civil Service, military or foreign local employees—work long hours every day because they want to serve our government. No matter the political leanings of the administration, we believe in American leadership in the world, and we want to ensure good governance and defend and advance the interests of our nation and the principles our country stands for.

Our collective dedication, experience and, yes, counsel, can be a powerful asset—and I urge the new administration to please take advantage.

*H. Martin McDowell*  
FSO  
Fairfax, Virginia

## Understand What We Do

I am a Midwesterner. I had no connection to the Foreign Service prior to joining. I have proudly served America in six countries during my career—helping in a mass evacuation after an earthquake, visiting Americans in prison to make sure their rights were protected, assisting an American in the middle of the night who was destitute and had just been assaulted, uncovering various smuggling rings and preventing cartel members from being issued visas.

I served in Bogota, where the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People's Army, known as FARC, blew up car bombs; and I served in Havana when we were considered the imperialist enemy. My wife and kids adapt to a new posting, language and culture every few years. My career isn't unusual—this is what we in the Foreign Service do, and we are proud to do it.

*Robert Neus*  
FSO, Diplomat in Residence  
Chicago, Illinois

## Elevate Public Diplomacy

It is time to take public diplomacy out of the State Department and give it back the agency status it once had. We are losing the war of ideas around the world. Social media has changed the way we practice public diplomacy, and we are not keeping up with it. To help make America great again, we need to do a better job telling its story and explaining its policies.

*Ray Burson*  
FSO, retired  
Doniphan, Missouri

## Our Most Important Role

The most important role of the Foreign Service is to get foreigners to do what we want. To be most effective in that, we need an understanding of foreign societies, interests and leadership. Our embassies need to be secure and supplied with the right people and equipment to allow interaction with host governments and people at every level, including outside the capital. We use these contacts and relationships to develop policy recommendations

that account for the policy interests of our hosts and define the points of intersection and divergence with our own.

Diplomats play their highest-value role when we lead inter-agency teams overseas. The leadership role of the State Department in executing our foreign policy relies on our unique focus on foreign policy and ability to coordinate the views and activities of a diverse interagency team to achieve well-defined goals.

The leadership role of the Foreign Service relies, as well, on our unique ability to see and act on the full breadth of U.S. interests—unlike other agencies and services, which have a narrower focus on security, cultural or commercial interests.

FSOs should be present in every place and situation with the potential to affect U.S. strategic interests. At a minimum, FSOs should be assigned to joint military, intelligence and diplomatic teams in areas of interest. Such assignments would allow for the clearest operational picture and integrate policy recommendations and actions from U.S. representatives best able to provide such insights.

*Henry S. Ensher*

*FSO*

*McLean, Virginia*

## Use Development Assistance to Build Capacity

Strong institutions are necessary for the achievement of lasting progress. It is widely recognized that strong institutions are essential for nation-building and the efficient utilization of external assistance. It is therefore surprising that donors seldom fund institution-strengthening projects. The overwhelming demands posed by the needs of low-income countries cause donors to lose sight of the fundamental requirement of building the institutions required to manage aid and continue working after external funding has ended.

Donors can accelerate the graduation of middle-income countries from dependence, and thereby shift more funding to address the human needs of low-income countries. By joining together, donors can streamline assistance and consolidate their focus on building the institutions needed to ensure development progress on a sustainable basis.

The goal is to enable host-government institutions to be certified as capable of managing funds and activities according to international standards. More work is needed to consistently fund long-term institution assistance frameworks that increase host-country capacity to better manage its own affairs and respond to crises. In this manner, official development assis-

tance will progressively be managed by institutions that have been certified.

These certified institutions will be responsible for managing aid funds and implementing donor-funded projects according to a performance-based system. Strong, pro-poor institutions are the best way forward in the 21st century for low-income countries.

*Mark Wentling*

*USAID FSO, retired*

*Warwick, Rhode Island*

## Safeguard Our Diplomats

In moving forward to “Make America Great Again,” diplomacy must take a leading role in fostering enhanced international cooperation and an understanding of each country’s role and responsibilities in the world. An expanded U.S. diplomatic outreach effort built on strength can only take place if appropriate measures are in place to safeguard our diplomats as they work and avoid the shortcomings and confusion that surrounded the 2012 attack in Benghazi, Libya.

Since September 2012 the Government Accountability Office has issued three reviews to address these shortcomings.

First Review: June 25, 2014, “Diplomatic Security: Overseas Facilities May Face Greater Risks Due to Gaps in Security-Related Activities, Standards and Policies” (GAO 14-655). Second Review: July 9, 2015, “Diplomatic Security: State Department Should Better Manage Risks to Residences and Other Soft Targets Overseas” (GAO 15-700). Third Review: Oct. 4, 2016, “Diplomatic Security: State Should Enhance Its Management of Transportation-Related Risks to Overseas U.S. Personnel” (GAO 17-124).

These reports cover the three aspects of diplomatic security: overseas facilities, residential/soft targets and risks to U.S. personnel. However, of the reports’ 26 recommendations for improvement in these vital areas, only four have been adequately addressed and closed.

Illustrative of these shortcomings is the two-year-old recommendation that reads:

“To strengthen the effectiveness of the Department of State’s risk management policies, the Secretary of State should develop a risk management policy and procedures for ensuring the physical security of diplomatic facilities, including roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and a routine feedback process that continually incorporates new information.”

Can America be made great again if we have not fully

addressed the security problems that continue to pose a threat to professional diplomats?

*James (Jim) Meenan*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Fairfax, Virginia*



## We Are Honored to Serve

As a medical doctor new to the Foreign Service, I watched our 2016 election from U.S. Embassy Caracas. One fact has become increasingly clear. Our “America” is not just “there” in the 50 states. Not just “there” in the corridors of advertising, business and commerce. And certainly not just “there” inside the Beltway.

The United States of America is everywhere we have staked a claim to a relationship, including at embassies like ours in Caracas. For many here in Venezuela, we are the only “United States of America” they will ever see. Everywhere that an American post or citizen is, the United States of America is there, as well.

The paradigm of “the United States of America” causes great ambivalence in much of our world, both inside and outside our borders. But it is a concept, a philosophy, a way of living and being with which virtually all people must contend in our current global society.

We at the Department of State serve our country’s freedoms, democracy and respect for human life and dignity through our business, our conversations and our relationships, and by advocating on behalf of the interests of the United States of America with humility and conviction.

It has been a great honor to serve the Obama administration, and it will be a great honor to serve the newly elected Trump administration and each democratically elected administration that occupies our White House.

*Robert Bentley Calhoun, M.D.*  
*Regional Medical Officer*  
*U.S. Embassy Caracas, Venezuela* ■

# HONOR A COLLEAGUE

Nominations for AFSA’s 2017 Constructive Dissent and Exemplary Performance Awards Are Now Being Accepted

## DISSENT AWARDS

- The **W. Averell Harriman Award** for an Entry-Level Foreign Service Officer.
- The **William R. Rivkin Award** for a Mid-Level Foreign Service Officer.
- The **Christian A. Herter Award** for a Senior Foreign Service Officer.
- The **F. Allen “Tex” Harris Award** for a Foreign Service Specialist.

## PERFORMANCE AWARDS

- The **Mark Palmer Award** for the Advancement of Democracy.
- The **Nelson B. Delavan Award** for a Foreign Service Office Management Specialist.
- The **M. Juanita Guess Award** for a Community Liaison Office Coordinator.
- The **Avis Bohlen Award** for an Eligible Family Member.
- The **Post Rep of the Year Award** for an Outstanding AFSA Post Representative.

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT [WWW.AFSA.ORG/AWARDS](http://WWW.AFSA.ORG/AWARDS).  
THE DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS FEBRUARY 28, 2017.

Questions? Contact Perri Green, Awards Coordinator, at [green@afsa.org](mailto:green@afsa.org) or (202) 719-9700.

# Developing the Next Generation of Followers at USAID

**We need to better understand followership—not just because it essentially complements leadership, but for its own specific qualities.**

BY JOSÉ M. GARZÓN

Several years ago, I interviewed a Presidential Management Fellow candidate who, flush with enthusiasm, told me how much she wanted to lead people. She passionately described how, as a Peace Corps Volunteer, she had led the effort to bring water to villages in Honduras, overcoming all sorts of obstacles, and concluded with a rousing plea: “I want to lead! I want to lead!”

“Wonderful,” I replied. “But would you like to follow? We really need followers right now.”

I can be *such* a buzzkill sometimes.

But I was trying to make a serious point. The U.S. government and the private sector devote enormous energy and resources to the subject of leadership. The Federal Executive Institute is dedicated to “helping executives perform effectively as the top

leaders.” The stated purpose of the National Defense University is “Educating, Developing and Inspiring National Security Leaders.”

Leadership is also among the promotion precepts for FSOs, and everyone is rated against that precept. We take for granted that, with greater experience, every employee should assume greater leadership responsibilities. And why not? Who wants to become a follower? To be called a follower is nearly a professional insult: supposedly, followers don’t make things happen, they don’t make a difference. No inspirational poster ever says “You, too, can be a follower!”

But with all this leadership, is anyone following? Who is selected, trained or rewarded for following? And without followers, is anyone actually leading? This is not a trivial question, as followership cannot be assumed.

Many would-be leaders who have charged up a hill have found themselves in a lonely place. Part of the problem is that we tend to confuse leadership with holding a leadership position. But all of us know people who are put in such jobs who are not leaders and would contribute much more by holding what I call a followership position.

Moreover, not everyone in the Foreign Service wants to be a leader, but may feel compelled to contort themselves to fit that pigeonhole—an unfortunate waste of talent. Even if we accept the narrow bureaucratic concept of leadership, everyone in a leadership position is still in a position of followership to



*José M. Garzón is a retired Foreign Service officer who spent three decades working for the U.S. Agency for International Development managing democracy, governance and conflict programs. He now mentors and trains the next generation of development professionals, serving as co-chair of the Strengthening USAID Committee of the USAID Alumni Association, a Payne Fellow mentor and as an adjunct professor at American University’s School of International Service. He is the author of “Hispanic Representation at USAID: Why So Low for So Long?” (March 2014 FSJ).*

someone else. Indeed, we spend most of our professional time following, not leading.

So we ignore followership at our peril. We need to better understand it, not simply because it essentially complements leadership. As I will demonstrate, followership is also the critical skill needed for the most challenging Foreign Service assignments.

### Defining Followers

What kind of followers are we talking about here? Sheep? Paper shufflers? Robots? Absolutely not! This is the critical point: the difference between good and bad followership. Good followers work both independently and collaboratively. They need minimal supervision. They take initiative; they create. Most importantly, they display courage. They know how and when to speak up, give bad news, make suggestions and dissent when needed.

In 1988, management scientist Robert Kelley rebelled against the leadership culture with an article, “In Praise of Followers.” In his 1992 book, *The Power of Followership*, Kelley posits a model that groups followers into four categories based on their level of independence, critical thinking, and activity or passivity.

A dependent and passive follower is one who relies on leaders to think for them and who requires close direction. Kelley calls them “sheep.” The active version of this (active, but still dependent) is the conformist follower, or “yes person.” These two groups are usually associated with the term “follower.” The third category is the alienated follower. These are the individuals who are independent, but passive. On a good day, they are the skeptics in our midst; on a bad one, they are called cynics. But in a bureaucracy, they are the ultimate survivors, because they do not oppose. They follow and grumble.

Kelley’s ideal is the independent, active follower, which he calls the exemplary or “star” follower. Exemplary followers possess four qualities: 1) they manage themselves well; 2) they are committed to the organization and its goals; 3) they build their competencies; and 4) they are “courageous, honest and credible.” In Foreign Service language, they are constructive dissenters when the situation calls for it; otherwise, they are just straight-shooters. This goes beyond “managing up,” which refers to one’s relationship with a superior. Followership, by contrast, requires commitment to the organization’s broader values and goals in the absence of clear direction, or when specific directions from a supervisor conflict with those larger values and goals.

Kelley goes on to make another startling assertion based on his research: Self-managed teams work best. Too many leaders can lead to chaos, but the absence of leaders often produces excellent results—provided the team has the right members,

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## Maybe the U.S. government isn’t yet ready to embrace the Zappos model, but the idea of followership still deserves careful consideration.

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who are guided by the mission, not other persons.

The concept of followership didn’t die with the 1990s. It has recently found a new expression in literature (e.g., *Reinventing Organizations* by Frederic Laloux) and management (e.g., the holacracy system embraced by the online shoe store Zappos, which recently eliminated its middle management in favor of “self-organization”). Maybe the U.S. government isn’t yet ready to embrace the Zappos model, but the idea of followership still deserves careful consideration.

### Followership and USAID’s Mission

The concept of followership is relevant to all organizations and sectors, but it matters especially in the field of international development and is therefore of particular interest to members of the Foreign Service at USAID.

Consider where the field stands today. Since 1990, the world has made dramatic strides in reducing poverty, improving health, reducing violent conflict and expanding democracy. But about 50 to 60 states are considered “fragile.” These are societies with low levels of legitimacy and effectiveness, and high levels of instability and violence. While different agencies maintain their own lists, using different methodologies, they tend to agree that places such as Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Haiti, Somalia and Yemen are highly fragile and unstable, with high levels of poverty. In addition, many transnational problems, from migration and disease to terrorism, find their breeding grounds in these fragile states. From the standpoint of development, these countries have been largely left out of the progress of the past three decades, or earlier progress has been violently reversed. While these are not the only places that demand our attention as development professionals, they certainly will consume much of it.

Yet Foreign Service jobs in such difficult, often dangerous places are usually the hardest to fill. Some, like Afghanistan and Iraq, are unaccompanied posts (Critical Priority Countries in

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## Exemplary followers, and their teams, need more freedom of action, not less.

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USAID parlance). They present problems that do not fit neatly within any sector. Instead, they require the ability to work across sectoral and agency boundaries in novel and creative ways. Above all, they require courage: not only bravery in the face of real physical risks, but the willingness to send bad news up the chain of command and to constructively dissent when necessary. Since fragile states abound with policy and program failures and contradictions, they generate plenty of bad news to report.

For all these reasons, Foreign Service work in these states requires a certain kind of professional: one who is able and willing to work independently, deeply commit to a mission, continuously build new competencies (especially by engaging with different professionals or by developing new cultural and linguistic skills), go where the action is, speak truth to power and be credible to all parties.

### The Ideal Follower

That person is the exemplary follower. Such individuals and their teams need more freedom of action, not less. But the natural reflex of bureaucracy is to go in the opposite direction. What tends to happen, especially in the CPCs, is that the U.S. political leadership sends more leaders and more money—but then requires those employees and managers to spend most of their time accounting for, well, their time. This was particularly true of Afghanistan during my tour from 2008 to 2009 there as head of the Democracy and Governance Office. The organizational chart became an inverted pyramid as multiple ambassadors and coordinators, along with the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction and a constant train of congressional delegations, all watched over project managers who had little mobility or authority.

A particularly unfortunate side effect of heavy oversight is that mere “staff” are discouraged from revealing policies that are not working or counterparts who are abusive and corrupt. I can attest from my work in Latin America that reporting human rights abuses by security forces is often not welcome. Under these circumstances, the exemplary follower may be unfairly viewed as “not a team player,” when this kind of employee is the one who can actu-

ally build U.S. credibility.

The Foreign Service’s traditional methods of selecting, developing, promoting and rewarding staff are designed for relatively stable contexts. One gradually assumes greater responsibilities and becomes a leader, or at least moves toward that goal. But complex, unpredictable environments, such as fragile states, challenge traditional management paradigms. These environments require quick, creative responses and the sorting out of competing objectives. They demand a higher level of independence, the ability to collaborate and creativity. Loyalty to the mission becomes more important than mere compliance with procedures and directives.

In some cases, as occurred with provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, an employee is attached to a special unit away from the capital and must work independently of the “mother ship.” Even in the embassy or USAID mission, employees have to negotiate their way through a tangled web of interagency, multisectoral and multi-institutional interests without the benefit of a proven textbook. A good example of this is rehabilitation of youth soldiers and gang members, where interventions are legal, social, psychological and economic. Trial, error, rapid learning and retrieval slowly show the way forward, and competing priorities (e.g., supporting a new government vs. protecting human rights) need to be sorted out in practice. A professional who simply manages up or follows direction will not provide the type of energy or creativity to such a complex task.

### Restoring the Balance

The Foreign Service already has many exemplary followers, but they do not receive the same encouragement and opportunities to excel in that role as leaders receive in theirs. So how should USAID and other foreign affairs agencies go about restoring balance between these two sides of the same coin?

Down the road, we should consider establishing a School of Followership Studies at the Foreign Service Institute, which already has a very active School of Leadership and Management. Even Foreign Service employees who are wholly committed to becoming organizational leaders could benefit from a few courses on followership. But that will obviously take significant time and resources. In the meantime, here are a few suggestions to nurture the next generation of exemplary followers.

One approach could be for USAID to create self-managed teams in the field, charged with proposing and implementing new solutions to a thorny development problem, such as insecurity or natural disasters. These teams would have the freedom to experiment, make program adjustments and carry out frequent, informal evaluations.

Another application of the followership principle lies in reworking the selection, training and development of new Foreign Service officers, something I think will resonate with millennials. We should identify and nurture the qualities that will be needed for the messy world they will enter, such as independence, creativity, flexibility, the ability to work unsupervised and, above all, courage. Why not give stronger weight to these qualities in the Foreign Service promotion precepts, and evaluate performance accordingly?

Finally, as I've already noted, a key indicator of exemplary followership is the practice of constructive dissent. This has an illustrious tradition in the Foreign Service, and AFSA rightfully recognizes it. Yet while the State Department Foreign Service promotion precepts do include a section on constructive dissent, that is absent from the USAID precepts.

Not surprisingly, few USAID FSOs write dissenting cables or memos, and few have received AFSA's own awards for constructive dissent. USAID's own Direct Channel—which, like the State Dissent Channel, is intended to allow FSOs to bring concerns and

critical information to the attention of senior agency leadership—has gone largely unused. That is particularly discouraging for an organization that supports democracy and prides itself on an open and democratic internal culture. Perhaps constructive dissent is not part of the USAID organizational culture, or perhaps USAID FSOs do not feel the need to formally dissent. But I suspect it is also because USAID FSOs are feeling especially vulnerable because they serve in a non-Cabinet agency that faces heavy oversight. As USAID focuses more on fragile states where poverty and instability is most difficult to overcome, we will need to see more constructive dissenters and sharers of honest information.

Ultimately, the idea of followership is about turning the bureaucracy on its head and shaking it a bit before putting it back on its feet. We hear a lot about "innovation." Innovation is a wonderful idea, but it needs to transform from a buzzword to natural habits and practices. To truly innovate requires an organizational culture where leadership is enhanced by followership. If we follow, we shall also lead. ■



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# AFSA Thanks Outreach Participants



AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson (center) with members and staff who made 2016 such a successful year for AFSA outreach.

On Dec. 7, AFSA welcomed close to 30 members for a reception at its headquarters. The purpose was to thank those individuals for their role in public outreach campaigns on behalf of AFSA and the Foreign Service in 2016.

During the holiday-themed reception, AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson offered remarks, specifically thanking Ambassador Lino Gutierrez and the

Una Chapman Cox Foundation for their partnership with AFSA, which has allowed us to add an outreach staff member and dramatically increase our capacity in this area.

"No matter how hard we work on outreach initiatives here at AFSA, they simply would not be possible without you all," said Amb. Stephenson. "You are the people who answered the call and took on the challenge to meet with

people in your local communities to tell the story of the Foreign Service.

"You have spoken at Road Scholar programs, supported the essay contest, participated in World Affairs Council high school education programs, offered events in this very room and even met with community college students in Kodiak, Alaska!"

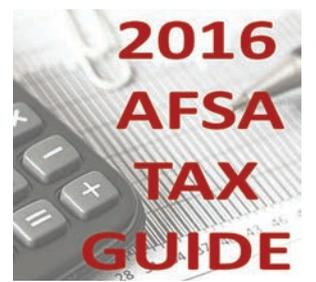
Ambassador (ret.) Patricia Butenis, a member of the AFSA Governing Board, spoke of her own experiences doing outreach in her home state of New Jersey. There is a clear interest in hearing from members of the Foreign Service in places ranging from middle schools to universities, she reported.

