

**REPORT ON
USAID ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Oct. 25, 2019 – Center for
Global Development Washington, D.C.**

This report provides USAID Alumni Association (UAA) members who were not able to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) with a brief summary of the presentations and discussions that marked this day-long gathering. [Note that you can see and hear the entire meeting on YouTube.](#)

Following a welcome from the President of the Center for Global Development, the 2019 AGM was comprised of six main sessions: (1) A welcome and update on UAA activities from the UAA Co-Chairs, Nancy Tumavick and Chris Crowley, (2) a panel on democratic governance chaired by Thomas Carothers, Senior Vice-President of the Carnegie Endowment (3) an address and conversation with Peter McPherson, former USAID Administrator, (4) a presentation and discussion with Derek Gianino from the US Global Leadership Coalition, (5) remarks by the current USAID Deputy Administrator, Bonnie Glick and (6) a presentation of annual UAA awards by Bette Cook. A special event this year was a presentation of life-time, extraordinary accomplishment awards presented posthumously to the widows of Peter Kimm and John Sanbrailo. As always, the conference also provided a wonderful opportunity to catch up with many friends and former colleagues.



The following paragraphs will guide readers through the day's events. Click on the links to view the [meeting agenda](#) and the [speakers' bio-data](#).

Welcome Comments from Masood Ahmed, President of Council on Global Development.

UAA was fortunate to have Masood available to welcome us at the start of the formal sessions. In his welcoming remarks, Masood noted a couple of current areas of CGD work and related events that illustrate the central role CGD plays in providing important guidance and access for the development community on both development policy and practice. He has also reaffirmed the availability of CDG as a venue for our annual meeting again next year, for which UAA is very grateful.

UAA Co-Chair Report. Chris Crowley began by welcoming participants and thanking the various committees that have worked hard on a number of important initiatives during the year. Nancy Tumavick summarized some of those initiatives, acknowledging several individuals that have made special contributions in time and effort to produce noteworthy results. Members were also urged to review and comment on the [UAA's report on 2019 activities and preliminary plans for 2020](#). Chris also reviewed the agenda prior to the first session.



Panel Discussion on Democratic Governance. In his introduction of the panel, Jim Michel observed it is now accepted that effective and accountable governance, respect for human rights, and the rule of law are all important for development. These aspects of development are complex. Like other donors, USAID has often struggled with multiple challenges – stimulating local commitment and helping build local capacity, maintaining USG coherence, coordination with the international community.

Thomas Carothers, Moderator, recalled the history of DRG in USAID since the 1980s and US leadership in the world on this theme. He called attention to the global democratic decline in recent years and the continuing discussion about the place of DRG in US policy and in USAID. He then invited panelist views, beginning with the sensitivity of the issues and differences in USAID's role in DRG as distinguished from its role in addressing other aspects of development like health and education.

Chris Crowley offered examples where the sensitivity of USAID DRG activities had given rise to controversy or concern. These included: (1) in Egypt, support for judicial independence and efficiency and support for civil society advocacy, which were irritants to the host government; and (2) electoral support in Ukraine, where USAID impartiality was not reflected in the activities of USAID grantees. As to differences in USAID's role, a notable example was in Iraq, where a "whole of government" approach diluted program effectiveness through divided agency responsibilities and funding. He observed that in sensitive situations there may be less controversial ways to introduce democratic practices and values. Examples might include improving land registration systems or getting parents involved in education issues.

Beth Hogan recalled her assignments in Guatemala and South Africa at times when the host governments were very receptive to support for democratic transitions then underway. In those cases, there was no resistance to USAID support. However, at a later time she encountered difficulty in a country in Latin America when a programmatic emphasis on civil society in the face of local democratic backsliding lacked US diplomatic support and was unwelcome to the host government, ultimately resulting in closing the USAID Mission. She pointed out that there could also be internal controversies in the US political system. Conflicting views in Congress about USAID's non-presence activities in Cuba made that work a focus of partisan divisions. She acknowledged that working with civil society groups can give rise to controversy. For example, religious groups engaged in health activities sometimes assert religious and political positions.

