



USAID Alumni Association

July 2018 UAA Newsletter

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming UAA Events

Saturday, September 8, 12:00 noon - UAA Annual Picnic at Fort Hunt in Alexandria, Virginia

Friday, September 14, 11:30 am - 2:00 pm - Ambassador Rick Barton speaks about his book **Peace Works: America's Unifying Role in a Turbulent World** in a Development Dialogue at DACOR.

Friday, October 26, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm - **UAA Annual General Meeting** at the Center for Global Development (CGD) in Washington, D.C.

New on USAIDalumni.org

- **Obituaries:** There are a number of new additions to the [In Memoriam](#) page.
- In [Articles](#), read items focusing on: 1) what it will take to be a next generation development professional, 2) U.S. efforts to derail a World Health Assembly resolution on breastfeeding, 3) things for USAID to consider in the redesign of its procurement and program design processes, 4) an online game/course on resource governance, 5) USAID's new "self-reliance" metrics, 6) a brief USAID online history, 7) Hill discussions re. FY '19 funding for foreign affairs, 8) how the USG funds assistance to fragile states, 9) increased budget shortages for UN assistance to Gaza, 10) pressure from VP Pence for assistance to Iraqi Christian communities, 11) military vs development assistance priorities from the US to Africa, and 12) criteria for receiving USG development assistance.
- In [Web Links](#) take a look at the Economist Intelligence Unit's updated Democracy Index. The news isn't good.
- In the [Forum](#), find two additions by alumnus Joe Ryan. One focuses on a recent add-on to the USAID entry on Wikipedia. The other is an addition to his running commentary on Development Assistance History. The focus of this entry is a discussion of USAID structural changes, particularly in the 1970s.

Do you have news, an article or event you would like to share? Please send it to office@usaidalumni.org or, better still, post it on the [Forum](#).

Looking for someone with a USAID alumni background and skills to hire or as a volunteer? If you would like to post a job or volunteer opportunity, please email us at office@usaidalumni.org, Attn: Jobs/Volunteers.

USAID History Author John Norris



John Norris

As regular readers of the UAA Newsletter certainly are aware, the UAA History of USAID Project is well underway. As you will also know, our author is **John Norris**. We thought it might be useful to remind UAA members - including especially the more than 150 generous contributors to the project - as to who John Norris is. John is managing to keep up with his 18-month contractual drafting schedule on the History while holding down another demanding job. He is just beginning a new position as the Deputy Director of Policy and Strategic Insight at the Gates Foundation in Seattle, Washington. Before joining the Gates Foundation this month, John was for many years the Executive Director of the Sustainable Security Initiative at the Center for American Progress. In 2014, he was also appointed by President Barack Obama

to the President's Global Development Council, a body charged with advising the administration on effective development practices. He has served in a number of additional senior roles in government, international institutions, and nonprofits. For example, he was the Executive Director of the Enough Project and the chief of political affairs for the United Nations Mission in Nepal. He was also the Washington chief of staff for the International Crisis Group, and the director of communications for U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. He also worked as a speechwriter and field disaster expert at the USAID in the 1990s. John is the author of several books, including a biography of the late journalist Mary McGrory which was a finalist for the LA Times Book Prize, and has published many articles in major American newspapers.

We asked John for a short comment on how he has found the work thus far: his response - **"Perhaps the most intriguing part of my research to date has been how often AID issues rose to a presidential level in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. Both men clearly saw the agency as instrumental in realizing their vision for the world, and both fundamentally shaped the foundations of much of AID's work that followed."**

We shall continue to keep you posted on John's progress on this exciting UAA project. In addition, at the UAA Annual General Meeting at CGD on Friday, October 26, John will have a conversation with CGD's Charles Kenny about key "inflection points" in USAID history - please be sure to attend!

UAA Executive Committee Retreat

The UAA was created on May 27, 2009. Accordingly, we will be celebrating our tenth birthday next year.

On June 5, 2018, the Executive Committee of the UAA held a retreat to review our experience, examine important organizational questions, and consider key priorities for the future.