Amb. Butenis recounted a story from her visit to the Trenton Catholic Academy, where the teacher thanked her by saying that without

*Continued on page 51*



From left: AFSA State Representative Alison Storsve, Retiree Vice President Ambassador (ret.) Thomas Boyatt, State VP Angie Bryan and Retiree Representative Ambassador (ret.) Patricia Butenis, chatting at a reception to thank those who reach out for AFSA.



**2016  
AFSA  
TAX  
GUIDE**

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## CALENDAR

**January 15**

**Deadline:**

**Sinclair Language Award Nominations**

**January 16**

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day:  
AFSA Offices Closed**

**January 20**

**Inauguration Day:  
AFSA Offices Closed**

**February 1**

**12-1:30 p.m.**

**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**

**February 6**

**Deadline:**

**AFSA Merit Award Applications**

**February 13**

**12-1:15 p.m.**

**Recruitment Luncheon:  
12th Consular Fellows Class**

**February 20**

**Presidents' Day:  
AFSA Offices Closed**

**February 28**

**Deadline:**

**AFSA Dissent and Performance Award Nominations**

**March 1**

**12-1:30 p.m.**

**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**



## Speaking of Elections

Just when you thought you wouldn't have to hear the word "elections" for a few more years, it's time to talk about the upcoming elections for the 2017-2019 AFSA Governing Board.

For starters, my job will be up for grabs. Like the job of AFSA President, the job of AFSA State Vice President is a full-time job that comes with a time-in-class extension. While any grade and any skill code can run for the position, the wider the candidate's experience in the Foreign Service, the better he or she will be able to do the job.

The State VP is the head of the union portion of AFSA (the professional association side is led by the president) and, as such, is the chief negotiator for the union.

What does that mean in practical terms? When the State Department proposes a new policy or a significant change to an existing policy, the State VP leads the negotiations on behalf of FS employees. I'm a political officer, but I've engaged in more negotiations during this assignment than during any of my overseas postings.

The State VP, along with the excellent labor-management staff at AFSA, is responsible for reviewing new and revised policies and determining how best to mitigate any potential adverse impact to our members.

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### Whether you're interested in running for office or not, please be sure to vote. It makes an enormous difference who holds the job of State Vice President.

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Attention to detail is crucial, as is a solid understanding of and appreciation for the full spectrum of FS employees. A policy which might be great for FSOs, for example, could disadvantage specialists, or a policy that sounds like a positive change might in fact end up hurting employees at lower grades, etc.

The State VP maintains contact with several employee organizations and affinity groups and meets regularly with the leadership of the Career Development and Assignments Office (HR/CDA), Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Medical Services, to name a few.

He or she also attends the monthly AFSA Governing Board meetings; participates in periodic AFSA budget meetings; coordinates as needed with counterparts at Agriculture, USAID and Commerce; and writes this riveting monthly column on the topic of his or her choice.

Every job has its downsides, and this one is no exception. Labor-manage-

ment relations are complex. It can be frustrating to see how hard it is to effect actual change in the department, and it's no fun to have to tell people that you weren't able to get them the result they wanted.

There's also a two-year cooling-off period after you finish the job, which prevents you from assuming a leadership position within HR immediately after serving as AFSA State VP.

The positives, however, far outweigh the negatives. The job is extremely flexible in terms of work-life balance, and it provides the holder with a rare opportunity to set his or her own agenda and prioritize whichever issues they believe are most important for the Foreign Service.

AFSA's labor-management staff are some of the best colleagues I've ever had, and I genuinely enjoy coming to work each day because of them. You learn a lot about how the State Department works (for better and for worse), and you get to play a role in making things better for future gen-

erations of FS colleagues. In short, your efforts actually matter.

If you're interested in becoming more involved but don't want it to be your full-time job, consider running for a State Representative position on the Governing Board—those are all volunteer positions, not full-time jobs. You attend the monthly Governing Board meetings and get involved in other issues as much or as little as you want in between.

Finally, whether you're interested in running for office or not, please be sure to vote. It makes an enormous difference who holds the job of State VP, so you need to acquaint yourself with the candidates and their positions on issues that matter to you.

Vote for whichever candidate you believe possesses the best judgment when it comes to protecting your interests. It matters. ■



Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA FCS VP. Contact: steve.morrison@trade.gov or (202) 482-9088

## Results Matter

It's fair to say that I was shocked by the results of the recent U.S. Presidential election.

In fact, confident in a Clinton win, I had turned in my January column ahead of schedule. Throughout 2016, polls and pundits predicted a close-fought race but that, eventually, Hillary Clinton would prevail.

But on Nov. 8, America chose a different path and elected Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States.

What I learned that night is that polls are just that: polls. They are not

real—until they are traded for actual votes, something concrete and actionable, as we saw in November.

The same goes for trade promotion, right? Until you actually help a company close that sale or secure that contract, you really haven't accomplished your goal.

And that is why, in spite of the unexpected election results and the enormous changes that will come with a new administration, I am encouraged by the idea that our business-centric metrics and value-added counseling will not only help us survive the transition but perhaps

even help us prosper.

It has been a long time since we've seen radical new developments on the trade promotion front. But one of the things I remember most was when Director General Sue Schwab (under her sagacious, forward-looking "Strategic Review" during the George H.W. Bush administration) introduced export successes (or perhaps they were called export "actions" back then) and value-added counseling.

Those two developments—along with the advent of the Gold Key Service and the end of Export

Now, all quantifiable and measurable—put us on the road of differentiation and success that we are now on.

So I'll toss out my insights into what a Hillary Clinton administration might have looked like. Our most important job now is to stay focused on getting results for American business and workers, and to continue to promote foreign direct investment in the United States, and the rest will take care of itself.

We have much to be proud of, and our results and business-like metrics will speak for themselves. ■

## AFSA Dues Change for 2017

AFSA has increased dues for 2017 by 1.5 percent for all individual membership categories. In concrete terms, this amounts to an increase of between 5 and 25 cents per pay period, depending on an individual's membership category.

AFSA policy, in accordance with Article IV of the AFSA bylaws, is to increase dues by no more than the cumulative increase in the national Consumer Price Index, published by the Department of Labor, since the effective date of the previous dues increase. AFSA last increased its membership dues rate in January 2015.

This increase will provide the association with a stable and predictable income source, giving AFSA the resources needed to carry out its multifaceted mission.

Active-duty and retired members paying dues via payroll and annuity deduction will see a small increase in the amount automatically deducted from their paychecks and annuities. Those paying annually will be billed the new rate on their regularly scheduled renewal date. ■

### Active Duty

Foreign Service Grades	2017 Annual	2017 Bi-Weekly	Annual Increase	Deduction Increase
SFS	\$403.55	\$15.50	\$5.95	\$0.20
FS 1, 2, 3	\$312.00	\$12.00	\$4.60	\$0.20
FS 6, 5, 4	\$178.65	\$6.85	\$2.65	\$0.10
FS 7, 8, 9	\$94.45	\$3.65	\$1.40	\$0.05

### Retiree

Annuity Level	2017 Annual	2017 Monthly	Annual Increase	Deduction Increase
Annuity under \$25,000	\$69.30	\$5.80	\$1.00	\$0.10
Annuity of \$25-50,000	\$108.90	\$9.10	\$1.60	\$0.15
Annuity of \$50-75,000	\$145.45	\$12.10	\$2.15	\$0.15
Annuity over \$75,000	\$182.10	\$15.20	\$2.70	\$0.25
Retiree Spouse	\$54.45	\$4.55	\$0.80	\$0.10

### Associate

Category	2017 Annual	Annual Increase
Associate Membership	\$111.90	\$1.65
Retired Associate	\$68.50	\$1.00



## “To Support and Defend the Constitution”

The presidential election in November really was like no other that I remember (going back to 1940) or have read about (all the others). Just about everybody—the pollsters, media, pundits, the academy, late-night comics, entertainers, all Democrats, most Republicans and you and I—got it wrong. Even President-elect Donald Trump’s supporters were stunned, and the shock of the coastal elites was palpable.

Within this maelstrom of emotion there are reports that some of our less experienced Foreign Service officer and specialist colleagues are confused and asking their peers and mentors what they are supposed to do now. The implication is that they are questioning how to serve the incoming president.

I hope that these reports are inaccurate and exaggerated. But just in case such thoughts hover in the minds of some colleagues, let me table a direct response.

The answer, of course, is

**We do not swear allegiance to an emperor, a king, a president, a political party, the blood of our ancestors or the like. We swear allegiance to a document with specific ideas and structures for governance. That is a wonderful concept.**

pure and simple: all serving members of the Foreign Service should continue to honor their oath of office by showing up for work and bringing all of their energy and talents to the tasks assigned.

Let’s go back to the basics surrounding our oath “to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.” Article II of the U.S. Constitution deals with the executive branch. There are only five executive branch officers of government mentioned in Article II. Obviously, the first two are the president and vice president. The other three are diplomatic positions: ambassadors, ministers and consuls. We are all constitutional officers.

The president of the Con-

stitutional Convention was General George Washington. One of the outstanding operational and intellectual leaders was Lt. Colonel Alexander Hamilton. They and their colleagues knew from experience that the very successful diplomacy of Franklin, Jefferson, Adams and the others enabled victory in war and made the formation of the United States possible. The Constitution reflects the fact that, for the founders, diplomacy mattered.

Specifically, Article II, Section 2 states, “The President shall nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court” and others

as established by statute—for example, the Secretary of State.

Every diplomat since the enactment of the Constitution has sworn in his or her oath of office “to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.” We do not swear allegiance to an emperor, a king, a president, a political party, the blood of our ancestors or the like. We swear allegiance to a document with specific ideas and structures for governance. That is a wonderful concept.

Every Foreign Service officer and specialist, as constitutional officers and citizens, must honor and support the implementation of this concept every day, and particularly during a presidential transition. ■

*Outreach Event  
Continued from page 48*

her visit, her students would never have realized that someone like them—a regular kid from South Jersey—could grow up to become a diplomat.

While most of the attend-

ees were from the Washington, D.C., area, it goes without saying that AFSA is similarly grateful to all of our members across the country who have engaged in outreach in their communities.

The AFSA Governing Board made a conscious

choice to place a significant emphasis on public outreach during its term, and without the many members who share our belief in the importance of that mission, it would not have been as successful or wide-ranging as it has been in 2016.

To learn more about how to become involved in AFSA outreach, please email [speakers@afsa.org](mailto:speakers@afsa.org) or visit [www.afsa.org/speakers](http://www.afsa.org/speakers). ■

# Call for Nominations: 2017-2019 AFSA Governing Board

AFSA's Governing Board needs you!

By standing for election to the AFSA Governing Board, you can help lead the association dedicated to furthering the profession of diplomacy and the career Foreign Service.

AFSA is seeking dedicated active-duty and retired professionals from all Foreign Service agencies to serve in leadership positions.

There are many benefits to joining the AFSA Governing Board:

- A significant role in advancing your profession;
- Access to up-to-date information about the challenges facing your agency and your profession
- An opportunity to enhance the value of AFSA membership to the foreign affairs community;
- Managing a multimillion-dollar organization with a large professional staff and
- The chance to exchange ideas and perspectives with other volunteer leaders.

AFSA values and seeks diverse leadership as defined by professional level, skill code, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, etc.

Consider joining the next AFSA leadership team by running for a position on the

2017-2019 AFSA Governing Board.

## Election Call

**Election of AFSA Officers and Constituency Representatives.** This election call, issued in accordance with Article VII (2)(a) of the AFSA bylaws, constitutes a formal notice to all AFSA members of the opportunity to participate in the nomination and election of a new Governing Board.

## Call for Nominations

### Available Positions.

The following positions will be filled in this election:

#### Officers

- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Vice President for State
- Vice President for USAID
- Vice President for FCS
- Vice President for FAS
- Vice President for Retirees

#### Constituency Representatives

- State Department Representatives (5)
- USAID Representative (1)
- Alternate FCS Representative (1)
- Alternate FAS Representative (1)
- BBG Representative (1)
- APHIS Representative (1)
- Retired Member Representatives (2)

Note: As per the bylaw

amendments approved by the membership in the 2015 AFSA election, the AFSA Governing Board will be reduced from 29 members to 18 voting members. Each constituency with 100 members will have one Vice President and is entitled to one representative per 2,000 members or fraction thereof, provided that the fraction is greater than half. Constituencies with fewer than 100 members are entitled to one representative.

The positions listed above have two-year terms beginning July 15, 2017. AFSA bylaws require that all Governing Board members must be resident in the Washington D.C. area within 60 days of taking office on July 15, 2017, and must remain resident in the Washington D.C. area throughout their term in office.

The president and State, USAID, FCS and FAS vice presidents are full-time positions detailed to AFSA. These

employees are assigned over complement and are eligible for time-in-class extensions.

The active-duty representative positions are not full time, but they are given a reasonable amount of official time to attend meetings regarding labor management issues.

Governing Board members are required to attend board meetings, traditionally on the first Wednesday of each month at lunchtime and may volunteer to serve on additional committees. For position descriptions for all officer positions, see the AFSA website: [www.afsa.org/board](http://www.afsa.org/board).

## Nomination Procedures

**Nominating Candidates.** Any AFSA regular member in good standing (i.e., a member whose dues are automatically deducted or who has paid dues as of Feb. 1, 2017) may nominate any person (including themselves) for any of the avail-

### Important Dates:

February 1, 2017	Deadline for nominations
February 9, 2017	Informational meeting for candidates—optional
February 15, 2017	Committee on Elections announces candidates' names
April 17, 2017	Ballots and candidate statements mailed
June 8, 2017	Ballots counted
July 15, 2017	New Governing Board takes office

able positions for which the nominee is eligible.

The following requirements apply to nominations:

**1.** No member may nominate more than one person for each officer position or more than the number of representatives established for each constituency. No member's name may appear on the ballot for more than one position. Each nomination must indicate the position for which the person is being nominated. A nominee may run for a position outside of his or her constituency (e.g., a retiree position while on active duty) as long as the nominee will be a member of that constituency by the time the new Governing Board takes office on July 15.

**2.** All nominations must be submitted by completing the nomination form on the AFSA website: [www.afsa.org/nominationform](http://www.afsa.org/nominationform). To be valid, they must, without exception, be received no later than 5 p.m. on February 1, 2017.

**3.** Nominations must be accompanied by evidence of eligibility (i.e., no conflict of interest as described below).

**4.** Nominations may be submitted individually or in slates. To qualify as a slate, a proposed slate must have a minimum of four candidates from at least two constituencies. Slate designations will be noted on the ballot.

**Qualifications for Governing Board Membership.** Individuals meeting the following qualifications are eligible for nomination to one of the

available positions:

1. The individual must be an AFSA regular member in good standing by Feb. 1, 2017, and remain in good standing through the election process and, if elected, for his or her term of office.

2. The individual must not have a conflict of interest as defined in Section 1017(e) of the Foreign Service Act. Please see the "Conflicts of Interest" section below for more information.

3. The individual must be resident in the Washington, D.C., area on July 15 as described in Article V, Section 8 of the AFSA Bylaws.

**Conflicts of Interest.** Section 1017(e) of the Foreign Service Act restricts employees serving in certain positions within their agencies from participating in labor-management issues while serving on the Governing Board.

Management officials and confidential employees, as well as those in positions that may raise or appear to raise a conflict of interest (as defined below) when the new Governing Board takes office on July 15, may not participate in Governing Board discussions, deliberations or decisions relating to labor-management issues. They may participate in AFSA Board activities that do not relate to labor-management issues.

The Foreign Service Act also imposes a two-year pre- and post-AFSA "cooling off" period on employees who

occupied or will occupy positions within their agency that involve labor-management relations or the formulation of personnel policies and programs of a foreign affairs agency.

**a.** Section 1017(e) of the Act, 22 USC 4117(e) states: "Participation in labor organizations restricted.

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter—(A) participation in the management of a labor organization for purposes of collective bargaining or acting as a representative of a labor organization for such purposes is prohibited under this subchapter: (i) on the part of any management official or confidential employee; (ii) on the part of any individual who has served as a management official or confidential employee during the preceding two years; or (iii) on the part of any other employee if the participation or activity would result in a conflict of interest or apparent conflict of interest or would otherwise be incompatible with law or with the official functions of such employee, and—(B) service as a management official or confidential employee is prohibited on the part of any individual having participated in the management of a labor organization for purposes of collective bargaining or having acted as a representative of a labor organization during the preceding two years.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(A)(ii) and paragraph (1)(B), the term "man-

agement official" does not include: (A) any chief of mission; (B) any principal officer or deputy principal officer; (C) any administrative or personnel officer abroad; or (D) any individual described in section 4102(12)(B), (C), or (D) of this title who is not involved in the administration of this subchapter or in the formulation of the personnel policies and programs of the Department."

**b.** Section 1002 (12), 22 USC 4102(12) of the Foreign Service Act defines a management official as "an individual who: is a chief of mission or principal officer; occupies a position of comparable importance to chief of mission or principal officer; is serving as a deputy to the foregoing positions; is assigned to the Office of the Inspector General; or is engaged in labor-management relations or the formulation of personnel policies and programs of a foreign affairs agency."

**c.** Section 1002 (6), 22 USC 4102(6) of the Act defines a confidential employee as "an employee who acts in a confidential capacity with respect to an individual who formulates or effectuates management policies in labor-management relations."

Employees who may have a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest include those who are "engaged in personnel work in other than a purely clerical capacity" (for example, employees assigned to non-clerical posi-

tions within the HR Bureau) and “employees engaged in criminal or national security investigations of other employees or who audit the work of individuals to ensure that their functions are discharged honestly and with integrity” (such as employees assigned to Diplomatic Security investigative units or those assigned to the OIG). See Sections 1012(1) and (2), 22 USC 4112(1) and (2) of the Foreign Service Act.

#### Other Restrictions

As discussed above, the Foreign Service Act precludes these categories of individuals from participating in labor-management issues while serving on the Governing Board.

The Foreign Service Act also imposes a two-year “cooling-off period” both before and after AFSA service, which restricts the movement of Foreign Service employees between certain positions on the AFSA Governing Board and certain Washington-based positions.

• *Pre-AFSA restrictions:* Any individual who has served: 1) in a management position in Washington in which he or she has engaged in labor-management relations or the formulation of personnel policies and programs; or 2) as a confidential employee to one of these management officials within two years prior to taking office in AFSA, is precluded from participating

in labor-management issues while serving on the Governing Board.

• *Post-AFSA restrictions:* Employees who have participated in collective bargaining while serving on the AFSA Governing Board may not serve: 1) in a management position in Washington that involves labor-management relations or the formulation of personnel policies and programs; or 2) as a confidential employee to such management positions, for two years after leaving AFSA.

Members should consider these restrictions before deciding whether to run for AFSA Governing Board positions covered by these restrictions.

Please direct questions regarding this issue to Sharon Papp, General Counsel, by email: papps@state.gov. All other election-related queries should be addressed to the Committee on Elections by email: election@afsa.org.

In addition to the above, due to AFSA efforts to educate Congress on issues related to Foreign Service conditions of employment, legislative proposals and other issues directly impacting the Foreign Service, employees serving in congressional fellowships may not serve on the AFSA Governing Board. A conflict or potential conflict of interest exists between their position in AFSA and their official duties. AFSA members serving as congressional fellows

may run for the AFSA Governing Board provided their fellowship ends before the incoming board takes office on July 15, 2017.

#### Accepting a Nomination

**1.** A nominee must indicate his or her acceptance of a nomination by completing the online Nomination Acceptance Form at [www.afsa.org/nominationform](http://www.afsa.org/nominationform) no later than 5 p.m. EST on Feb. 10, 2017. Any nominee whose Nomination Acceptance Form is not received by the Committee on Elections by this time will be considered to have declined candidacy.

**2.** All active duty candidates accepting a nomination must identify the position or positions they have filled for the past two years by completing the Nomination Acceptance Form. All active duty candidates not seeking a full-time AFSA position (President, State VP, USAID VP, FCS VP, FAS VP) must also identify the department/agency position they will be serving in beginning on July 15, 2017, when the Governing Board takes office. This information is necessary to ensure compliance with section 1017(e) of the Foreign Service Act.

**3.** All candidates accepting a nomination must be members of the constituency for which they are being nominated. However, an active-duty member may run to be a retiree representative, if he or she will be retired on July 15.

#### Campaigning

**1. Campaign Statements.** All candidates will be given the opportunity to submit campaign statements for dissemination to AFSA members with the election ballots. Further information regarding such statements and editorial deadlines is contained in “Instructions to Candidates,” which will be posted by the Elections Committee on the AFSA website ([www.afsa.org/elections](http://www.afsa.org/elections)) by Jan. 3, 2017.