Susan Reichle pointed out that sometimes sensitivities were encountered within USAID. For example, early in her career she was advised by her supervisor in Washington that she should not give much emphasis to the rule of law in Haiti. On the other hand, at a later date when she worked on DRG issues in Russia, the sensitivities were all external and USAID was very supportive. On reflection, she thinks USAID had moved too fast in Russia at a time when the country was going through major internal changes (from Yeltsin to Putin). Susan believes that DRG remains an important field for USAID. Interagency disputes continue and there is still work



to done, especially at higher policy levels. One issue is the fragmentation of authority and funding.

Audience comments and questions were wide-ranging and encouraged the panelists to address many issues. The evident knowledge, experience and thoughtfulness of the panelists and the moderator stimulated enthusiastic audience participation. In turn, important questions and comments from the audience enriched the dialogue and stimulated the panel.

Conversation with Peter McPherson. In conversation with Alex Shakow, Peter emphasized the importance of documenting USAID's histories and the contributions of the individuals who have been committed to its mission over the years. He covered some of the key issues during his tenure as USAID Administrator, including the political pressures surrounding family planning and the importance of support from the White House, and the significance of USAID working with their partners to promote the use of ORT, including developing the specific and bold goal of saving 3 million lives within 3 years. He also stressed the value of continued investments in participant training and institution building. The audience was clearly



appreciative of Peter's stories, which evoked nostalgia and a recognition of the inspirational leadership Peter provided USAID during his tenure as Administrator.

Special Presentation of Life-Time Achievement

Awards. Immediately after the lunch break, the group was reconvened for a posthumous recognition of two people who have made extraordinary contributions to development: John Sanbrailo and Peter Kimm.

Following brief presentations of the work of each, their wives, Grace Kimm and Cecilia Sanbrailo received the awards and made brief comments. For a link to the details of their contributions, [please follow this link](#).



Presentation of Derek Gianino, US Global Leadership Council.



Derek Gianino began this session with a description of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) and the features that have enabled it to become one of the most effective advocates for strong U.S. leadership through development and diplomacy. The coalition includes over 500 businesses and NGOs from across the country. Coalition members believe in strong US global leadership and the important contributions that development and diplomacy make to our national security, economic prosperity, and standing in the world. The USGLC provides its

business and NGO members with the opportunity help shape development and diplomacy in the 21st century through meetings and consultations, both at the national and local levels. USGLC has two advisory councils; (1) a bipartisan National Advisory Council of distinguished leaders including former Cabinet officials, members of Congress, and every living Secretary of State, to provide strategic counsel to the USGLC, and (2) a National Security Advisory Council of retired three- and four-star generals and admirals that support advancing America's national security. USGLC works across the country with its partners and with State Advisory Committees and local supporters to educate community leaders and local members of Congress on the positive effects that U.S. international affairs programs are having at a local, state, and nationwide level. Gianino also provided information on the USGLC's new bipartisan education initiative "Impact 2020". He thought that it could be helpful if UAA members (foreign and civil servants with overseas experience) were willing to participate in their educational outreach programs.

Comments from Bonnie Glick, Deputy Administrator.

Ms. Glick spoke about priorities for USAID, emphasizing the focus on freedom of religion, and the importance of strengthening democratic institutions and economic growth in support of this principle. A second priority is electoral democracy, and she noted issues with internet interference caused by malign actors, which have required the development of new tools in support of democratic processes. The new GDI Bureau will encompass democratic governance efforts of the Agency. Glick noted a third priority of private sector engagement. Finally, she emphasized the focus on human dignity and the Agency’s initiative on prevention of sexual misconduct.



UAA Board election results and UAA awards.

Nancy Tumavick reported on the results of the Board election. George Hill, Terry Myers and Franklin Moore are standing down and three new members were voted in: Jim Bever, Carol Dabbs and Margaret Neuse (who could not attend the annual meeting). Anne Aarnes, Terry Brown, Chris Crowley and Nancy Tumavick will continue on the Board for another year.

Bette Cook then announced the two winners of the Annual UAA awards for domestic and international achievements. Because this year both of the final candidates had contributed to both domestic and international efforts, they were awarded for their work on both fronts. The awardees are Mary Lewellyn and Larry Heilman pictured here. Please read more about their contributions by clicking [here](#).



Nancy Pielemeier and Joy Riggs-Perla closed the meeting with an appeal to UAA members to volunteer for various committees for the coming year, as well as filling out the feedback questionnaire for comments on the meetings and suggestions for next year’s meeting.