The group found that the organization had achieved a great deal during its first decade of existence. Among the most salient accomplishments were: steady growth in membership, the establishment of a highly regarded mentorship program for overseas Foreign Service employees of USAID, a well-attended and respected speakers program, a highly regarded substantive Annual General Meeting, three annual social events each year, a well-utilized and valued website, an outstanding (nearly) monthly newsletter, a respected Development Initiatives program, a bibliography of works by USAID officers, support for the writing of a history of USAID and many other activities of benefit to the Association's membership.

Topics of discussion included: validation of the UAA basic charter, enhanced efforts for foreign assistance advocacy, expanded and deepened relationships and partnerships in the development community, succession planning for Board and Executive Committee members, and expanded membership and associate membership criteria.

Points for discussion by the membership will be presented to the AGM on October 26.

7th Annual UAA Summer Picnic

SAVE THE DATE! JOIN THE FUN!

7th Annual UAA Summer Picnic
Fort Hunt Park, Alexandria, VA
Saturday, September 8, 2018
Noon - 3:00 pm

In order for us to have adequate water and soft drinks available, please let us know that you are coming and with how many adults and children. [Please register by clicking here.](#)

Details:

The UAA will have its annual picnic on Saturday September 8 at Fort Hunt picnic area. Our get together is scheduled from noon till 3:00pm. We hope everyone will come and bring other Alumni, children, guitars, games, etc. The parking lot is a very short stroll to the sheltered picnic area so we will proceed rain or shine. Based on the enthusiastic response the last three years, we decided to repeat our successful pot luck so that people can bring dishes to share. We will provide non-alcoholic beverages and water, table covers, paper goods, cups and plastic ware. Please bring your own wine and beer - and some to share. The area has a liquor license, but for wine and beer only.

Please bring one dish sufficient for 6 to 8 people. If you have a special dish that would be great. Otherwise, bring a dish according to the following categories:

- People with last names between A and D are asked to bring a salad or side dish.
- People with last names between E and M are asked to bring a main dish.
- People with last names between N and R are asked to bring an appetizer.
- People with last names between S and Z are asked to bring a dessert.

Directions: Fort Hunt is South of Alexandria and just north of Mount Vernon. From Interstate 395, take exit 10B for the southbound George Washington Memorial Parkway. Merge onto the parkway and continue for about 12 miles. Turn right onto Fort Hunt Road and continue to the Park. For further details, [click here](#). The UAA picnic will again be held in site B-001.

USAID Oral History Program Update

As reported in the October 2016 UAA newsletter, USAID gave a two-year grant to the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) to expand the number of former USAID employee oral histories in the ADST (and Library of Congress) archive. The two-year grant is scheduled to end on September 30, although ADST will be approaching USAID to see if there is interest in extending the grant.

The original grant called for 50 new oral history interviews to be done by ADST and several volunteers from the UAA (Alex Shakow, Ann Van Dusen, John Pielemeier, and Carol Peasley). To date, 61 new interviews have been completed: 29 have already been posted on the ADST and USAID/DEC websites; 19 have been transcribed and are being edited; and 13 are still being transcribed. There are also a number of interviews in process, so the final total will be somewhere near 70 new interviews. In addition, at the request of USAID, ADST is conducting some short video interviews that USAID will ultimately use for training and public purposes, including possibly at the State Department Diplomacy Center. Best of all, we know that the new oral histories are already being used. ADST has included many of them in its weekly newsletters highlighting "Moments in Diplomatic History." These "moments" are also part of the ADST website (<https://adst.org/moments>), so check them out. Also, John Norris, author of the upcoming book on the history of USAID has read all of the new and old interviews. If the grant is extended, we will be reaching out to find more folks interested in participating.



An excellent example of such oral histories is the one from USAID's Lew Lucke.

Read the story in George Lewis' ADST oral history: [Helping Rebuild Rwanda after the 1994 genocide.](#)

Thank You UAA PAYNE Mentor Volunteers!!

As advertised in the June UAA Newsletter under "Opportunities for UAA Public Outreach in the DMV Area" we are pleased to report that 13 UAA members answered the call for mentors. According to Maria Vivas-House, Director of the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program at Howard University, all current Payne fellow mentor vacancies have now been filled.

Another solicitation will be sent in March soliciting mentors for the 2019 Payne Fellowship Class.

The Payne Fellowship Program is funded by USAID and administered by Howard University, and seeks to attract outstanding young people who are interested in pursuing careers in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The program encourages the application of members of minority groups who have historically been underrepresented in international development careers and those with financial need."