**2. Supplementary Statements.** Should candidates wish to mail supplementary statements to the membership, AFSA will make its membership mailing list or address labels available to the candidate upon request and at their expense. Further information on this and other campaign procedures is included in “Instructions to Candidates,” mentioned above.

**3. Other Methods of Communication.** Department of Labor requirements prohibit individuals from using government resources (including government email accounts) to campaign for AFSA positions. Candidates will be able to participate in the online AFSA Community Open Forum from their personal computers/devices during non-working hours. This online forum will be open to all members for whom AFSA has a valid personal email address.

## A More In-Depth Look at the New MSI Process

A State Department cable, released on Dec. 7, announced the new process for awarding Meritorious Service Increase(s).

The three-year pilot program is the result of formal negotiations initiated by the State Department with AFSA, during which we considered the feedback many members submitted in September.

In addition to the details outlined in the cable, we'd like to highlight for our members a few successes from the negotiations:

First and foremost, the department will no longer be able to claim that it has the right to make unilateral decisions not to pay MSIs. The precepts make crystal clear that the department must

pay MSIs at the percentage negotiated with AFSA.

We successfully included a provision in the new MSI system stating that, in the event of a severe budget crisis, the department must come back to AFSA and renegotiate any proposed decrease in the percentage of awards.

If AFSA and the department cannot agree on a new percentage for that specific year, then the matter will be resolved by the Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel.

Bidding privileges remain intact for the top group of employees who are recommended but not reached for promotion. That guarantee is now enshrined in the new agreement.

The new system is established as a pilot program with the department and AFSA working together to make improvements to the system and fix any unintended negative consequences.

This provision was important to AFSA leadership because we recognize that any wholesale change to a system affecting the entire Foreign Service will assuredly present a range of challenges, not all of which we can possibly anticipate.

Throughout the negotiations, one of AFSA's goals was to ensure the integrity of the rank order process used by the promotion boards. We are delighted to report that we achieved this goal.

MSIs will be divided between officers and specialists at roughly the same ratio found within the Foreign Service. For the most part, specialists will review specialist nominations and officers will review officer nominations.

People temporarily removed for low-rankings and/or discipline cases will be allowed to receive retroactive MSIs if their cases are successfully overturned, even years down the road.

If you are interested in more comprehensive details, we encourage you to read the new MSI Precepts once they are published. ■

—Angie Bryan,  
State Vice President

*Call for Nominations*  
Continued from page 54

### Voting

Ballots will be distributed on or about April 17, 2017, to each individual who is a regular AFSA member as of March 17, 2017. Candidates or their representatives may observe the ballot distribution process if they so desire. Each member may cast one vote for president, secretary and treasurer, as well as one vote for a constituency vice president and each represen-

tative position in the member's constituency.

Regular members may cast their votes for candidates listed on the official ballot, or by writing in the name(s) of member(s) eligible as of March 17, 2017, or by doing both. To be valid, a ballot must be received by 8 a.m. on June 8, 2017, either (i) at the address indicated on the envelope accompanying the ballot or (ii) by online vote. More detailed balloting instructions will accompany the ballots.

### Vote Counting and Announcement of Results

On or about June 8, 2017, the Elections Committee will oversee the ballot tabulation and declare elected the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for each position. Candidates or their representatives may be present during the tally and may challenge the validity of any vote or the eligibility of any voter. The committee will inform candidates individually of the election

results by the swiftest possible means and will publish the names of all elected candidates in the next issue of *The Foreign Service Journal*. The elected candidates will take office on July 15, 2017, as per the bylaws.

The Committee on Elections and supporting staff members may be reached at [election@afsa.org](mailto:election@afsa.org). ■

—The Committee on  
Elections

## Proposed Bylaw Amendments for 2017

Attention AFSA Members:

The Governing Board is proposing three bylaw amendments to be voted on during the 2017 AFSA Elections. The proposed bylaw changes would:

(1) Make the Awards and Plaques Committee a permanent standing committee;

(2) Change the current residency requirement for serving on the AFSA Governing Board to a participation requirement; and,

(3) Require that active-duty members presenting themselves as candidates for AFSA president or vice president hold an active security clearance.

The changes would become effective immediately if approved by two-thirds of the valid votes received from members.

### Explanation of Proposed Changes

#### 1. Proposal to Make the Awards and Plaques Committee a Permanent Standing Committee.

At its Aug. 3, 2016, meeting, the AFSA Governing Board voted to propose to membership during the election a bylaw amendment to establish the Awards and Plaques Committee as a permanent standing committee. The Governing Board recommends that members support the amendment of Article VI (Internal Organiza-

tion), Section 1 of the AFSA bylaws by adding the following language:

“(e) Awards and Plaques Committee: The board shall appoint and determine the terms of the chair and members of the Awards and Plaques Committee who, under the overall guidance of the board, shall develop criteria and make recommendations for awards and honors.”

#### **Justification:**

The Governing Board believes that AFSA should have a permanent Awards and Plaques Committee recognized in the bylaws as a standing committee.

Under the current bylaws, the Awards and Plaques Committee is not a permanent standing committee. Rather, the Awards and Plaques Committee has operated as a “special committee” for more than 20 years. Under Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised (which per the bylaws is the parliamentary authority of the association), the committee is established only for the duration of that elected board. The committee (along with AFSA staff) handles the annual AFSA Awards Ceremony and the AFSA Memorial Plaques, which are ongoing undertakings of the association. The AFSA awards and plaques program should be directed by a permanent standing

committee, recognized as such in the bylaws. The AFSA awards and plaques process requires sustained research, vetting and analysis, all of which take place on a continuous timeline, with recurring and firm deadlines.

AFSA awards recognize the important role of the Foreign Service and honor members of the Foreign Service community. Additional details on AFSA’s awards and honors can be found here: [www.afsa.org/awards](http://www.afsa.org/awards).

#### 2. Proposal to Change the Current Residency Requirement for Serving on the AFSA Governing Board to a Participation Requirement.

At its Oct. 3, 2016, meeting, the Governing Board voted to propose to membership a bylaw amendment to change the residency requirement for serving on the AFSA board to a participation requirement.

The Governing Board recommends that members support the amendment of Article V (The Governing Board) Section 8 of the AFSA bylaws by replacing the current language with the proposed language:

#### **Current Language:**

“Residency: Board members shall be resident in the Washington area within 60 days of taking office on July 15 or appointment to office

thereafter, and shall remain resident in the Washington area throughout their term in office. Board members who cease to be resident in the Washington area during their term shall submit their resignations to the board.”

#### **Proposed Language:**

“Participation: Board members shall participate via in-person attendance at regularly scheduled meetings of the board within 60 days of taking office on July 15 or appointment to office thereafter, and throughout their term in office. Board members who are unable to participate via in-person attendance at regularly scheduled meetings of the board, e.g., because of transfer, shall submit their resignations.

Board members may be removed from office by a majority vote of the board after four absences in any 12-month period from regularly scheduled meetings of the board.”

#### **Justification:**

As originally written, the bylaws recognize that members of the Foreign Service serve on a worldwide basis, and require that Governing Board members reside in the Washington area. The unintended consequence of this phrasing favors Governing Board members who reside in the Washington area but do not necessar-

ily participate regularly in board meetings.

The Governing Board believes it is more important for board members to participate than to simply reside in the Washington area.

The intent of this change is to follow best practices for boards and prevent cases in which elected board members do not take up their obligation to serve, regardless of where they reside. This change ties participation to one of the most important activities of the board, the monthly board meeting required by the bylaws. At these meetings board members vote on what actions AFSA will take, and it is important for board members to be fully engaged and participating. There is no intention to use AFSA funds to pay for the travel of board members to attend board meetings from afar.

This bylaw change increases the pool of eligible candidates for serving on the Governing Board. In the case that a vacancy is created, the respective Section 6 of the bylaws mandates that the board fill the vacancy by appointment, so long as the vacancy is filled from the respective constituency. These appointments are a regular occurrence and most often happen when board members are transferred overseas.



AFSA/JOSH

### **3. Proposal to Require that Active-Duty Members Presenting Themselves as Candidates for AFSA President or Vice President Hold a Security Clearance.**

At its Oct. 3, 2016, meeting, the Governing Board voted to propose to membership a bylaw amendment to add a security clearance requirement for an active-duty individual presenting themselves as a candidate for AFSA President or AFSA Vice President.

The Governing Board recommends that members support the amendment of Article VII (Elections) Section 1 of the AFSA bylaws by adding “active-duty members presenting themselves as candidates for president or constituency vice president must hold an active security clearance.”

The revised section would read as follows:

“Candidates: All regular members of the association in good standing are eligible to be candidates for the officer or representative positions on the

board; active-duty members presenting themselves as candidates for president or constituency vice president must hold an active security clearance.”

#### **Justification:**

The intent of this bylaw change is to strengthen AFSA by preventing a potential conflict of interest that could arise when an active-duty AFSA president or one of the constituency vice presidents—the main AFSA officers who negotiate with management—does not have a valid security clearance. The potential conflict of interest arises because the AFSA officer is reliant on management to approve his or her appeal to reinstate the security clearance. The proposed bylaw change applies only to active-duty members and only to the AFSA president and vice president positions. The requirement for a security clearance does not apply to active-duty members presenting themselves as candidates for other posi-

tions on the board.

#### **Procedures**

The complete bylaw amendment procedure can be found in Article IX of the AFSA bylaws, which are available online at [www.afsa.org/bylaws](http://www.afsa.org/bylaws). The AFSA Committee on Elections is responsible for conducting the polling on amendments. The process of amending the AFSA bylaws requires notification to the AFSA membership, with a 45-day period for submission of statements in opposition.

Statements opposing the proposed bylaw amendments require signatures from no fewer than 10 AFSA members in good standing and must be received within 45 calendar days of publication of this article.

Statements or questions may be sent to: Chair, AFSA Committee on Elections, 2101 E Street NW, Washington DC 20037, by fax to (202) 338-6820, or by email to [election@afsa.org](mailto:election@afsa.org). ■



## AFSA Governing Board Meeting, November 2, 2016

**Consent Agenda:** The Governing Board approved the consent agenda items, which were: (1) approval of the Oct. 5 Governing Board meeting minutes; (2) acceptance of Jeff Cochrane's resignation as USAID representative; (3) appointment of Ann Posner as USAID representative; (4) appointment of Steve Herman as BBG representative; (5) appointment of Ann Posner and Haven Hubbard-Cruz to the USAID Standing Committee; and, (6) acceptance of Tracy Whittington's resignation from the Editorial Board and Todd Andrews' resignation from the Awards and Plaques Committee.

**Dissent Guidance:** Retiree Vice President Ambassador Tom Boyatt presented guidance on dissent award criteria ("What Is Dissent?") to the board for approval. With no objection, the requested guidance was approved and will be provided to the Awards and Plaques Committee to assist them in selecting recipients for AFSA's unique dissent awards.

**FS Grievance Board:** On behalf of the Executive Committee, Amb. Boyatt moved that the Governing Board approve the nomination of David Clark as a presiding member of the FSGB. The motion was approved.

**2017 Budget:** On behalf of the Finance, Audit and Management Committee, AFSA Treasurer Ambassador Charles Ford moved that the board adopt the proposed budget for 2017. The motion passed unanimously. On behalf of the FAM Committee, Amb. Ford also moved that membership dues be increased by 1.5 percent in 2017. The motion was approved unanimously. ■

## AFSA Welcomes New BBG Representative

AFSA is pleased to welcome Steve Herman as the new Broadcasting Board of Governors representative on the Governing Board, confirmed at the Nov. 2 meeting.

Mr. Herman is the senior diplomatic correspondent for the Voice of America and has been a VOA bureau chief in India, Korea and Thailand.

He previously served as president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan and is currently an elected governor on the board of the Overseas Press Club of America. ■



Steve Herman.

AFSA/SHAWN DORMAN

### NEWS BRIEF

#### REMINDER – 2017 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

The American Foreign Service Association's National High School Essay Contest has begun!

The contest winner will receive \$2,500, a trip to Washington, D.C., to meet the Secretary of State and full tuition for a Semester at Sea educational voyage. The runner-up receives \$1,250 and full tuition for the National Student Leadership Conference's International Diplomacy summer program.

AFSA welcomes the continuing support of our fantastic contest partners: The United States Institute of Peace, Semester at Sea, and the National Student Leadership Conference.

Eligibility for AFSA's 2017 National High School Essay Contest is limited to high school students of U.S. citizenship, in grades 9-12, whose parents are not members of the Foreign Service.

The deadline for entries is **March 15, 2017**. Full details of the contest, including this year's essay topic, are available from the AFSA website: [www.afsa.org/essay](http://www.afsa.org/essay). ■

## The Foreign Service Networks at AFSA

On Nov. 17, AFSA welcomed more than 60 members and guests to a networking happy hour at its 21st Street headquarters.

Hosted by AFSA Secretary Bill Haugh, the happy hour was a great opportunity for AFSA members to meet and socialize, as well as for nonmembers to learn about AFSA's role in promoting the message of the Foreign Service.

Many AFSA representatives and staff were available at the happy hour to answer questions and provide information about the association.

AFSA is planning more happy hours in the near future: Sign up for AFSA Net



AFSA Secretary Bill Haugh (back to camera) welcomes attendees to a happy hour at AFSA headquarters. Inset: AFSA State Representative Jason Donovan speaks with Rob Joswiak, an incoming member of the Foreign Service.



announcements to receive news on upcoming events ([www.afsa.org/afsanet](http://www.afsa.org/afsanet).) ■

## Elections Committee Thanks Amb. Farrand for Leadership

AFSA extends its sincere gratitude to Ambassador (ret.) Bill Farrand (right) for his steady leadership of AFSA's Elections Committee during the last four years.

At his final committee meeting on Oct. 27, Amb. Farrand was presented with a certificate of thanks for his work by Executive Director Ian Houston (center) and Elections Committee member Mary Ellen Gilroy. ■



## AFSA Applauds JSP Graduates



AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson (eighth from right) with Job Search Program graduates on Oct. 28.

On Oct. 28, AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson congratulated graduates of the State Department’s Job Search Program. Amb. Stephenson encouraged JSP participants to rejoin AFSA as retiree members to continue the

lifelong networking opportunities offered by the association—and reminded them that switching from active-duty to retiree status is not an automatic process.

She also urged program graduates to engage with AFSA’s new 50-state strat-

egy to “take the story of the Foreign Service out beyond the Beltway.” She noted that AFSA can provide talking points and resources for retirees and active service members who speak at high schools, colleges and social groups.

If you join or establish a retiree group, please contact AFSA ([member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org)) and let us know about your outreach efforts and activities. ■

### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### LAST CALL FOR AFSA COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS!

The children of active-duty or retired, separated or deceased AFSA members can apply for college aid. Graduating high school seniors can apply for \$2,500 academic and art merit awards along with a community service award, while incoming/current undergraduates can apply for need-based financial aid scholarships ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

The merit award program submission deadline is Feb. 6, and the need-based financial aid scholarship submission deadline is March 6. Not all who submit an application will receive an award.

Visit [www.afsa.org/scholar](http://www.afsa.org/scholar) for details, or contact AFSA Scholarship Director Lori Dec at [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org) or (202) 944-5504. ■



## Congress Passes FY17 State Authorization Bill

On Dec. 10, the Senate passed the FY17 Department of State Authorities Act by unanimous consent. This marks the first time Congress has sent a State Department authorization bill to the White House in 14 years.

In meetings on the authorization bill with numerous legislators throughout the year, AFSA was encouraged to find robust support on both sides of the aisle for maintaining strong American global leadership and an appreciation for the

critical role the Foreign Service plays in that effort. At the same time, we made concerted efforts to walk back and/or improve certain sections that we and a vast majority of our members deemed harmful to the career Foreign Service.

While there are some items that we would have preferred to have more time and a better process to work out with the new Congress, the State Authorities Act contains positive provisions that make the Foreign Service stronger.

AFSA continues to track a number of issues, including the Overseas Development Program, lateral entry into the Foreign Service and suspension of duties for members with suspended security clearances.

One of AFSA's highest priorities in the coming year is for the new Congress to recognize that protecting American interests abroad requires preserving, protecting and investing in one of the primary pillars of our national security—the U.S. Foreign Service.

AFSA stands firm in its conviction that any consideration of legislation that would affect or alter the integrity of the current Foreign Service personnel system be done through a transparent, orderly and deliberative process that includes ample time for consultation with key stakeholders. We are grateful for the many allies on Capitol Hill who agree that this is the best way to ensure a strong and effective U.S. diplomacy on behalf of the American people. ■

### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### DEADLINE APPROACHES FOR DISSENT AND PERFORMANCE NOMINATIONS

It's your last chance to nominate someone for a 2017 AFSA Constructive Dissent or Exemplary Performance Award. The deadline for nominations is **Feb. 28, 2017**.

AFSA proudly recognizes constructive dissent within the system with four separate awards: The **W. Averell Harriman Award** is for entry-level (FS-6 through FS-4) officers; the **William R. Rivkin Award** is for mid-level (FS-3 through FS-1) officers; the **Christian A. Herter Award** is for Senior Foreign Service officers; and the **F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award** is for Foreign Service specialists.

Recipients receive prize money and travel expenses to be honored at the June ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the State Department. More information about each of these awards is available from the AFSA website, [www.afsa.org/dissent](http://www.afsa.org/dissent).

AFSA is also accepting nominations for its five awards recognizing exemplary performance until the Feb. 28 deadline. We urge members to nominate someone whose contribution has made a difference.

The **Nelson B. Delavan Award** recognizes the work of a Foreign Service office management specialist.

The **M. Juanita Guess Award** is conferred on a community liaison office coordinator who has demonstrated outstanding leadership.

The **Avis Bohlen Award** honors the volunteer accomplishments of a family member of a Foreign Service employee at post.

The **Mark Palmer Award** is open to members of the Foreign Service from any of the foreign affairs agencies, especially entry and mid-level personnel, who promote American policies that advance democracy, freedom and governance through bold, exemplary, imaginative and effective efforts during one or more assignments.

The **Post Rep of the Year Award** honors a post representative who best demonstrates sustained and successful engagement with AFSA membership at post.

For details on all of the above awards and to file a nomination online, go to [www.afsa.org/awards](http://www.afsa.org/awards). Contact Coordinator Perri Green at [green@afsa.org](mailto:green@afsa.org) or (202) 719-9700 for more information. ■

## 2016 Federal and State Tax Provisions for the Foreign Service

The American Foreign Service Association's annual Tax Guide is designed as an informational tool. Although this update accurately summarizes the law, it is merely a starting point. The language of the actual tax provisions is always more technical than what follows here. AFSA recommends that you use this guide with caution and consult a tax adviser with specific questions, as the IRS may impose penalties for understating tax liabilities (please see the Circular 230 notice at the end of this article).

Gross income is the starting point for figuring state and federal income tax. It includes "all income from whatever source derived." Adjustments to gross income, deductions and tax credits are matters of legislative grace. Congress passes, the IRS applies and the courts scrutinize the law and its application. The result is federal tax law. State legislatures may adopt the federal system or deviate from federal law, sometimes requiring residents to add back amounts for a higher taxable state income. Consequently, no tax benefit should be claimed without knowing state and federal law.

This update begins with federal tax law, headlined by the 2016 tax brackets and rates. From there the personal exemption, foreign earned income exclusion, extension for taxpayers abroad, and standard and itemized deduction rules are presented. Special attention is devoted to the topics Foreign Service employees most frequently ask AFSA about: moving, interest, home leave and official residence expenses; home ownership and sale of a principal residence.

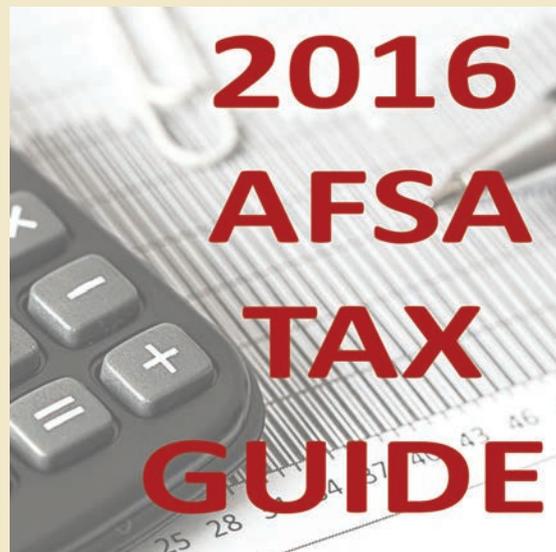
This update concludes with each state's domicile rules. James Yorke (YorkeJ@state.gov), who compiles the tax guide, would like to thank Sam Schmitt of the EFM Law Company for preparing the section on federal tax provisions.

### 2016 FEDERAL TAX PROVISIONS

The table on page 63 summarizes the marginal income and corresponding capital gains tax brackets.

#### PLEASE NOTE

This guidance applies to the 2016 tax year, for returns due on April 18, 2017. While correct at time of publication, bear in mind there may be changes to the tax code for the 2017 tax year. At present, we are not aware of any possible changes that are likely to apply to 2016 returns.



#### Personal Exemption:

For each taxpayer, spouse and each dependent, the personal exemption is \$4,050. A personal exemption phase-out is in place for 2016. Unmarried taxpayers who earn more than \$259,400 individually (\$285,350 head of household, \$311,300 married filing jointly) should contact a tax professional to calculate the amount by which their personal exemption must be reduced.

#### Foreign Earned Income Exclusion:

Americans living and working overseas may be eligible for this exclusion, but not if they are employees of the U.S. government. The first \$101,300 earned overseas as an employee or self-employed may be exempt from income taxes.

To receive this exclusion the taxpayer must:

(1) Establish a tax home in a foreign country, which is the general area of the taxpayer's "main place of business, employment or post of duty." In other words, where the taxpayer is "permanently or indefinitely engaged to work as an employee or self-employed individual"; and,

(2) Either (a) Meet the "bona-fide residence" test, which requires that the taxpayer has been a bona-fide resident of a foreign country for an uninterrupted period that includes an entire tax year OR (b) Meet the "physical presence" test, which requires the taxpayer to be present in a foreign country for at least 330 full (midnight-to-midnight) days during any 12-month period (the period may be different from the tax year).

Note: The method for calculating the tax on non-excluded income in tax returns that include both excluded and non-excluded income was changed, beginning in 2006, resulting in higher tax on the non-excluded portion. (See the box on page 64 for a full explanation.)

### Extension for Taxpayers Abroad:

Taxpayers whose tax home is outside the United States on April 18, 2016, are entitled to an automatic extension until June 15 to file their returns. When filing the return, these taxpayers should write "Taxpayer Abroad" at the top of the first page and attach a statement of explanation. There are no late-filing or late-payment penalties for returns filed and taxes paid by June 15, but the IRS does charge interest on any amount owed from April 18 until the date it receives payment.

2016 Tax Brackets & Rates				
Income Tax Rate*	Upper Income Limit			Capital Gains Rate***
	Individual	Married** Filing Jointly	Head of Household	
10%	\$9,275	\$18,550	\$13,250	0%
15%	\$37,650	\$75,300	\$50,400	
25%	\$91,150	\$151,900	\$130,150	15%
28%	\$190,150	\$231,450	\$210,800	
33%	\$413,350	\$413,350	\$413,350	
35%	\$415,050	\$466,950	\$441,000	
39.6%	> \$415,050	> \$466,950	> \$441,000	20%

\* Marginal rates apply to income in excess of each of the prior tax brackets.

\*\* Income thresholds for those married filing separately are half of those who are married filing jointly.

Same-sex couples who were married in or after tax year 2013, in a state where it is legal, must file their federal tax return as either married filing jointly or married filing separately, not individually.

\*\*\* Refers to long-term capital gains—gains from the sale of property held for greater than 12 months.

### Standard Deduction:

Taxpayers who do not itemize are entitled to take a standard deduction in the following amounts:

2016 Standard Deduction

Individual	\$6,300
Married Filing Jointly	\$12,600
Head of Household	\$9,300

An additional amount is allowed for taxpayers over age 65 and for those who are blind.

### Itemized Deductions:

Taxpayers who itemize cannot claim the standard deduction. However, itemizers gain the benefit of specific deductions, including the deduction for unreimbursed employee expenses on 1040 Schedule A. These are deductible to the extent they exceed 2 percent of adjusted gross income (AGI). Some examples of unreimbursed employee expenses include professional dues and subscriptions to publications; employment and continuing education expenses; home office, legal, accounting, custodial and tax preparation fees; home leave, representational and other employee business expenses. In 2016, the IRS will phase out itemized deductions a taxpayer is allowed at certain income thresholds. Unmarried individuals earning more than \$155,650 individually (\$259,400 head of household, \$311,300 married filing jointly) should contact a tax professional to calculate the limits on their itemized deductions.

### Medical and Dental Expenses:

Taxpayers who itemize can deduct medical expenses to the extent they exceed 10 percent of AGI (including health and long-term care insurance, but not health insurance premiums deducted from government salaries). If the taxpayer is over 65, the threshold at which this deduction can be claimed remains at 7.5 percent until Jan. 1, 2017, after which, the threshold increases to 10 percent for all taxpayers.

### Unreimbursed Moving Expenses:

Taxpayers who itemize and those who claim the standard deduction may claim unreimbursed moving expenses as an adjustment to income. Unreimbursed moving expenses include the cost of transportation, storage and travel costs of moving the taxpayer, possessions (including pets) and the taxpayer's family. The cost of meals during the move does not qualify. Other adjustments itemizers and non-itemizers may claim include contributions to pre-tax IRAs, alimony payments, bad debt, student loan interest, tuition and fees and educator expenses. Each may be subject to its own limits.

### Deductible Taxes:

There are only four kinds of deductible non-business taxes: (1) State, local and foreign income taxes; (2) State and local general sales taxes; (3) State, local and foreign real estate taxes; and (4) State and local personal property taxes. The taxpayer must itemize (using 1040 Schedule A) and must have been charged and actually paid the taxes to be entitled to these deductions.

### Charitable Contributions:

Only contributions to “qualified organizations” may be deducted, and then only to the extent the tax code permits. For example, the AFSA Fund for American Diplomacy qualifies as a public charity. Contributions to it, and any public charity, can be deducted; but a taxpayer’s deduction for charitable contributions is limited to 50 percent of AGI. The IRS provides an “Exempt Organizations” online check tool to determine whether a charity qualifies. Payments to individuals are never deductible. A taxpayer must itemize to claim this deduction.

### Interest Expenses:

Itemizers may deduct interest (Schedule A) on investments (to the extent of income from those investments) and qualified mortgage interest (discussed below). Business loan interest and interest incurred to produce rents or royalties are other forms of deductible interest (limits may apply). Interest on loans that do not fall into the above categories, even money borrowed to buy tax-exempt securities, is not deductible. However, non-deductible debts can be consolidated and paid with deductible home equity loan interest (discussed below). Passive investment interest on investments in which the taxpayer is an inactive participant can be deducted only from the income produced by passive activities.

### Home Leave and Unreimbursed Representational Expenses:

These generally qualify as unreimbursed employee business expenses. They may be deducted as miscellaneous itemized

deductions and claimed on Form 2106, subject to a 2 percent floor and a 50-percent limit for meals and entertainment. All unreimbursed travel and lodging exceeding 2-percent of AGI may be deducted here. However, only the employee’s (not family members’) home leave expenses are deductible. AFSA recommends maintaining a travel log and retaining a copy of home leave orders, which will help if the IRS ever questions claimed expenses. It is important to save receipts, because without receipts for food, a taxpayer may deduct only the federal meals-and-incidentals per diem rate at the home leave address—no matter how large the actual bill is. Lodging is deductible as long as it is not with friends, relatives or in one’s home.

The IRS will deny per diem and expenses claimed for family members. If a hotel bill indicates double rates, the single room rate should be claimed. Taxpayers should save the hotel’s rate sheet, if possible. Car rental, mileage and other unreimbursed travel expenses, including parking fees and tolls, may be deducted. The 2016 rate for business miles driven has dropped to 54 cents. Those who use this optional mileage method need not keep detailed records of actual vehicle expenses. They must, however, keep a detailed odometer log to justify the business use of the vehicle and track the percentage of business use. This optional mileage method also applies to leased vehicles.

### Official Residence Expenses:

ORE reimbursements defray the “unusual” expenses from the operation of an official residence while extending official hospitality, receiving foreign dignitaries and holding official ceremonies. Conversely, a principal representative is expected to bear

## FOREIGN EARNED INCOME EXEMPTION DENIALS

Some AFSA members report having difficulty claiming the foreign earned income exemption (FEIE). To receive this exemption, the taxpayer must meet one of two tests:

- 1) The physical presence test requires that the taxpayer be present in a foreign country for at least 330 full (midnight to midnight) days during any 12-month period (the period may be different from the tax year); or
- 2) The bona fide residence test requires that the taxpayer has been a bona fide resident of a foreign country for an uninterrupted period that includes an entire tax year.

We understand that IRS auditors have been denying the FEIE for Foreign Service spouses and dependents under the bona fide residence test, on the grounds that diplomatic status overseas does not constitute “bona fide residence” in a foreign country.

In this context, note that if you work for a company or organization on the local economy you generally have to pay local taxes, and your “tax home” is technically in the foreign country. You will have relinquished your diplomatic status in any matters related to your job, although of course for matters outside your job you would retain the diplomatic status that you derive from your FS employee spouse or parent.

However, members report that they have successfully used the physical presence test. They have also used this in appealing a denial of the bona fide residence test. This test requires that you spend 330 full days during a calendar year actually in a foreign country, not just outside the United States. Time spent traveling to and from a country does not count. If using this test, you are advised to record all your travel carefully and to keep copies of visas and tickets, so that you can substantiate the 330 days in case of an audit.

the burden of “usual” household expenses of 3.5 percent of their salary (see 3 FAM 3253.1). None of the 3.5 percent of “usual” household expenses is deductible because it is “payment for ordinary, everyday living expenses, and is not excludable from gross income” (see Revenue Ruling 90-64). These expenses cannot be deducted as miscellaneous business expenses because they are personal expenses. Official expenses for which any State Department employee is not reimbursed are deductible as unreimbursed employee expenses.

### Home Ownership:

Home ownership may trigger many tax benefits including: (1) The mortgage interest deduction; (2) Deduction of points to obtain a home mortgage; (3) Business use of a home; and (4) Selling a home.

**(1) Mortgage Interest Deduction:** The interest expense of up to \$1 million of acquisition debt (\$500,000 for individual filers) and up to \$100,000 home equity debt (\$50,000 individually) for loans secured by a primary or secondary residence may qualify for a deduction. The properties for which a taxpayer would like to take this deduction must qualify as a home or a secondary residence. “Home” is the place where a taxpayer ordinarily lives most of the time. A secondary residence is a property the taxpayer does not rent out (or attempt to sell) during the year. Note that the structure claimed as a home or secondary residence may be a house, condominium, cooperative, mobile home, house trailer, boat or similar property that has sleeping, cooking and toilet facilities.

**(2) Points on a Mortgage:** Taxpayers who claim the above deduction may also qualify to currently deduct all the points paid to obtain that mortgage. Nine requirements must be met to deduct those points. Taxpayers should contact a tax professional to see if they qualify and explore the possibility of partially deducting these points. Save the settlement sheet (HUD-1 Form) for documentation in case of an audit.

**(3) Business Use of Home, Including as a Rental:** Taxpayers may be entitled to deductions for the business use of part of a home.

**(3)(a) Rental:** When income is earned by renting out the home, deductions the taxpayer claims for mortgage interest remain deductible; however, they become an expense for the production of rental income instead of a personal deduction under the mortgage interest expense provisions (Schedule E rather than Schedule A). Depreciation, repair costs and operating expenses such as fees charged by independent contractors (e.g., groundskeepers, accountants, attorneys) are deductible. Limits apply to these deductions when the taxpayer uses their property for the greater of 14 days or 10 percent of the total days it is rented to others at a fair rental price.

**(3)(b) The 1031 Exchange:** Taxpayers who convert their

### IMPORTANT NOTE: FOREIGN EARNED INCOME

The Foreign Earned Income Exclusion allows U.S. citizens who are not United States government employees and are living outside the United States to exclude up to \$101,300 of their 2016 foreign-source income if they meet certain requirements. Since 2006, you have been required to take your total income and figure what your tax would be, then deduct the tax that you would have paid on the excludable income.

For example: A Foreign Service employee earns \$80,000 and their teacher spouse earns \$30,000.

**Before 2006:** Tax on \$110,000 minus \$30,000 = tax on \$80,000 = tax bill of \$13,121.

**Since 2006:** Tax on \$110,000 = \$20,615; tax on \$30,000 = \$3,749; total tax = \$20,615 minus \$3,749 = tax bill of \$16,866.

homes to investment property (perhaps because they have inadvertently used it exclusively for business purposes for too long) may no longer qualify for the exclusion of up to \$500,000 of capital gain on the sale of a principal residence (discussed below). However, the property may become eligible for an IRC Section 1031 exchange. This tax provision is normally invoked by businesses exchanging like-kind, income-producing property. The IRS rules for these exchanges are complex and specific, with a number of pitfalls that can nullify the transaction. A 1031 exchange should never be attempted without assistance from a tax professional specializing in this field.

#### (4) Selling a Principal Residence:

**(4)(a)** A taxpayer may exclude up to \$250,000 (\$500,000 for married filing jointly) of long-term capital gain from the sale of a principal residence. To qualify for the full exclusion amount, the taxpayer: (i) must have owned the home and lived there for at least two of the last five years before the date of the sale (but

### CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT WHEN OVERSEAS

Bear in mind that in order to claim the child care tax credit while serving overseas, you must submit IRS Form 2441, for which the instructions say: “For U.S. citizens and resident aliens living abroad, your care provider may not have, and may not be required to get, a U.S. taxpayer identification number (for example, an SSN or EIN). If so, enter “LAFCP” (Living Abroad Foreign Care Provider) in the space for the care provider’s taxpayer identification number.”

see Military Families Relief Act below); (ii) cannot have acquired the home in a 1031 exchange within the five years before the date of the sale; and (iii) cannot have claimed this exclusion during the two years before the date of the sale. An exclusion of gain for a fraction of these upper limits may be possible if one or more of the above requirements are not met. A taxpayer who sells their principal residence for a profit of more than \$250,000 (\$500,000 married filing jointly), or a reduced amount, will owe capital gains tax on the excess.

**(4)(b) Military Families Tax Relief Act of 2003:** The five-year period described above may be suspended for members of the Foreign Service by any 10-year period during which the taxpayer has been away from the area on a Foreign Service assignment, up to a maximum of 15 total years. Failure to meet all of the requirements for this tax benefit (points (i) through (iii) in the Selling a Principal Residence section above) does not necessarily disqualify the taxpayer from claiming the exclusion. However, the services of a tax professional will probably be necessary if one of these requirements is not met.

**(4)(c) Adjustments to the Basis of a Home:**

**(i) Buying or Building a Home:** Some investments in the construction of a home, purchase of a home, improvements during ownership and improvements in preparation to sell must be added to the basis of the home. The starting point is the amount paid to acquire the property: cost basis. Some settlement fees and closing costs may be added to the cost basis (yielding the adjusted basis). These include abstract of title fees, charges for installing utility services, legal fees for the title search and preparing the sales contract and deed, recording fees, survey fees, transfer or stamp taxes and title insurance. A taxpayer who builds a home may add the cost of the land and the cost to complete the house to arrive at an initial cost basis. Construction includes the cost of labor and materials, amounts paid to

a contractor, architect's fees, building permit charges, utility meter charges and legal fees directly connected with building the house.

**(ii) Improving a Home During Ownership:** During the ownership period, improvements to the home including additions (bedrooms, bathrooms, decks), lawn and grounds improvements (landscaping, paving a driveway), improvements to the exterior (storm windows, new roof, siding), insulation, plumbing, interior improvements (built-in appliances, kitchen modifications, flooring) and investments in the home systems (heating, central air, furnace) may all be added to adjust the basis of the home upward.

**(iii) Preparing to Sell:** "Fixing-up costs" no longer exist insofar as they refer to what was once recognized as a 1034 exchange of a residence. Capital expenditures continue to operate as described above when a taxpayer is preparing to sell a home. Any capital improvements when preparing to sell should simply be added to the adjusted basis and subtracted from the sales price to reduce net capital gain when the home is sold.

**(iv) Selling:** Selling expenses can be subtracted from the sales price, further reducing the taxable gain. These include fees for sales commissions, any service that helped the taxpayer sell the home without a broker, advertising, legal help, and mortgage points or other loan charges the seller pays that would normally have been the buyer's responsibility.

**Circular 230 Notice:**

Pursuant to U.S. Treasury Department Regulations, all state and federal tax advice herein is not intended or written to be used, and may not be used, for the purposes of avoiding tax-related penalties under the Internal Revenue Code or promoting, marketing or recommending advice on any tax-related matters addressed herein. ■

**TAX WITHHOLDING WHEN ASSIGNED DOMESTICALLY**

In 2014, the State Department instituted new procedures to comply with Treasury regulations for withholding state taxes for all employees serving domestically. (See Department Notice 2014\_11\_016, dated Nov. 3, 2014.) This means state taxes will be withheld for an employee's "regular place of duty"—in other words, your official duty station. If you require state taxes to be withheld for a state other than that of your official duty station, your bureau executive director must provide a certification to the department's Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services.

This does not mean that you must relinquish your state of domicile if it is different than your official duty station. "Domicile" (legal residence) is different from "residence," and so long as you maintain your ties to your home state you will be able to change your withholdings, if you so wish, back to your home state when you go overseas again. See the Overseas Briefing Center's guide to Residence and Domicile, available on AFSA's website at [www.afsa.org/domicile](http://www.afsa.org/domicile).

Bear in mind, too, that CGFS does not adjudicate state income tax elections when you are serving overseas, since in those circumstances it is the employee's responsibility to accurately elect state income taxes. However, upon the employee's return to a domestic assignment, CGFS will evaluate the employee's state tax withholding election based on his or her new official domestic duty station.

## STATE TAX PROVISIONS

**Liability:** Every employer, including the State Department and the other foreign affairs agencies, is required to withhold state taxes for the location where the employee either lives or works. Employees serving overseas, however, must maintain a state of domicile in the United States where they may be liable for income tax; the consequent tax liability that the employee faces will vary greatly from state to state. Further, the many laws on taxability of Foreign Service pensions and annuities also vary by state. This section briefly covers both those situations. (See separate box on Tax Withholding When Assigned Domestically.)

### Domicile and Residency

There are many criteria used in determining which state is a citizen's domicile. One of the strongest determinants is prolonged physical presence, a standard that Foreign Service personnel frequently cannot meet due to overseas service. In such cases, the states will make a determination of the individual's income-tax status based on other factors, including where the individual has family ties, has been filing resident tax returns, is registered to vote, has a driver's license, owns property, or has bank accounts or other financial holdings.

In the case of Foreign Service employees, the domicile might be the state from which the person joined the Service, where his or her home leave address is or where he or she intends to return upon separation. For purposes of this article, the term "domicile" refers to legal residence; some states also define it as permanent residence. "Residence" refers to physical presence in the state. Foreign Service personnel must continue to pay taxes to the state of domicile (or to the District of Columbia) while residing outside of the state, including during assignments abroad, unless the state of residence does not require it.

Members are encouraged to review the Overseas Briefing Center's Guide to Residence and Domicile, available on AFSA's website at [www.afsa.org/domicile](http://www.afsa.org/domicile).

### Domestic Employees in the D.C. Area

Foreign Service employees residing in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area are generally required to pay income tax to the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia, in addition to paying tax to the state of their domicile.

Virginia requires tax returns from most temporary residents, as well. Most states allow a credit, however, so that the taxpayer pays the higher tax rate of the two states, with each state receiving a share.

We recommend that you maintain ties with your state of domicile—by, for instance, continuing to also file tax returns in

that state if appropriate—so that when you leave the D.C. area for another overseas assignment, you can demonstrate to the District of Columbia, Virginia or Maryland your affiliation to your home state.

Also, if possible, avoid using the D.C. or Dulles VA pouch zip code as your return address on your federal return because, in some cases, the D.C. and Virginia tax authorities have sought back taxes from those who have used this address.

See box on page 66 for new procedures within the State Department for state tax withholdings.

### States That Have No Income Tax

There are currently seven states with no state income tax: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. In addition, New Hampshire and Tennessee have no tax on earned income, but do tax profits from the sale of bonds and property.