Mentoring Program Announcement

Building on a successful pilot program in 2012/13 that matched UAA alumni with FSOs assigned to field positions in the E&E Bureau, the UAA/USAID Mentoring Program has been expanded over the past several years to include partnering arrangements with several bureaus including Africa, E&E, PPL, LAC and GH. UAA's purpose in supporting the program is to contribute to the development of the next generation of Agency leaders at all levels, including recent recruits and seasoned veterans up to the Mission Director level. Successes to date correlate directly with a strong commitment to keep the program demand driven, having at its core the needs, objectives and specific requests of field based FSOs, and the dedicated effort of capable mentors. To date seven cohorts of matched mentors/mentees (just over 100 pairs) have been trained and mobilized. USAID is very pleased with results of the program to date.

We plan to start mentor recruitment for Cohort 8 of the program in August. We will tap former mentors who have demonstrated ability to serve effectively along with new mentors who demonstrate real interest. Please watch for forthcoming notices regarding application for the program, a very simple process. This is a rewarding and enjoyable activity and will keep you engaged and up to speed with what is happening in the field and the evolution of Agency policy. Often lasting friendships are formed, and the program really does contribute to effective operations in the field and the development of needed leadership talent in the Agency. Excellent training is provided to the mentors and the mentees at the start of the program.

2018 UAA Awards Program

Only a short time remains for submission of nominations of a UAA member (or yourself) for the 2018 "Alumni of the Year" awards. Please send your nominations now until July 31 to: awards@usaidalumni.org. The prestigious awards will be announced at the UAA Annual General Meeting on October 26. The "Alumni of the Year" award recognizes and celebrates new paths taken in retirement by USAID alumni to provide service to their communities and improve the lives of others at home and abroad. There are impressive contributions among our alumni community waiting to be recognized. Example categories of service that are appropriate, but not limited to, for consideration include:

- Service with nongovernmental organizations and other groups (profit or non-profit) that work closely with communities with special needs, at home or abroad, or both (e.g., legal services or advocacy for disadvantaged groups, foster parenting, medical service in underserved areas, etc.).
- Service with groups that promote education (at any level), the arts and sciences (e.g., museums, community theater, music appreciation, etc.).
- Support for civic programs of any kind (e.g., scouts movement or projects promoted by groups such as the Lions, Rotary, or similar).
- Leadership excellence, including contributions to intellectual development and implementation (e.g., for sustained extraordinary achievement, dedication and passion in a leadership role).
- Service by alumni, including retirees and their spouses or partners, who are UAA members and actively support contributions in furtherance of social and economic development and humanitarian relief at home or abroad.

Don't wait until the last minute to share those stories. All nominees, including the 2018 winner(s), will be profiled in future editions of the monthly UAA newsletter. For full details about the award and how to make nominations, [please click here.](#)

Alumni Profile: Neil Levine

Neil Levine retired from USAID in June 2017 after 24 years of service. He and his wife, Kate Brennan, moved to New England where they enjoy their new home in Beverly, Massachusetts with frequent visits to their "northern holdings" - a camp in Rangeley, Maine.



Joining USAID in 1993 and serving through 2016, Neil served as a Congressional Liaison Officer for the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs, Deputy Director for Central American Affairs and various leadership positions in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, including leadership of the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation and the Center of Excellence for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance. Neil also enjoyed two excursions as a student and faculty member at the National Defense University, first as a student at the National War College (2007-08) and as a faculty instructor at the Eisenhower School (2013-14).

Neil began his "encore" career by becoming a certified professional coach and started Levine Strategies, his own consulting practice, in October 2017. The practice is devoted to "helping individuals and organizations have conversations with themselves." His first client was the USAID Alumni Association where he volunteered to facilitate the all-day mentor training for the latest of cohort of UAA mentors. Along with coaching and consulting, Neil serves as Vice Chair of the Board of CDA Collaborative Learning (Cambridge, MA) and the alumni council of Earlham College. Neil and Kate welcome hearing from their USAID friends and may be reached at nelevine37@gmail.com.

Make Your 2018 UAA Membership Contribution

USAID Alumni Association

USAID Alumni Association, 1801 F Street, Washington, DC 20006

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