### States That Do Not Tax Non-Resident Domiciliaries

There are 10 states that, under certain conditions, do not tax income earned while the taxpayer is outside the state: California, Connecticut, Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania (but see entry for Pennsylvania below) and West Virginia. The requirements for all except California, Idaho and Oregon are that the individual should not have a permanent "place of abode" in the state, should have a permanent "place of abode" outside the state, and not be physically present for more than 30 days during the tax year. California allows up to 45 days in the state during a tax year.

All 10 states require the filing of non-resident returns for all income earned from in-state sources. Foreign Service employees should also keep in mind that states could challenge the status of overseas government housing in the future.

In "State Overviews" you will find brief state-by-state information on tax liability, with addresses provided to get further information or tax forms. Tax rates are provided where possible.

As always, members are advised to double-check with their state's tax authorities. While AFSA makes every attempt to provide the most up-to-date information, readers with specific questions should consult a tax expert in the state in question. We provide the website address for each in the state-by-state guide, and an email address or link where available. Some states do not offer email customer service.

We also recommend the Tax Foundation website at [www.taxfoundation.org](http://www.taxfoundation.org), which also provides a table showing 2016 tax rates for all states.

## STATE OVERVIEWS

### ALABAMA

Individuals domiciled in Alabama are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Alabama's individual income tax rates range from 2 percent on taxable income over \$500 for single taxpayers and \$1,000 for married filing jointly to 5 percent over \$3,000 for single taxpayers and \$6,000 for married filing jointly.

Write: Alabama Department of Revenue, 50 N. Ripley, Montgomery AL 36104.

Phone: (334) 242-1170.

Website: [www.ador.state.al.us](http://www.ador.state.al.us)

Email: Link through the website: "About Us" then "Contacts," then "Income Tax."

### ALASKA

Alaska does not tax individual income or intangible or personal property. It has no state sales and use, franchise or fiduciary tax. However, some municipalities levy sales, property and use taxes.

Write: State Office Building, 333 West Willoughby Ave., 11th Floor, P.O. Box 110420, Juneau AK 99811-0420.

Phone: (907) 465-2320.

Website: [www.tax.state.ak.us](http://www.tax.state.ak.us)

### ARIZONA

Individuals domiciled in Arizona are considered residents and are taxed on any income that is included in the Federal Adjusted Gross Income, regardless of their physical presence in the state. Arizona's tax rate ranges in five brackets from a minimum of 2.59 percent to a maximum of 4.54 percent of taxable income over \$304,868 married filing jointly or \$152,434 for single filers.

Write: Arizona Department of Revenue, Customer Care, P.O. Box 29086, Phoenix AZ 85038-9086.

Phone: (602) 255-3381.

Website: [www.azdor.gov](http://www.azdor.gov)

Email: For general questions, [taxpayerassistance@azdor.gov](mailto:taxpayerassistance@azdor.gov)

### ARKANSAS

Individuals domiciled in Arkansas are considered residents and are taxed on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The Arkansas tax rate ranges in six brackets from a minimum of 2.5 percent to a maximum of 6.9 percent of net taxable income over \$35,099.

Write: Department of Finance and Administration, Income Tax Section, P.O. Box 3628, Little Rock AR 72203-3628.

Phone: (501) 682-1100.

Website: [www.arkansas.gov/dfa](http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa)

Email: Use Contact Form on "Contact Us" page of the website.

### CALIFORNIA

Foreign Service employees domiciled in California must establish non-residency to avoid liability for California taxes (see Franchise Tax Board Publication 1031). However, a "safe harbor" provision allows anyone who is domiciled in state but is out of the state on an employment-related contract for at least 546 consecutive days to be considered a non-resident. This applies to most FS employees and their spouses, but members domiciled in California are advised to study FTB Publication 1031 for exceptions and exemptions. The California tax rate for 2016 ranges in eight brackets from 1 percent of taxable income under \$7,850 for singles and \$15,770 for joint filers to a maximum of 12.3 percent on taxable income over \$526,443 for singles and \$1,052,886 for joint filers. Non-resident domiciliaries are advised to file on Form 540NR.

Write: Personal Income Taxes, Franchise Tax Board, P.O. Box 942840, Sacramento CA 94240-0040.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 852-5711 (inside the U.S.); (916) 845-6500 (outside the U.S.).

Website: [www.ftb.ca.gov](http://www.ftb.ca.gov)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

### COLORADO

Individuals domiciled in Colorado are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Colorado's tax rate is a flat 4.63 percent of federal taxable income, plus or minus allowable modifications.

Write: Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Service Division, P.O. Box 17087, Denver CO 80217-0087.

Phone: (303) 238-7378.

Website: [www.colorado.gov/revenue](http://www.colorado.gov/revenue)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab on the "Taxation" page.

### CONNECTICUT

Connecticut domiciliaries may qualify for non-resident tax treatment under either of two exceptions as follows:

Group A—the domiciliary 1) did not maintain a permanent place of abode inside Connecticut for the entire tax year; and 2) maintains a permanent place of abode outside the state for the entire tax year; and 3) spends not more than 30 days in the aggregate in the state during the tax year.

Group B—the domiciliary 1) in any period of 548 consecutive days, is present in a foreign country for at least 450 days; and 2) during the 548-day period, is not present in Connecti-

cut for more than 90 days; and 3) does not maintain a permanent place of abode in the state at which the domiciliary's spouse or minor children are present for more than 90 days. Connecticut's tax rate for married filing jointly rises from 3 percent on the first \$20,000 in six steps to 6.9 percent of the excess over \$500,000, and 6.99 percent over \$1,000,000. For singles it is 3 percent on the first \$10,000, rising in six steps to 6.9 percent of the excess over \$250,000 and 6.99 percent over \$500,000.

Write: Department of Revenue Services, 450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 1, Hartford CT 06103.  
Phone: (860) 297-5962.  
Website: [www.ct.gov/drs](http://www.ct.gov/drs)  
Email: Contact through the "Contact us" page on the website.

## **DELAWARE**

Individuals domiciled in Delaware are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Delaware's graduated tax rate rises in six steps from 2.2 percent of taxable income under \$5,000 to 6.6 percent of taxable income over \$60,000.

Write: Division of Revenue, Taxpayers Assistance Section, State Office Building, 820 N. French St., Wilmington DE 19801.  
Phone (302) 577-8200.  
Website: [www.revenue.delaware.gov](http://www.revenue.delaware.gov)  
Email: [personaltax@state.de.us](mailto:personaltax@state.de.us)

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Individuals domiciled in the District of Columbia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence there. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the District for 183 days or more. The District's tax rate is 4 percent if income is less than \$10,000; \$400 plus 6 percent of excess over \$10,000 if between \$10,000 and \$40,000; \$2,200 plus 6.5 percent of excess over \$40,000; \$3,500 plus 8.5 percent of the excess over \$60,000; \$28,150 plus 8.75 percent of any excess above \$350,000; and 8.95 percent over \$1,000,000.

Write: Office of Tax and Revenue, Customer Service Center, 1101 4th St. SW, Suite 270 West, Washington DC 20024.  
Phone: (202) 727-4829.  
Website: [www.otr.cfo.dc.gov/](http://www.otr.cfo.dc.gov/)  
Email: [taxhelp@dc.gov](mailto:taxhelp@dc.gov)

## **FLORIDA**

Florida does not impose personal income, inheritance, gift or intangible personal property taxes. Property tax (homestead) exemptions are only available if you own and permanently

reside on the property. Sales and use tax is 6 percent. There are additional county sales taxes which could make the combined rate as high as 9.5 percent.

Write: Taxpayer Services, Florida Department of Revenue, 5050 W. Tennessee St., Bldg. L, Tallahassee FL 32399-0100.  
Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 352-3671.  
Website: <http://dor.myflorida.com/dor/taxes/>  
Email: Link through the website, go to "Taxes," then "Tax Information," then "Questions?"

## **GEORGIA**

Individuals domiciled in Georgia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Georgia has a graduated tax rate rising in six steps to a maximum of 6 percent of taxable income over \$10,000 and above for joint married filers and \$7,000 for single filers.

Write: Georgia Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, 1800 Century Blvd. NE, Atlanta GA 30345-3205.  
Phone: (877) 423-6711 Option #2, or contact through Georgia Tax Center (log in required).  
Website: <http://dor.georgia.gov/taxes>

## **HAWAII**

Individuals domiciled in Hawaii are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Hawaii's tax rate rises in 12 steps from 1.4 percent on taxable income below \$2,400 for single filers and \$4,800 for joint filers, to a maximum of 8.25 percent for taxable income above \$48,000 for single filers and \$96,000 for joint filers.

Write: Oahu District Office, Taxpayer Services Branch, P.O. Box 259, Honolulu HI 96809-0259.  
Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 222-3229, or (808) 587-4242.  
Website: <http://tax.hawaii.gov/>  
Email: [Taxpayer.Services@hawaii.gov](mailto:Taxpayer.Services@hawaii.gov)

## **IDAHO**

Individuals domiciled in Idaho for an entire tax year are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. However, you are considered a non-resident if: 1) you are an Idaho resident who lived outside of Idaho for at least 445 days in a 15-month period; and 2) after satisfying the 15-month period, you spent fewer than 60 days in Idaho during the year; and 3) you did not have a personal residence in Idaho for yourself or your family during any part of the calendar year; and 4) you did not claim Idaho as your federal tax home for deducting away-from-home expenses on your federal return; and 5) you were not employed on the staff of a U.S. senator; and 6) you did not hold an elective or appointive

office of the U.S. government other than the armed forces or a career appointment in the U.S. Foreign Service (see Idaho Code Sections 63-3013 and 63-3030). In 2016 Idaho's tax rate rises in six steps from a minimum of 1.6 percent to a maximum of 7.4 percent on the amount of Idaho taxable income over \$10,905 for singles and \$21,810 for married filers. A non-resident must file an Idaho income tax return if his or her gross income from Idaho sources is \$2,500 or more. Write: Idaho State Tax Commission, P.O. Box 36, Boise ID 83722-0410. Phone: Toll-free 1 (800) 972-7660 or (208) 334-7660. Website: [www.tax.idaho.gov](http://www.tax.idaho.gov) Email: [taxrep@tax.idaho.gov](mailto:taxrep@tax.idaho.gov)

## ILLINOIS

Individuals domiciled in Illinois are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The Illinois tax rate is a flat 3.75 percent of net income. Write: Illinois Department of Revenue, PO Box 19001, Springfield IL 62794-9001. Phone: toll-free (800) 732-8866, or (217) 782-3336. Website: [www.revenue.state.il.us](http://www.revenue.state.il.us) Email: Link through the website, "Contact Us," then "Taxpayer Answer Center."

## INDIANA

Individuals domiciled in Indiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Indiana's tax rate is a flat 3.3 percent of Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Several counties also charge a county income tax. Write: Indiana Department of Revenue, Individual Income Tax, P.O. Box 40, Indianapolis IN 46206-0040. Phone: (317) 232-2240. Website: [www.in.gov/dor](http://www.in.gov/dor) Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## IOWA

Individuals domiciled in Iowa are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income to the extent that income is taxable on the person's federal income tax returns. Iowa's 2016 tax rate rises in eight steps from 0.36 percent to a maximum 8.98 percent of taxable income over \$69,930, depending on income and filing status. Write: Taxpayer Services, Iowa Department of Revenue, PO Box 10457, Des Moines IA 50306-0457. Phone: 1-(800) 367-3388 or (515) 281-3114 Website: <https://tax.iowa.gov/> Email: Use email form on "Contact Us" page of the website.

## KANSAS

Individuals domiciled in Kansas are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. In 2016 the Kansas tax rate is 2.7 percent on Kansas taxable income under \$15,000 for single filers and under \$30,000 for joint filers and 4.6 percent on income over those amounts. Write: Kansas Taxpayer Assistance Center, Room 150, 915 SW Harrison, Topeka KS 66612. Phone: (785) 368-8222. Website: [www.ksrevenue.org](http://www.ksrevenue.org) Email: [kdor\\_tac@ks.gov](mailto:kdor_tac@ks.gov)

## KENTUCKY

Individuals domiciled in Kentucky are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Kentucky's tax rate ranges from 2 percent on the first \$3,000 of taxable income to 6 percent on all taxable income over \$75,000 for both single and joint filers. Write: Kentucky Department of Revenue, 501 High Street, Frankfort KY 40601. Phone: (502) 564-4581. Website: [www.revenue.ky.gov](http://www.revenue.ky.gov) Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## LOUISIANA

Individuals domiciled in Louisiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Louisiana's tax rate rises from 2 percent for the first \$12,500 for single filers or \$25,000 for joint filers; 4 percent over \$12,500 for singles and over \$25,000 for joint filers, and 6 percent over \$50,000 for single filers or \$100,000 for joint filers. Write: Taxpayer Services Division, Individual Income Tax Section, Louisiana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 201, Baton Rouge LA 70821-0201. Phone: (855) 307-3893. Website: [www.revenue.louisiana.gov](http://www.revenue.louisiana.gov) Email: Link through the website's "Contact LDR Online tab" on the "Contact Us" page.

## MAINE

Individuals domiciled in Maine are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. Since Jan. 1, 2007, however, there have been "safe harbor" provisions. Under the General Safe Harbor provision, Maine domiciliaries are treated as non-residents if they satisfy all three of the following conditions: 1) they did not maintain a permanent place of abode in Maine for the entire taxable year; 2) they maintained

a permanent place of abode outside Maine for the entire taxable year; and 3) they spent no more than 30 days in the aggregate in Maine during the taxable year. Under the Foreign Safe Harbor provision, Maine domiciliaries are also treated as non-residents if they are present in a foreign country for 450 days in a 548-day period and do not spend more than 90 days in Maine during that period. Maine's 2016 tax rate is 5.8 percent on Maine taxable income below \$21,050 for singles and \$42,100 for joint filers, 6.75 percent up to \$37,500 for singles and \$75,000 for married filing jointly, and 7.15 percent over those amounts.

Write: Maine Revenue Services, Income Tax Assistance, P.O. Box 9107, Augusta ME 04332-9107.

Phone: (207) 626-8475.

Website: [www.maine.gov/revenue](http://www.maine.gov/revenue)

Email: [income.tax@maine.gov](mailto:income.tax@maine.gov)

## **MARYLAND**

Individuals domiciled in Maryland are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for an aggregated total of 183 days or more. Maryland's tax rate is \$90 plus 4.75 percent of taxable income over \$3,000 up to \$100,000 if filing singly and \$150,000 if filing jointly. It then rises in four steps to \$12,760 plus 5.75 percent of the excess of taxable income over \$250,000 for singles or \$15,072 plus 5.75 percent of the excess over \$300,000 for married filers. In addition, Baltimore City and the 23 Maryland counties impose a local income tax, which is a percentage of the Maryland taxable income, using Line 31 of Form 502 or Line 9 of Form 503. The local factor varies from 1.75 percent in Worcester County (and for non-residents) to 3.2 percent in Baltimore City, and in Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, Wicomico and Howard counties (see website for details for all counties).

Write: Comptroller of Maryland, Revenue Administration Center, Taxpayer Service Section, 110 Carroll Street, Annapolis MD 21411-0001.

Phone: Toll-free 1 (800) 638-2937, or (410) 260-7980.

Website: [www.marylandtaxes.com](http://www.marylandtaxes.com)

Email: [taxhelp@comp.state.md.us](mailto:taxhelp@comp.state.md.us)

## **MASSACHUSETTS**

Individuals domiciled in Massachusetts are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Salaries and most interest and dividend income are taxed at a flat rate of 5.10 percent for 2016. Some income (e.g., short-term capital

gains) remains taxed at 12 percent.

Write: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, P.O. Box 7010, Boston MA 02204.

Phone: (617) 887-6367.

Website: <http://www.mass.gov/dor/>

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## **MICHIGAN**

Individuals domiciled in Michigan are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Michigan's tax is 4.25 percent. Some Michigan cities impose an additional 1- or 2-percent income tax. Detroit imposes an additional 2.4-percent income tax.

Write: Michigan Department of Treasury, Lansing MI 48922.

Phone: (517) 636.4486 for income tax questions.

Website: [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury)

Email: [treasIndTax@michigan.gov](mailto:treasIndTax@michigan.gov)

## **MINNESOTA**

Individuals domiciled in Minnesota are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Minnesota's tax rate in 2016 is 5.35 percent on taxable income up to \$25,180 for singles or \$36,820 for married joint filers, rising in three steps to a maximum of 9.85 percent on taxable income over \$155,650 for single filers or \$259,420 for married filing jointly.

Write: Minnesota Department of Revenue,

600 North Robert St., St. Paul MN 55146-5510.

Phone: (651) 296-3781.

Website: [www.taxes.state.mn.us](http://www.taxes.state.mn.us)

Email: [individual.incometax@state.mn.us](mailto:individual.incometax@state.mn.us)

## **MISSISSIPPI**

Individuals domiciled in Mississippi are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Mississippi's tax rate is 3 percent on the first \$5,000 of taxable income, 4 percent on the next \$5,000 and 5 percent on taxable income over \$10,000 for all taxpayers, whether filing singly or jointly.

Write: Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 1033, Jackson MS 39215-1033.

Phone: (601) 923-7700.

Website: [www.dor.ms.gov](http://www.dor.ms.gov)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## **MISSOURI**

An individual domiciled in Missouri is considered a non-resident, and is not liable for tax on Missouri income if the individual has no permanent residence in Missouri, has a permanent

residence elsewhere and is not physically present in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Missouri calculates tax on a graduated scale up to \$9,000 of taxable income. Any taxable income over \$9,000 is taxed at a rate of \$315 plus 6 percent of the excess over \$9,000.

Write: Individual Income Tax, P.O. Box 2200, Jefferson City MO 65105-2200.

Phone: (573) 751-3505.

Website: [www.dor.mo.gov](http://www.dor.mo.gov)

Email: [income@dor.mo.gov](mailto:income@dor.mo.gov)

## MONTANA

Individuals domiciled in Montana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Montana's tax rate for 2016 rises in six steps from 1 percent of taxable income under \$2,900 to a maximum of 6.9 percent of taxable income over \$17,400. See the website for various deductions and exemptions.

Write: Montana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 5805, Helena MT 59604-5805.

Phone: 1 (866) 859-2254 or (406) 444-6900.

Website: [www.revenue.mt.gov/home](http://www.revenue.mt.gov/home)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## NEBRASKA

Individuals domiciled in Nebraska are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. For 2016 the individual income tax rates range in four steps from a minimum of 2.46 percent to a maximum of 6.84 percent of the excess over \$29,590 for singles and \$59,180 for joint filers. If AGI is over \$258,250 for single filers or \$370,800 for joint filers an additional tax of between 0.438 and 0.183 percent is imposed.

Write: Department of Revenue, 301 Centennial Mall South, P.O. Box 94818, Lincoln NE 68509-4818.

Phone: (402) 471-5729.

Website: [www.revenue.state.ne.us](http://www.revenue.state.ne.us)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## NEVADA

Nevada does not tax personal income. There is a sales-and-use tax that varies from 6.85 percent to 8.1 percent depending on local jurisdiction. Additional ad valorem personal and real property taxes are also levied.

Write: Nevada Department of Taxation, 1550 College Pkwy, Suite 115, Carson City NV 89706.

Phone: 1 (866) 962-3707 or (775) 684-2000.

Website: [www.tax.state.nv.us](http://www.tax.state.nv.us)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

The state imposes no personal income tax on earned income and no general sales tax. The state does levy, among other taxes, a 5-percent tax on interest and dividend income of more than \$2,400 annually for single filers and \$4,800 annually for joint filers, and an 8.5-percent tax on business profits, including sale of rental property. There is no inheritance tax. Applicable taxes apply to part-year residents.

Write: Central Tax Services Unit, P.O. Box 3306, Concord NH 03302-3306.

Phone: (603) 230-5000.

Website: [www.revenue.nh.gov](http://www.revenue.nh.gov)

## NEW JERSEY

A New Jersey domiciliary is considered a non-resident for New Jersey tax purposes if the individual has no permanent residence in New Jersey, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not physically in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Filing a return is not required (unless the non-resident has New Jersey-source income), but it is recommended in order to preserve domicile status. Filing is required on Form 1040-NR for revenue derived from in-state sources. Tax liability is calculated as a variable lump sum plus a percentage from a minimum of 1.4 percent of taxable gross income up to \$20,000, in three steps to 6.37 percent between \$75,000 and \$500,000, and a maximum of 8.97 percent on taxable gross income over \$500,000 for both single and joint filers.

Write: New Jersey Division of Taxation, Technical Services Branch, P.O. Box 281, Trenton NJ 08695-0281.

Phone: (609) 292-6400.

Website: [www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## NEW MEXICO

Individuals domiciled in New Mexico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The basis for New Mexico's calculation is the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure. Rates rise in four steps from a minimum of 1.7 percent to a maximum of 4.9 percent on New Mexico taxable income over \$16,000 for single filers and \$24,000 for married filing jointly.

Write: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, 1100 South St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe NM 87504.

Phone: (505) 827-0700.

Website: [www.tax.newmexico.gov/](http://www.tax.newmexico.gov/)

Email: Link through the website's "Email Us" tab.

## NEW YORK

There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if you have no permanent residence in New York, have a permanent resi-

dence elsewhere and are not present in the state more than 30 days during the tax year OR you were in a foreign country for at least 450 days during any period of 548 consecutive days; and you, your spouse and minor children spent 90 days or less in New York State during this 548-day period. Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. The tax rate rises in six steps from a minimum of 4 percent to 6.45 percent of taxable income over \$21,300 for single filers and \$42,750 for married filing jointly; 6.65 percent on taxable income over \$80,150 for single filers and \$160,500 for joint filers; 6.85 percent on taxable income over \$214,000 for single filers or \$321,050 for joint filers; and 8.82 percent over \$1,070,350 for single filers and over \$2,140,900 for joint filers. In New York City the maximum rate is 3.648 percent over \$90,000 and 3.876 percent over \$500,000. Filing is required on Form IT-203 for revenue derived from New York sources.

Foreign Service employees assigned to USUN for a normal tour of duty are considered to be resident in NY State for tax purposes. See TSB-M-09(2)I of Jan. 16, 2009, at [www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/memos/income/m09\\_2i.pdf](http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/memos/income/m09_2i.pdf). Write: New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, Personal Income Tax Information, W.A. Harriman Campus, Albany NY 12227. Phone: (518) 457-5181. Website: [www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov) Email: Link through the website's "Answer Center" tab.

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

Individuals domiciled in North Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. North Carolina charges a flat tax rate of 5.75 percent. Residents must also report and pay a "use tax" on purchases made outside the state for use in North Carolina.

Write: North Carolina Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 25000, Raleigh NC 27640-0640. Phone: Toll-free 1 (877) 252-3052. From overseas, call 1 (919) 814-9701. Website: [www.dornc.com/](http://www.dornc.com/)

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

Individuals domiciled in North Dakota and serving outside the state are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. For the 2016 tax year, the tax rate ranges in four steps from 1.1 percent on North Dakota taxable income up to \$37,650 for singles and \$62,900 for joint filers to a maximum of 2.90 percent on taxable income over \$413,350 for singles and joint filers.

Write: Office of State Tax Commissioner, State Capitol,

600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 127, Bismarck ND 58505-0599. Phone: (701) 328-1247. Website: [www.nd.gov/tax](http://www.nd.gov/tax) Email: [individualtax@nd.gov](mailto:individualtax@nd.gov)

## **OHIO**

Individuals domiciled in Ohio are considered residents and their income is subject to tax, using the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure as a starting base. Ohio's tax rate starts at a minimum of 0.495 percent on taxable income under \$5,200, rising in seven steps to a maximum of 4.997 percent on taxable income over \$208,500 for single and joint filers. Ohio also charges a school district income tax of between 0.5 and 2 percent, depending on jurisdiction. Write: Ohio Department of Taxation, Taxpayer Services Center, P.O. Box 530, Columbus OH 43216-0530. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 282-1780 or (614) 387-0224. Website: [www.tax.ohio.gov](http://www.tax.ohio.gov) Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

## **OKLAHOMA**

Individuals domiciled in Oklahoma are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Oklahoma's tax rate for 2016 rises in eight stages to a maximum of 5 percent on taxable income over \$7,200 for single filers and \$12,200 for married filing jointly. Write: Oklahoma Tax Commission, Income Tax, P.O. Box 26800, Oklahoma City OK 73126-0800. Phone: (405) 521-3160. Website: [www.tax.ok.gov](http://www.tax.ok.gov) Email: [otcmaster@tax.ok.gov](mailto:otcmaster@tax.ok.gov)

## **OREGON**

Individuals domiciled in Oregon are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. For 2016, Oregon's tax rate rises from 5 percent on taxable income over \$3,350 for single filers and \$6,700 for married filing jointly, in three steps to 9.9 percent on taxable income over \$125,000 for single filers and \$250,000 for joint filers. Oregon has no sales tax. Write: Oregon Department of Revenue, 955 Center St. NE, Salem OR 97301-2555. Phone: 1 (800) 356-4222, or (503) 378-4988. Website: [www.oregon.gov/DOR](http://www.oregon.gov/DOR) Email: [questions.dor@state.or.us](mailto:questions.dor@state.or.us)

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

Pennsylvania's tax rate is a flat 3.07 percent. Pennsylvania tax authorities have ruled that Pennsylvania residents in the

U.S. Foreign Service are not on federal active duty for state tax purposes, and thus their income is taxable compensation. For non-Foreign Service state residents, there is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in the state, has a permanent residence elsewhere and spends no more than 30 days in the state during the tax year. However, Pennsylvania does not consider government quarters overseas to be a “permanent residence elsewhere.” Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. File Form PA-40 for all income derived from Pennsylvania sources.

Write: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Department, Harrisburg PA 17128-1061.

Phone: (717) 787-8201.

Website: [www.revenue.pa.gov](http://www.revenue.pa.gov)

Email: Link through the website’s “Contact Us” tab.

## PUERTO RICO

Individuals who are domiciled in Puerto Rico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the Commonwealth. Normally, they may claim a credit with certain limitations for income taxes paid to the United States on any income from sources outside Puerto Rico. Taxes range from 7 percent of taxable income up to \$25,000 to 33 percent of taxable income over \$61,500 for all taxpayers.

Write: Departamento de Hacienda, P.O. Box 9024140, San Juan PR 00902-4140.

Phone: (787) 622-0123.

Website: [www.hacienda.gobierno.pr](http://www.hacienda.gobierno.pr)

Email: [infoserv@hacienda.gobierno.pr](mailto:infoserv@hacienda.gobierno.pr)

## RHODE ISLAND

Individuals domiciled in Rhode Island are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2016 Rhode Island tax rate is 3.75 percent of taxable income up to \$60,850 for all filers, 4.75 percent of income over \$60,850 and 5.99 percent of taxable income over \$138,300 for all filers. Also, a 2010 change treats capital gains as ordinary taxable income. Refer to the tax division’s website for current information and handy filing hints, as well as for forms and regulations.

Write: Rhode Island Division of Taxation, Taxpayer Assistance Section, One Capitol Hill, Providence RI 02908-5801.

Phone (401) 574-8829, Option #3.

Website: [www.tax.state.ri.us](http://www.tax.state.ri.us)

Email: [Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov](mailto:Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov)

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Individuals domiciled in South Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. South Carolina’s 2016 tax rates rise in six steps from 3 percent on the first \$5,840 of South Carolina taxable income to a maximum of 7 percent of taxable income over \$14,600.

Write: South Carolina Tax Commission, P.O. Box 125, Columbia SC 29214.

Phone: 1 (844) 898-8542 Option 3, or (803) 898-5000.

Website: [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org)

Email: [iitax@dor.sctax.gov](mailto:iitax@dor.sctax.gov) or through the “Contact Us” tab on the website.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

There is no state income tax and no state inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 4 percent; municipalities may add up to an additional 2.75 percent.

Write: South Dakota Department of Revenue, 445 East Capitol Ave., Pierre SD 57501-3185.

Phone: (605) 773-3311.

Website: <http://dor.sd.gov>

Email: Link through the website’s “Contact Us” tab.

## TENNESSEE

Salaries and wages are not subject to state income tax, but Tennessee imposes a 6-percent tax on most dividends and interest income of more than \$1,250 (single filers) or \$2,500 (joint filers) in the tax year.

Write: Tennessee Department of Revenue (Attention: Taxpayer Services), 500 Deaderick St., Nashville TN 37242.

Phone: (615) 253-6000.

Website: [www.tn.gov/revenue/](http://www.tn.gov/revenue/)

Email: [TN.Revenue@tn.gov](mailto:TN.Revenue@tn.gov)

## TEXAS

There is no state personal income tax. State sales tax is 6.25 percent with local additions adding up to 2 percent.

Write: Texas Comptroller, P.O. Box 13528, Capitol Station, Austin TX 78711-3528.

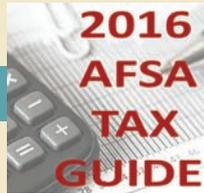
Phone: 1 (800) 252-5555.

Website: [www.comptroller.texas.gov/](http://www.comptroller.texas.gov/)

Email: Use email options on “Contact Us” page of the website.

## UTAH

Utah has a flat tax of 5 percent on all income. Individuals domiciled in Utah are considered residents and are subject to Utah state tax. Utah requires that all Federal Adjusted Gross Income reported on the federal return be reported on the state return regardless of the taxpayer’s physical presence in



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the state. Some taxpayers will be able to claim either a taxpayer tax credit or a retirement tax credit, or both (see website for explanation).

Write: Utah State Tax Commission, Taxpayer Services Division, 210 North 1950 West, Salt Lake City UT 84134.

Phone: toll-free (800) 662-4335, Option 0, or (801) 297-2200, Option 0.

Website: [www.tax.utah.gov](http://www.tax.utah.gov)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

### VERMONT

Individuals domiciled in Vermont are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2016 tax rate ranges from 3.55 percent on taxable income under \$37,650 for singles and \$62,850 for joint filers to a maximum of 8.95 percent on taxable income over \$413,350 for singles and joint filers.

Write: Vermont Department of Taxes, Taxpayer Services Division, 133 State St., Montpelier VT 05633-1401.

Phone: (802) 828-2865.

Website: [www.tax.vermont.gov/](http://www.tax.vermont.gov/)

Email: [tax.individualincome@vermont.gov](mailto:tax.individualincome@vermont.gov) or through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

### VIRGINIA

Individuals domiciled in Virginia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for 183 days or more. These individuals should file using Form 760. In addition, Virginia requires non-residents to file Form 763 if their Virginia Adjusted Gross Income (which includes any federal salary paid during time they are residing in Virginia) exceeds \$11,950 for single filers and married filing separately, or \$23,900 for married filing jointly.

Individual tax rates are: 2 percent if taxable income is less than \$3,000; \$60 plus 3 percent of excess over \$3,000 if taxable income is between \$3,000 and \$5,000; \$120 plus 5 percent of excess over \$5,000 if taxable income is between \$5,000 and \$17,000; and \$720 plus 5.75 percent if taxable income is over \$17,000. In addition, using Form R-1H, Virginia allows employers of household help to elect to pay state unemployment tax annually instead of quarterly.

Write: Virginia Department of Taxation, Office of Customer Services, P.O. Box 1115, Richmond VA 23218-1115.

Phone: (804) 367-8031.

Website: [www.tax.virginia.gov](http://www.tax.virginia.gov)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.



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Website: [www.irvingcom.com](http://www.irvingcom.com)

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or call **(202) 944-5504**

### APPLICATION DEADLINES

Merit Awards: **February 6, 2017**  
Financial Aid Scholarships: **March 6, 2017**

**WASHINGTON**

There is no state income tax and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks and bonds. Residents may deduct Washington sales tax on their federal tax returns if they itemize deductions. State tax rate is 6.5 percent and local additions can increase that to 9.5 percent in some areas.

Write: Washington State Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services, P.O. Box 47478, Olympia WA 98504-7478. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 647-7706.

Website: [www.dor.wa.gov](http://www.dor.wa.gov)

Email: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

**WEST VIRGINIA**

There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in West Virginia, has a permanent residence elsewhere and spends no more than 30 days of the tax year in West Virginia. However, non-resident domiciliaries are required to file a return on Form IT-140 for all income derived from West Virginia sources. Tax rates rise in four steps from 4 percent of taxable income over \$10,000 for all filers, to 6.5 percent of taxable income for all filers over \$60,000.

Write: Department of Tax and Revenue, The Revenue Center, 1001 Lee St. E., Charleston WV 25337-3784.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 982-8297, or (304) 558-3333.

Website: [www.wvtax.gov](http://www.wvtax.gov)

Email: [TaxHelp@WV.Gov](mailto:TaxHelp@WV.Gov)

**WISCONSIN**

Individuals domiciled in Wisconsin are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of where the income is earned. Wisconsin's 2016 tax rate rises in four steps from 4 percent on income up to \$11,150 for single filers or \$14,820 for joint filers to a maximum of 7.65 percent on income over \$244,750 for single filers or \$326,330 for joint filers.

Write: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Individual Income Tax Assistance, P.O. Box 59, Madison WI 53708-0001.

Phone: (608) 266-2486.

Website: [www.revenue.wi.gov](http://www.revenue.wi.gov)

Email: Through the "Contact Us" link on the website.

**WYOMING**

There is no state income tax and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks or bonds. State sales tax is 4 percent. Local jurisdictions may add another 4 percent.

Write: Wyoming Department of Revenue, Herschler Building, 122 West 25th St., Cheyenne WY 82002-0110.

Phone: (307) 777-5200.

Website: <http://revenue.wyo.gov/>

Email: [dor@wyo.gov](mailto:dor@wyo.gov) ■

**STATE PENSION AND ANNUITY TAX**

The laws regarding the taxation of Foreign Service annuities vary greatly from state to state. In addition to those states that have no income tax or no tax on personal income, there are several states that do not tax income derived from pensions and annuities. Idaho taxes Foreign Service annuities while exempting certain categories of Civil Service employees. Several websites provide more information on individual state taxes for retirees, but the Retirement Living Information Center at [www.retirementliving.com/taxes-by-state](http://www.retirementliving.com/taxes-by-state) is one of the more comprehensive and is recommended for further information.

**ALABAMA**

Social Security and U.S. government pensions are not taxable. The combined state, county and city general sales and use tax rates range from 7 percent to as much as 8.65 percent. See also [www.revenue.alabama.gov/taxpayerassist/retire.pdf](http://www.revenue.alabama.gov/taxpayerassist/retire.pdf).

**ALASKA**

No personal income tax. Most municipalities levy sales and/or use taxes of between 2 and 7 percent and/or a property tax. If over 65, you may be able to claim an exemption.

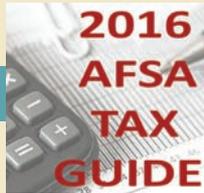
**ARIZONA**

Up to \$2,500 of U.S. government pension income may be excluded for each taxpayer. There is also a \$2,100 exemption for each taxpayer age 65 or over. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales and use tax is 5.6 percent, with additions

depending on the county and/or city.

**ARKANSAS**

The first \$6,000 of income from any retirement plan or IRA is exempt (to a maximum of \$6,000 overall). Social Security is excluded from taxable income. There is no estate



or inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 6.5 percent; city and county taxes may add another 5.5 percent.

### CALIFORNIA

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. The sales and use tax rate varies from 7.5 percent (the statewide rate) to 11 percent in some areas. CA Pub 71 lists all rates statewide.

### COLORADO

Up to \$24,000 of pension or Social Security income can be excluded if individual is age 65 or over. Up to \$20,000 is exempt if age 55 to 64. State sales tax is 2.9 percent; local additions can increase it to as much as 9.9 percent.

### CONNECTICUT

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable for residents. Social Security is exempt if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$50,000 for singles or \$60,000 for joint filers. Statewide sales tax is 6.35 percent. No local additions.

### DELAWARE

Pension exclusions per person: \$2,000 is exempt under age 60; \$12,500 if age 60 or over. There is an additional standard deduction of \$2,500 if age 65 or over if you do not itemize. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Delaware does not impose a sales tax.

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Pension or annuity exclusion of \$3,000 is applicable if 62 years or older. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales and use tax is 5.75 percent, with higher rates for some commodities (liquor, meals, etc.).

### FLORIDA

There is no personal income, inheritance, gift tax or tax on intangible property. The state sales and use tax is 6 percent. There are additional county sales taxes, which could make the combined rate as high as 9.5 percent.

### GEORGIA

Up to \$35,000 of retirement income may be excluded for those aged 62 or older or totally disabled. Up to \$65,000 of retirement income may be excludable for taxpayers who are 65 or older. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales tax is 4 percent statewide, with additions of up to 3 percent depending on jurisdiction.

### HAWAII

Pension and annuity distributions from a government pension plan are not taxed in Hawaii. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Hawaii charges a general excise tax of 4 percent instead of sales tax.

### IDAHO

If the individual is age 65 or older, or age 62 and dis-



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abled, Civil Service Retirement System and Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System pensions qualify for a deduction in 2016 of a maximum of \$27,876 for a single return and up to \$41,814 for a joint return. Federal Employees' Retirement System or Foreign Service Pension System pensions do not qualify for this deduction. The deduction is reduced dollar for dollar by Social Security benefits. Social Security itself is not taxed. Idaho state sales tax is 6 percent; some local jurisdictions add as much as another 3 percent.

### ILLINOIS

Illinois does not tax U.S. government pensions or Social Security. State sales tax is 6.25 percent. Local additions can raise sales tax to 8.45 percent in some jurisdictions.

### INDIANA

If the individual is over age 62, the Adjusted Gross Income may be reduced by the first \$2,000 of any pension, reduced dollar for dollar by Social Security benefits. There is also a \$1,000 exemption if over 65, or \$1,500 if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$40,000. There is no pension exclusion for survivor annuitants of federal annuities. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales tax and use tax is 7 percent.

### IOWA

Generally taxable. A married couple with an income for the year of less than \$32,000 may file for exemption, if at least one spouse or the head of household is 65 years or older on Dec. 31, and single persons who are 65 years or older on Dec. 31 may file for an exemption if their income is \$24,000 or less. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Statewide sales tax is 6 percent, with no more than 1 percent added in local jurisdictions.

### KANSAS

U.S. government pensions are not taxed. There is an extra deduction of \$850 if over 65. Social Security is exempt if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is under \$75,000. State sales tax is 6.3 percent, with additions of between 1 and 4 percent depending on jurisdiction.

### KENTUCKY

Government pension income is exempt if retired before Jan. 1, 1998. If retired after Dec. 31, 1997, pension/annuity income up to \$41,110 remains fully excludable for 2016. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales and use tax is 6 percent statewide, with no local sales or use taxes.

### LOUISIANA

Federal retirement benefits are exempt from state income tax. There is an exemption of \$6,000 of other annual retirement income received by any per-

son age 65 or over. Married filing jointly may exclude \$12,000. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. State sales tax is 4 percent with local additions up to a possible total of 10.75 percent. Use tax is 8 percent regardless of the purchaser's location.

### MAINE

Recipients of a government-sponsored pension or annuity who are filing singly may deduct up to \$10,000 (\$20,000 for married filing jointly) on income that is included in their Federal Adjusted Gross Income, reduced by all Social Security and railroad benefits. For those aged 65 and over, there is an additional standard deduction of \$1,450 (single), \$1,150 (married filing singly) or \$2,200 (married filing jointly). General sales tax is 5.5 percent; 8 percent on meals and liquor.

### MARYLAND

Those over 65 or permanently disabled, or whose spouse is permanently disabled, may under certain conditions be eligible for Maryland's maximum pension exclusion of \$29,200. Also, all individuals 65 years or older are entitled to an extra \$1,000 personal exemption in addition to the regular \$3,200 personal exemption available to all taxpayers. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. See the worksheet and instructions in the Maryland Resident Tax

Booklet. General sales tax is 6 percent; 9 percent on liquor.

### MASSACHUSETTS

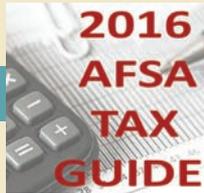
Federal pensions and Social Security are excluded from Massachusetts gross income. Each taxpayer over age 65 is allowed an additional \$700 exemption on other income. Sales tax is 6.25 percent.

### MICHIGAN

Pension benefits included in Adjusted Gross Income from a private pension system or an IRA are deductible for those born before 1946 to a maximum of \$47,309 for a single filer, or \$94,618 for joint filers; public pensions are exempt. If born after 1946 and before 1952, the exemption for public and private pensions is limited to \$20,000 for singles and \$40,000 for married filers. If born after 1952, not eligible for any exemption until reaching age 67. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Full details at: [www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/PensionBenefitsChart\\_479546\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/PensionBenefitsChart_479546_7.pdf). Michigan's state sales tax rate is 6 percent. There are no city, local or county sales taxes.

### MINNESOTA

Social Security income is taxed by Minnesota to the same extent it is on your federal return. If your only income is Social Security, you would not be required



to file an income tax return. All federal pensions are taxable, but single taxpayers who are over 65 or disabled may exclude some income if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is under \$33,700 and nontaxable Social Security is under \$9,600. For a couple, the limits are \$42,000 for Adjusted Gross Income and \$12,000 for nontaxable Social Security. Statewide sales and use tax is 6.875 percent; some local additions may increase the total to 9.53 percent.

**MISSISSIPPI**

Social Security, qualified retirement income from federal, state and private retirement systems, and income from IRAs are exempt from Mississippi tax. There is an additional exemption of \$1,500 on other income if over 65. Statewide sales tax is 7 percent.

**MISSOURI**

Public pension income may be deducted if Missouri Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$100,000 when married filing jointly or \$85,000 for single filers, up to a limit of \$36,442 for each spouse. The maximum private pension deduction is \$6,000. You may also deduct 100 percent of Social Security income if over age 62 and Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than the limits above. Sales tax is 4.225 percent; local additions may add another 2 percent.

**MONTANA**

There is a \$3,980 pension income exclusion if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$33,190. Those over 65 can exempt an additional \$800 of interest income for single taxpayers and \$1,600 for married joint filers. Social Security is subject to tax. Montana has no general sales tax, but tax is levied on the sale of various commodities.

**NEBRASKA**

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is taxable. State sales tax is 5.5 percent, with local additions of up to 2 percent.

**NEVADA**

No personal income tax. Sales and use tax varies from 6.85 to 8.1 percent, depending on local jurisdiction.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

No personal income tax. There is no inheritance tax. There is a 5-percent tax on interest/dividend income over \$2,400 for singles (\$4,800 married filing jointly). A \$1,200 exemption is available for those 65 or over. No general sales tax.

**NEW JERSEY**

Pensions and annuities from civilian government service are subject to state income tax, with exemptions for those aged 62 or older or totally and permanently disabled. However, see this link for the distinction between

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the “Three-Year method” and the “General Rule method” for contributory pension plans: [www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/njit6.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/njit6.shtml). Singles and heads of households can exclude up to \$15,000 of retirement income; those married filing jointly up to \$20,000; those married filing separately up to \$10,000 each. These exclusions are eliminated for New Jersey gross incomes over \$100,000. Residents over 65 may be eligible for an additional \$1,000 personal exemption. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. State sales tax is 7 percent.

### NEW MEXICO

All pensions and annuities are taxed as part of Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Taxpayers 65 and older may exempt up to \$8,000 (single) or \$16,000 (joint) from any income source if their income is under \$28,500 (individual filers) or \$51,000 (married filing jointly). The exemption is reduced as income increases, disappearing altogether at \$51,000. New Mexico has a gross receipts tax, instead of a sales tax, of 5.125 percent; county and city taxes may increase the total to 6.625 percent in some jurisdictions.

### NEW YORK

Social Security, U.S. government pensions and annuities are not taxed. For those over age 59½, up to

\$20,000 of other annuity income (e.g., Thrift Savings Plan) may be excluded. See N.Y. Tax Publication 36 at [www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/income/pub36.pdf](http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/income/pub36.pdf) for details. Sales tax is 4 percent statewide. Other local taxes may add up to an additional 5 percent.

### NORTH CAROLINA

Pursuant to the “Bailey” decision (see <http://dorn.com/taxes/individual/benefits.html>), government retirement benefits received by federal retirees who had five years of creditable service in a federal retirement system on Aug. 12, 1989, are exempt from North Carolina income tax. Those who do not have five years of creditable service on Aug. 12, 1989, must pay North Carolina tax on their federal annuities. In Tax Year 2014 and later, the \$4,000 deduction is no longer available. For those over 65, an extra \$750 (single) or \$1,200 (couple) may be deducted. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. State sales tax is 4.75 percent; local taxes may increase this by up to 3 percent.

### NORTH DAKOTA

All pensions and annuities are fully taxed. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. General sales tax is 5 percent; 7 percent on liquor. Local jurisdictions impose up to 3 percent more.

### OHIO

Retirement income is taxed. Taxpayers 65 and over may take a \$50 credit per return. In addition, Ohio gives a tax credit based on the amount of the retirement income included in Ohio Adjusted Gross Income, reaching a maximum of \$200 for any retirement income over \$8,000. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. State sales tax is 5.75 percent. Counties and regional transit authorities may add to this, but the total must not exceed 8.75 percent.

### OKLAHOMA

Individuals receiving FERS/FSPS or private pensions may exempt up to \$10,000, but not to exceed the amount included in the Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Since 2011, 100 percent of a federal pension paid in lieu of Social Security (i.e., CSRS and FSRDS—“old system”—including the CSRS/FSRDS portion of an annuity paid under both systems) is exempt. Social Security included in FAGI is exempt. State sales tax is 4.5 percent. Local and other additions may bring the total up to 9.5 percent.

### OREGON

Generally, all retirement income is subject to Oregon tax when received by an Oregon resident. However, federal retirees who retired on or before Oct. 1, 1991, may exempt their entire federal pension; those who worked

both before and after Oct. 1, 1991, must prorate their exemption using the instructions in the tax booklet. For those over age 62, a tax credit of up to 9 percent of taxable pension income is available to recipients of pension income, including most private pension income, whose household income was less than \$22,500 (single) and \$45,000 (joint), and who received less than \$7,500 (single)/\$15,000 (joint) in Social Security benefits. The credit is the lesser of the tax liability, or 9 percent of taxable pension income. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Oregon has no sales tax.

### PENNSYLVANIA

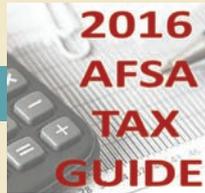
Government pensions and Social Security are not subject to personal income tax. Pennsylvania sales tax is 6 percent. Other taxing entities may add up to 2 percent.

### PUERTO RICO

The first \$11,000 of income received from a federal pension can be excluded for individuals under 60. For those over 60, the exclusion is \$15,000. If the individual receives more than one federal pension, the exclusion applies to each pension or annuity separately. Social Security is excluded from taxable income.

### RHODE ISLAND

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is taxed to the



extent it is federally taxed. Sales tax is 7 percent; meals and beverages 8 percent.

### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

Individuals under age 65 can claim a \$3,000 deduction on qualified retirement income; those age 65 or over may claim a \$15,000 deduction on qualified retirement income (\$30,000 if both spouses are over 65), but must reduce this figure by any other retirement deduction claimed. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales tax is 6 percent plus 1 percent in some counties. Residents aged 85 and over pay 5 percent.

### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

No personal income tax or inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 4 percent; municipalities may add up to an additional 2 percent. Residents who are age 66 and older and have a yearly income of under \$10,250 (single) or in a household where the total income was under \$13,250 are eligible for a sales tax OR a property tax refund.

### **TENNESSEE**

Social Security, pension income and income from IRAs and TSP are not subject to personal income tax. Most interest and dividend income is taxed at 6 percent if over \$1,250 (single filers) or \$2,500 (married filing jointly). However, for tax year 2015 and subsequently, those over 65 with total income from all sources

of less than \$37,000 for a single filer and \$68,000 for joint filers are completely exempt from all taxes on income. State sales tax is 5 percent on food; 7 percent on other goods, with between 1.5 and 2.75 percent added, depending on jurisdiction.

### **TEXAS**

No personal income tax or inheritance tax. State sales tax is 6.25 percent. Local options can raise the rate to 8.25 percent.

### **UTAH**

Utah has a flat tax rate of 5 percent of all income. For taxpayers over 65 there is a retirement tax credit of \$450 for single filers and \$900 for joint filers. This is reduced by 2.5 percent of income exceeding \$25,000 for single filers and \$32,000 for joint filers. See the state website for details. State sales tax is 4.7 percent; local option taxes may raise the total to as much as 9.95 percent.

### **VERMONT**

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is taxed to the extent it is federally taxed. State general sales tax is 6 percent; local option taxes may raise the total to 7 percent (higher on some commodities).

### **VIRGINIA**

Individuals over age 65 can take a \$12,000 deduction. The maximum \$12,000 deduction is reduced by

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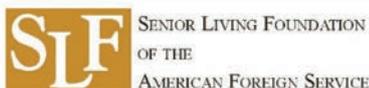


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one dollar for each dollar by which Adjusted Gross Income exceeds \$50,000 for single, and \$75,000 for married, taxpayers. All taxpayers over 65 receive an additional personal exemption of \$800. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. The estate tax was repealed for all deaths after July 1, 2007. The general sales tax rate is 5.3 percent (4.3 percent state tax and 1 percent local tax, with an extra 0.7 percent in Northern Virginia).

### WASHINGTON

No personal income tax. Retirement income is not taxed. State sales tax is 6.5 percent; rates are updated quarterly. Local taxes may increase the total to 9.5 percent.

### WEST VIRGINIA

\$2,000 of any civil or state pension is exempt. Social Security income is taxable only to the extent that the income is includable in Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Taxpayers 65 and older or surviving spouses of any age may exclude the first \$8,000 (individual filers) or \$16,000 (married

filing jointly) of any retirement income. Out-of-state government pensions qualify for this exemption. State sales tax is 6 percent, with additions of between 0.5 and 1 percent in some jurisdictions.

### WISCONSIN

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Those age 65 or over may take two personal deductions totaling \$950. Benefits received from a federal retirement system account established before Dec. 31, 1963, are not taxable. Those over 65 and with a FAGI of less than \$15,000 (single filers) or \$30,000 (joint filers) may exclude \$5,000 of income from federal retirement systems or IRAs. Those over 65 may take an additional personal deduction of \$250. State sales tax is 5 percent; most counties charge an extra 1.5 percent.

### WYOMING

No personal income tax. State sales tax is 4 percent. Local taxes may add another 4 percent. ■

### ■ **Lessie Marie “Cita” Brewton**

**Bishop**, 95, widow of the late Ambassador Max Waldo Schmidt Bishop, died peacefully at Maxland, her home in Ailey, Ga., on Sept. 18.

Jessie Marie was born Sept. 4, 1921, in Vidalia, Ga., a daughter of John Broadus Brewton and Ala Peterson Brewton. A 1938 graduate of Vidalia High School and a 1942 graduate of Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, she served in the U.S. Navy as a WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) communications officer during World War II.

Mrs. Bishop met her FSO husband in Japan, where he was serving as the political adviser to General MacArthur after the war. They were married on July 13, 1946, at the base chapel in Yokohama.

Mr. Bishop’s Foreign Service career took them to many international destinations, including Saudi Arabia, and culminated in his appointment as ambassador to Thailand by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1955.

Following her husband’s retirement as executive director of the World Affairs Council in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1973, the couple settled in Ailey, where Mrs. Bishop was a gracious hostess and enjoyed the company of friends and family. She especially loved arranging fresh flowers from her garden for her home.

She was a member of the Ailey United Methodist Church, the American Foreign Service Association and DACOR.

Mrs. Bishop was preceded in death by her husband, who died in 1994. She is survived by four children: Cecelia Marie Bishop of Oakland, Calif., Ala Joan (and her husband, Adrian) Jones of Tyrone, Ga., Nancy Caroline (and her husband, Bruce) Dutcher of Atlanta, Ga., and Max Brewton Bishop of Ailey; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchild-

dren; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

The family gratefully acknowledges the loving care Mrs. Bishop received from Elizabeth Cummings, Carolyn Snead, Melissa Nelms, Tye Ronnie Gasper and Mary Gasser.

Memorial donations in Mrs. Bishop’s name may be made to the Peterson Cemetery Fund, c/o Tom Peterson, P.O. Box 7, Ailey GA 30410.

■ **Lesley Dorman**, 95, the wife of FSO Philip Francis Dorman and a groundbreaking leader on behalf of Foreign Service families for nearly 50 years, died at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 26.

From 1976 to 1981, she served as president of AAFSW (Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide, then called Association of American Foreign Service Women).

Lesley Tanburn was born on Nov. 17, 1920, in the town of Chalfont St. Giles in the county of Buckinghamshire, a beautiful and historic area near London. Her mother, a suffragette who raced automobiles as a hobby, showed her daughter that if groups of women worked together, they could accomplish a great deal.

Her parents frequently received distinguished guests, and Lesley learned early on to converse with well-informed people older than she about a variety of topics. These childhood experiences gave her strong confidence in her own abilities, which served her well in later interactions with senior management at the Department of State and elected representatives on Capitol Hill.

During World War II she served as a WREN—Women’s Royal Naval Service, the women’s branch of the United Kingdom’s Royal Navy. She was stationed at Hyde Park in London, where she served as part

of an anti-aircraft group whose task it was to shoot down German warplanes.

In 1950, she married Philip Francis Dorman, an American FSO serving at Embassy London. The couple remained in London for four years. Postings to Cairo, Tehran, Lusaka, Khartoum and Bangkok followed.

At post, Mrs. Dorman took an active interest in the local community, either by becoming involved in existing projects or creating new ones. In Lusaka, a cooperative she organized and developed to encourage the production of local handicrafts continued to function many years after she departed.

The couple returned to Washington, D.C., in 1971, and Mrs. Dorman’s leadership on behalf of the Foreign Service community entered a new phase, one that would lead to the establishment of the Family Liaison Office at State and other pioneering achievements.

Mrs. Dorman was elected president of AAFSW in 1976, her five-year term coinciding with the social movement sparked by the “’72 Directive”—which, for the first time, asserted the independence of Foreign Service wives. One of her first acts was to take the lead in creating the AAFSW FORUM, which became the association’s think tank.

The FORUM sought to identify the major concerns people had begun to express about life in the Foreign Service. For the first time, clusters of issues were identified: (1) family life, including education of children and medical care; (2) the modern Foreign Service wife, including spousal employment, the formation of a skills bank and the representational function; (3) orientation, including training for spouses; (4) re-entry issues; and (5) women in transition, through retirement, the death of a spouse or divorce.

With Mrs. Dorman as chair, the

FORUM sent out 9,000 questionnaires, asking people overseas to assess the impact of the Foreign Service on family members in those five clusters of concern. Based on the replies, the “Report on the Concerns of Foreign Service Spouses and Families” was presented to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in March 1977.

The report contained 11 recommendations, the second of which was to establish the Family Liaison Office. Sec. Vance responded personally to the recommendations, the FLO proposal in particular: “The concept is a good one and I support it... I believe that we should establish FLO or its equivalent with all deliberate speed.”

Mrs. Dorman understood that the goal of AAFSW was to insert a non-bureaucratic office into a bureaucratic structure. As Mette Beecroft recalls in a September tribute from the AAFSW Board: “We used to say, ‘The FLO is in the bureaucracy but not of the bureaucracy.’”

Further reflecting her keen understanding of State Department bureaucratic realities, Mrs. Dorman insisted that the new Family Liaison Office be administratively placed directly under the Under Secretary for Management, rather than at a lower level.

She pursued numerous conversations with the Secretary of State, the Under Secretary for Management, the Director General of the Foreign Service and the Directors of USAID and USIA to ensure that their agencies’ concerns were taken into consideration.

FLO opened officially in March 1978. From the outset, and to the surprise of some inside the Department of State, the new office was a resounding success.

Mrs. Dorman’s engagement on behalf of the Foreign Service community did not stop there. While AAFSW president she also supported creation of the Overseas Briefing Center, to provide a source of

information that employees and families could consult on posts overseas before they completed their bid lists and before actually arriving at post.

In 1979, under Mrs. Dorman’s leadership, the FORUM contributed two more special reports based on information collected by members. “Legal and Economic Implications of USFS Life for Wives” discussed the realities of credit, property rights, widowhood and divorce for FS wives and their families. It was the first such document ever produced.

The second FORUM report addressed—again, for the first time ever—the issue of spousal employment.

In the late 1970s, when the administration decided to revise the Foreign Service Act of 1946, Mrs. Dorman steered AAFSW to a seat at the table, registering the group as a bona fide lobbying entity and, with others, gave testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the White House Conference on Families.

The result was a clause in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 stipulating that the “...Foreign Service pension be equally divided by spouses upon divorce unless an agreement or court order existed to the contrary.”

During the last two years of Mrs. Dorman’s AAFSW presidency, a new area of concern appeared. During the Iran hostage crisis from 1979 to 1981 it became obvious that the U.S. government needed to establish better support for diplomatic families in times of international emergency. The FORUM started work on a report, “Families in Situations of International Crisis.”

In addition, with Mrs. Dorman’s encouragement, AAFSW established fruitful cooperation with the Overseas Briefing Center to produce *What Do I Do Now? A Sourcebook on Regulations, Allowances*

*and Finances*—a volume still in use today.

After her term in office, Mrs. Dorman remained deeply loyal to AAFSW and later co-authored a history of the association from 1960 to 1990. In 1993, the association created the Dorman Award in her honor to recognize AAFSW volunteers who had given exceptional, sustained support to the AAFSW in all its endeavors.

In addition to serving as president, she served as the AAFSW program chair, the housing office chair and the public relations chair. Even when it became difficult for her to move about, she insisted on remaining engaged and often attended AAFSW Board meetings.

Lesley Dorman’s friends and colleagues remember her with admiration and affection as an unfailingly loyal and fascinating friend with a wonderful sense of humor. Even when she was involved in thorny discussions, they recall, she was never “all work and no play.” She loved tennis, both as player and spectator—especially the matches at Wimbledon.

From time to time, they recall, she would say: “We need a good giggle!” This would mean no shop talk and going out for lunch—or even, on one memorable occasion, for high tea at the Mayflower Hotel.

Friends and colleagues also remember her as an irreplaceable driving force whose legacy is an inspiration to all. Through AAFSW, Mrs. Dorman did an enormous amount to improve the quality of life of Foreign Service spouses and families.

Mrs. Dorman is survived by her husband of 65 years, Philip Dorman, and two sons, Mark and Tim, of Washington, D.C.

■ **Joske Y. Duffield**, 93, the widow of former FSO Thomas Jefferson (Jeff) Duffield Jr., died on Oct. 10 in Denver, Colo., of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Born Josephine Yvonne van Geelen in Bandung, Java, in the former Netherlands East Indies, to Karel Lodewijk van Geelen and Theodora (Dolly) Henriette Antonia (née Liveu, subsequently van Geelen, then van Dijke) Hoekstra, Mrs. Duffield grew up with her father in the pampered, colonial-era Dutch society in what is today Indonesia. She also spent three years (1928-1931) with her mother in the Netherlands.

She was working as a steno-typist for the Dutch Civil Air Protection Services in Surabaya when the Japanese invaded and occupied the Netherlands East Indies. As chief administrative officer of the State Railways for East Java, Mrs. Duffield's father was taken into custody by the Kempeitai shortly after Dutch capitulation in March 1942, and she never saw him again. Mrs. Duffield spent the war years in three Japanese internment camps on Java—Darmowijk in Surabaya, and Gedangan and Lampersari in Semarang.

After the Japanese surrender, Mrs. Duffield returned to Surabaya to search for her father. Her quick thinking and fearlessness saved the lives of residents of the house in which she lived from marauding mobs of young Indonesian nationalists. When she refused to be evacuated, she was imprisoned by the nationalists in the Simpang Club, thereby surviving the ensuing Massacre of Surabaya in November 1945.

When the nationalists were forced to retreat inland, she was released by Deibel Effendi and subsequently worked for the Allied British Military Police until they handed over power to their Dutch successors in April 1946.

Mrs. Duffield returned to the Netherlands in August 1946 and there met her future husband. FSO Thomas Duffield was posted to Rotterdam and had rented a room in Mrs. Hoekstra's fifth-floor flat

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in one of the few buildings in central Rotterdam to survive the Blitz. They married in 1948, at the Church of Saint Mary in Rotterdam.

The Duffields' first daughter was born in Rotterdam the following year. Mrs. Duffield became a U.S. citizen in 1950 in Boston, Mass. She accompanied her husband over the course of his career to Saigon (1950-1952), where their second daughter was born; Frankfurt (1952-1955), where their third daughter was born; Madrid (1955-1956); Porto (1956-1958), where their son was born; Washington, D.C. (1958-1962); and Porto Alegre (1963-1967).

By the time the Duffields settled in Potomac, Md., in 1967, Mrs. Duffield had learned to speak seven languages. After working as a clerical accounting supervisor/auditor in GEICO's Washington, D.C., offices, she accepted a position in their newly opened Denver, Colo., office in the summer of 1970.

She moved back to Bethesda, Md., in mid-1974, but returned to Colorado in mid-1977, where her career in the financial sector moved her through the ranks at most of Denver's largest banks. She retired in 1986.

A long-time resident of Aurora, Colo., Mrs. Duffield was an enthusiastic ice hockey fan and enjoyed gardening, shopping and her grandchildren. She was thrilled to have met her first great-grandchild a few weeks before her death. A smoker for much of her life, she battled emphysema for many years.

Mrs. Duffield was predeceased by her husband, who died in 1984. She is survived by her four children, Barbara Duffield of Concord, Mass., Judy (Klein) Greenberg of San Antonio, Texas, Caroline Duffield of Denver, Colo., and James Duffield of Aurora; four granddaughters, Meredith Klein of Santa Monica, Calif.,

Elaine Klein of Seattle, Wash., Lily Duffield of Washington, D.C., and Emily Duffield of Aurora; and one great-granddaughter, Eliora Rosenklein of Seattle.

■ **Mary Catherine Thompson Martin**, 89, a retired Foreign Service Office Management Specialist, died on Sept. 2 in Austin, Texas.

Mrs. Martin joined the Foreign Service in 1950. Her first assignment was to Bonn, and that was followed by postings in Istanbul and Madrid.

In Istanbul, Mrs. Martin was chosen to be in a State Department recruiting film featuring a Foreign Service woman at work and play. While horseback riding with two Turkish cavalry officers during the film shoot, her stallion unexpectedly bolted and ran. She was rescued on film by one of the officers. The episode was covered in American newspapers, as well.

During her assignment in Madrid, Mrs. Martin met a handsome Spanish surgeon on a train. She resigned from the Foreign Service (as was required at the time) to become his wife and the mother of three sons.

In 1979, she returned to the Foreign Service and subsequently served as an OMS in Panama, El Salvador, Nigeria, Peru, Greece and at the department, retiring in 1994.

With the sophistication and charm of a Southern belle, Mrs. Martin had personality and presence. She was a friend to everyone, Americans and foreign nationals alike, on the embassy's staff. At the embassies and places she served, she was also known for her philanthropic activities.

She volunteered with Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, collecting food and clothing from Mission members and others for the needy, and met Mother Teresa herself twice. In Athens she organized a community campaign to provide

medical help for hundreds of sick and homeless street cats.

Mrs. Martin is survived by her sisters, Sister Edith, Daughter of Charity, and Aimee Thompson; two brothers, Paul and Hays Thompson; sons Rafael, Joe and Michael Martin of Austin, Texas; and four grandchildren.

■ **Oscar J. Olson Jr.**, 83, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of cancer on Aug. 28 in Alexandria, Va.

Mr. Olson was born in Corpus Christi, Texas. His love of travel began with road trips his family took to Mexico and across the United States. He began to consider foreign service as a career—and took the first of his many voyages by ocean liner when he spent a summer at the University of Oslo. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and Yale University, he served in the U.S. Army in Germany.

Entering the Foreign Service in 1957, Mr. Olson's first post was Caracas, where he served as a consular officer and staff aide to the ambassador. He next served as an administrative officer in Barcelona, where, as principal liaison with the U.S. Navy, he would accompany naval officers from the Sixth Fleet on courtesy calls to the Spanish admiral.

Most of his career was spent in economic/commercial positions, beginning in 1964 in Juarez, where he was also the only American member of the Juarez Rotary Club. After a year of mid-career post-graduate work at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, he was assigned to Intelligence and Research in the Western European office and then to the economics section in West Berlin.

From there he was assigned to Panama, returning stateside after two years to serve as the executive director of the inter-agency committee responsible for U.S. participation in "Man and the Biosphere,"

a UNESCO program that provided a framework for international collaboration in efforts at sustainable development, biodiversity and natural resource management.

Following stints in management operations and as economic counselor in Quito, Mr. Olson retired from the Foreign Service in 1984.

He kept busy after retirement, spending a year at the international office of the Smithsonian Institution and working for the private firm Business Environment Risk Information.

He also began working part-time as a senior reviewer with the State Department's Freedom of Information Act office, a position he held for 20 years, until November 2015.

Mr. Olson took an active part in the second-career ministry of his late wife, the Rev. Patricia Olson, trading worldwide postings for service as a pastor's spouse at United Methodist churches big and small across northern and central Virginia.

He continued to indulge his love of travel and passenger liners, and was active in DACOR, the Civitan Club of Arlington and the Norwegian Society, among others. At Greenspring Retirement Village in Springfield, Va., one of his many roles included playing piano for singalongs.

Mr. Olson is survived by his brother, John M. Olson (and his wife, Claudia) of Corpus Christi, Texas; a son, Michael A. Olson, of Amsterdam; two daughters, Kirsten O. Pruski (and her husband, Ken) of Dallas, Texas, and Kathleen K. Olson (and her husband, John Beatty) of Allentown, Pa.; and five grandchildren: Sarah, Audrey, Paul, Daniel and Benjamin Pruski.

■ **Ellen Kruger Radday**, 79, wife of the late USIA FSO Harold Franz Radday, died peacefully on July 3, 2016, in Arlington, Va., of pancreatic cancer.

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Mrs. Radday was born in 1937 to Carl and Vera (Sommers) Kruger of San Francisco, Calif. She received a bachelor's degree at Lone Mountain College and earned a master's degree in social work from Catholic University, after which she worked in adoption services at Catholic Charities. Later in life she attended Washington Theological Union, completed clinical pastoral education, and became certified as a chaplain.

In 1961 Ellen married Harold Franz Radday of Brooklyn and accompanied him throughout his Foreign Service career with the U.S. Information Agency (1963-1989), raising their three children in Kenya, Zanzibar, the Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Belgium, Malta and West Germany.

Mrs. Radday was active in embassy communities, volunteered in the children's schools and was the embassy's Community Liaison Officer in Bonn. On the family's return to Washington, D.C., in 1986, she joined the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and worked as a chaplain at Holy Cross Hospital, Sibley Memorial Hospital and Manor Care Nursing Home.

She participated in faith-sharing groups (including Cursillo and Partners) and was an influential advocate for social justice and reform, working with Voice of the Faithful/SNAP, Call to Action, FutureChurch, the Women's Ordination Conference and the Intentional Eucharistic Communities/Communitas.

Mrs. Radday was preceded in death by her husband, who died in 2011, her brother Peter Kruger and sister Dolores Rodriguez. She is survived by her children Michael (Sherri), Elizabeth (Richard Starr) and Jeanne Marie (Sana Georges); beloved grandchildren Nicholas, Victoria, Melissa and Sophia; and

in-laws, nieces and nephews.

Memorial donations can be made in Ellen Radday's memory to a group of your choice, or to Mary's Pence ([www.maryspence.org](http://www.maryspence.org)).

■ **Evelyn Shoup Reed**, 93, a retired Foreign Service secretary, died on Sept. 22 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ms. Reed was born on March 17, 1923, in Salt Lake City, where she and her older sister Lorraine were raised by their mother, Martha VanCott Shoup Hagen. Evelyn graduated from South High in 1941.

After a brief marriage, she went to work for the United States government in 1943. Originally based in Salt Lake City, she later transferred to San Francisco.

In 1958, she began her service with the State Department Foreign Service and spent the next 15 years working in various embassies around the world. Ms. Reed's first overseas post was Yemen. Tours of duty in Pakistan, Nepal, the Netherlands and Taiwan, as well as Washington, D.C., followed.

Once while stationed in Washington, D.C., she had a brush with greatness when Walter Cronkite held the door for her as they were entering the United Nations Information Center.

After a 30-year career in government service, Ms. Reed retired in 1973. She and her mother then moved to Sun City, Ariz., where they enjoyed several years of sunshine and good friends. In 1978 they moved back to the Salt Lake City area. Over the next few years, Ms. Reed cared for her mother through Martha's journey into dementia until her death from Alzheimer's disease in 1988.

After that, Ms. Reed lived at the Millcreek Retirement Center. Friends remember her for her quick wit and

cheerful personality. Because she always wanted to attend her own funeral, her friends organized such an event three years ago, cleverly disguising it as her 90th birthday party. She was delighted to visit with all who came.

Ms. Reed was preceded in death by her sister Lorraine, who died at age 14, and her mother, Martha Hagen. She is survived by several cousins and their families.

■ **JoAnn Stoneman**, 92, wife of the late FSO Walter (Stoney) Stoneman, died on June 20, 2016, in Oro Valley, Ariz.

Born on March 30, 1924, in Teaneck, N.J., Mrs. Stoneman grew up in New Jersey, Florida and Washington, D.C., and completed high school, in French, in Montreal. She graduated from Skidmore College in 1946.

She went to work for the State Department in Washington, D.C., and there met her future husband, Walter Stoneman, whom she married in 1949.

Mrs. Stoneman was an active Foreign Service wife. The family maintained a home in Fairfax, Va., and accompanied Mr. Stoneman to postings in Burma and Honduras. In 1976 the couple retired to Arizona.

Mrs. Stoneman volunteered in hospitals in both Fairfax, Va., and Tucson, Ariz. She enjoyed reading widely, particularly about theology and Christianity. She showed an amazing knack with plants and had a love for Boston terriers. She was a member of St. Odilia's Catholic Church where she started the Blessed Sacrament Chapel for Eucharistic Adoration in 1984.

Mrs. Stoneman was widowed in 1995. She is survived by her children Barbara and Steven, and four grandchildren. ■

## Mulling Over the Murrow Myth

### Murrow's Cold War: Public Diplomacy for the Kennedy Administration

Gregory M. Tomlin, *Potomac Books*, 2016, \$34.95/hardcover, \$24.07/Kindle, 400 pages.

REVIEWED BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

In March 1961 America's most prominent and respected journalist, Edward R. Murrow, ended a 25-year career with the Columbia Broadcasting System to serve President John F. Kennedy as director of the United States Information Agency. This exhaustive (and, at times, exhausting) work assesses Murrow's efforts to improve the global perception of the United States as a way to advance U.S. foreign policy.

Gregory M. Tomlin, its author, is a former assistant professor of history at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Even if the book jacket had not told me that, I would have guessed something of the sort from Tomlin's faithful adherence to the military briefing model of "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em; tell 'em; then tell 'em what you just told 'em!"

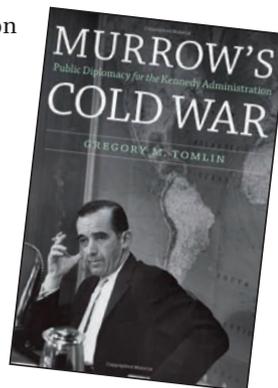
The result is a book that has many virtues, but also requires considerable tenacity to fully appreciate its insights. Happily, Tomlin's introduction, "Public Diplomacy for a New Frontier," is a model of clarity and cogency—almost worth the price of the book by itself. His overview of how public diplomacy evolved during the 20th century is one of the best explanations of that development I've ever run across.

For most of *Murrow's Cold War*, Tomlin devotes chapters to case studies of Pres. Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" outreach to Latin America and the

Bay of Pigs fiasco; construction of the Berlin Wall; the Cuban Missile Crisis; nuclear testing and arms control; and the Vietnam War.

Tomlin's take on each policy, and on USIA's effectiveness in selling the U.S. line under Murrow's leadership, is tough but fair. For example, despite the good intentions underlying the Alliance for Progress, he considers it a noble failure.

Tomlin faces a stiff challenge in discussing the Cuban Missile Crisis: Murrow was seriously ill in October 1962 with what was diagnosed as pneumonia at the time, but was very likely the



his personal connections, that outreach was quite fruitful.

The second, titled simply "Birmingham," addresses one of Murrow's finest hours as USIA director. Despite great pressure from both the White House and Congress to stand down, he insisted that the Voice of America must cover the civil

rights movement—and its bloody repression by Southern demagogues—fully and objectively.

As Murrow explained during a Feb. 26, 1962, address congratulating VOA employees on the 20th anniversary of their broadcast service:

### Tomlin's take on Murrow's performance as Pres. Kennedy's USIA director is tough but fair.

lung cancer that would force the heavy smoker to resign in early 1964 and kill him the next year.

Deftly working around that obstacle, Tomlin shows how well the bureaucratic and journalistic structures Murrow had established at 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest (USIA's symbolically rich street address) functioned during the crisis, even in his absence.

Two other chapters examine USIA's domestic operations. The first, "Mr. Murrow Goes to Hollywood," documents Murrow's campaign to entice the film and television industries to collaborate more closely with Uncle Sam. (As Murrow commented in 1962, "I don't mind being called a propagandist, so long as the propaganda is based on the truth.") Thanks largely to

"It is our task to bring our story around the world in its most favorable light. ... But as part of the cause of freedom, and the arm of freedom, we are obliged to tell our story in a truthful way—to tell it, as Oliver Cromwell said about his portrait, 'Paint us with all our blemishes and warts, all those things about us that may not be so immediately attractive.'"

Tomlin concedes that Murrow was not as successful at that grand endeavor as his myth suggests. But he makes a compelling case that he was utterly dedicated to the cause.

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*Steven Alan Honley, a State Department Foreign Service officer from 1985 to 1997, is the Journal's contributing editor.*

## The Ups and Downs of U.S.-Vatican Relations

### A Bridge Across the Ocean: The United States and the Holy See Between the Two World Wars

Luca Castagna, *Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014, hardcover, \$49.95, 193 pages.*

REVIEWED BY JOHN GRONDELSKI

U.S.-Holy See relations have certainly had their ups and downs. Several American consuls served in the Papal States during the first half of the 19th century, but the Senate prohibited funding for representation there in 1867.

Relations were not finally normalized until 1984. In the interim, there were only informal contacts or the occasional presidential representatives.

Castagna's pioneering book treats

**Wilsonian progressivism was also coupled with a strong nativist strain: the 28th president was as anti-Catholic as he was anti-black and anti-immigrant.**

bilateral contacts during the 25 years, roughly, between the beginnings of the First and Second World Wars—a historically significant swath of time from the viewpoint of international, domestic and ecclesiastical events.

Internationally, the interlude bracketed by the two world wars saw the rise of totalitarianism in Germany, Italy and Russia. Domestically, America's rise to world leadership at the dawn of the 20th century led, first, to neutrality and then to an activist Wilsonian crusade to "make the world safe for democracy." America recoiled from that in its "return to normalcy" and, later, experienced the

Great Depression.

Ecclesiastically, the Catholic Church in the United States had just ceased being treated as missionary territory but still remained devoid of policy experience or political connections in the public square.

Wilsonian progressivism was also coupled with a strong nativist strain: the 28th president was as anti-Catholic as he was anti-black and anti-immigrant.

Residual anti-Catholicism would color U.S. politics through the rise of the second Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s and the Catholic-baiting of Al Smith in 1928. Catholics found a place in the political sun only within FDR's New Deal coalition.

Against this background, Castagna shows how the Catholic Church, under Pope Benedict XV, hoped to engage with the neutral United States to promote papal peace and arbitration efforts during World War I.

The anti-Catholic president, who had his own visions for world order, regarded the Church as pro-Central Powers and, now bereft of territory following Italian unification, seeking its temporal interests as a non-State at the expense of Allied Italy. As active as the Holy See's efforts were, they found a deaf ear in the Wilson White House.

Harding, Coolidge and Hoover,

while doing nothing special to upgrade bilateral contacts, were at least more receptive to the Holy See's concerns. Herbert Hoover's election, following a general campaign filled with anti-Catholic prejudices, left a bitter taste; but the 1929 Lateran Treaty, establishing the Vatican City State, ended the issue of papal territory.

Changes in U.S.-Vatican relations would await two new figures in the 1930s.

FDR's 1932 election, with heavy Catholic ethnic support, allowed him to hawk his New Deal as an embodiment of Catholic social teaching. His growing concerns with European fascism found

resonance in Eugenio Pacelli, papal nuncio to Germany and later Vatican Secretary of State.

Pacelli's 1936 visit to Hyde Park paved the way for closer bilateral cooperation as war approached and, when Pacelli became Pope Pius XII in 1939, provided a personal tie to the White House. The growing contacts led eventually to the unofficial Myron Taylor mission during the war years.

Castagna weaves diplomatic and ecclesiastical sources together into this first book-length treatment of U.S.-Holy See relations during a critical quarter-century of world history.

Highly readable, *A Bridge Across the Ocean* demonstrates how politics, prejudice and pragmatism all shaped our contacts with the papacy between 1914 and 1939. ■

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*John M. Grondelski is an FSO who has served in Shanghai, Bern, Warsaw, London and in Washington, D.C., on the Russia Desk.*



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# Rip Van Winkle in the Foreign Service

BY DONNA SCARAMASTRA GORMAN

**W**e were gone for a decade, living in Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. When you land in Beijing without knowing a word of Chinese, you expect to be overwhelmed. As a woman who doesn't cover in a Muslim country, you know you'll get some curious, maybe even hostile, stares.

But when you go "home" again, nothing quite prepares you for the feeling of being a stranger in your own city. My first day back, I watched in confusion as the people in line in front of me at the coffee shop put their phones up to a scanner, one after another. What on earth were they doing? Who knew you could pay for a latte with your phone?

I paid cash. It took a while, because I had to pick through my wallet, searching for proper American coins amongst the kopecks, euros and dinar. I gave the cashier a broad grin, "I just came back from Russia." She stared back at me blankly, confused by my confusion.

Once fully caffeinated, I needed to purchase a phone and a phone plan. At my last two posts, I was given an option: Do you want this plan? Or no plan at all? Here they won't sell you a phone plan until you tell them how many gigabytes of data you'll be using. And will you be streaming Spotify? How about Netflix?

Again, I grinned foolishly and asked the salesperson to explain gigabytes of

## Didn't anybody realize I'd been off on a decade-long adventure?

data to me, telling him I'd been overseas so long that I still remembered unplugging the phone in my old house in order to access dial-up internet.

He looked vaguely interested. Or appalled, maybe. He had those strange plastic hole things embedded in each ear, stretching his earlobes to the size of silver dollars. It made me feel vaguely ill, staring through those holes while he talked.

Everywhere I went, I felt compelled to explain—Rip Van Winkle-style—that I wasn't really a foreigner, it's just that I'd been away. A few people nodded sympathetically. "State Department, right?" they'd ask, before moving on. Most people didn't care at all.

Sometimes, walking through the grocery store aisles, I'd get a bit dizzy. Those bright ceiling lights! The shiny floors! The row upon endless row of breakfast cereal! Everything seemed overwhelming, and I was certain the other shoppers were all laughing at my befuddlement.

Other times, though, I realized nobody was noticing me at all. Did I really look the same as all of these other suburban parents wandering the aisles? Didn't anybody realize I'd been off on a

decade-long adventure?

I had to stifle the urge to casually mention this fact to the guy behind the counter slicing the cheese. "We didn't have this kind of cheese in Jordan," I wanted to tell him, just to make sure he knew I was different somehow.

Repatriating is a strange beast. You want to fit in; you want to stand out. Sure, it's great that people here mostly stop for red lights, and nobody drives down the sidewalk. But you miss that sense of wonderment combined with annoyance that you used to feel every time a shepherd crossed the highway with his flock during your morning commute.

I'm sitting at the kitchen table in our temporary apartment, going over the bills with my husband, trying to figure out how to pay for everything associated with this move. How much money will he make here in the States? How will I find a job after 10 years of random embassy employment?

One of the kids wanders by, and sighs deeply. "Will we ever go on an airplane again? Maybe just to the Caribbean? Or to Cuba?" he asks. The whole family, it seems, is waking up to our new reality—the idea of a life lived at home in the United States, the way normal people do it.

It's hard being normal again, after all those years spent not fitting in. ■



*Donna Scaramastra Gorman is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in Newsweek, The Washington Post and the Christian Science Monitor. An FS spouse, she has lived in Amman, Moscow, Yerevan, Almaty and Beijing. Gorman, her Diplomatic Security officer husband and four children recently returned to the Washington, D.C., area.*



This is Mestia, in the Caucasian Svaneti region of Georgia. The region’s medieval towers, which number nearly 300 or so, were built either as fortresses against clan warfare or as bunkers against avalanches—perhaps both. They are generally attached to stone houses that feature one great room with a fire for cooking, sleeping areas around the outside for both people and livestock, and a “newlywed’s alcove” for privacy. Most of the descendants of the original families who built the towers still own them. In other words, these towers have stayed in the family for 1,000 years! ■

*Francesca Kelly is the spouse of U.S. Ambassador to Georgia Ian Kelly and a frequent contributor to The Foreign Service Journal. She took this photo with a BLU cell phone on Oct. 17 after the first snowfall of the season.*

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