



USAID Alumni Association

October 2020 Newsletter

Note from the UAA Board

The Board would like to share with you some interesting historical information on UAA governance since inception. The first formal minutes prepared during organization of the UAA report on a November 6, 2008 meeting of "the organizing committee." Articles of Association and By-laws were completed in May 2009. The first Annual General Meeting was held on November 10, 2009, when there was an election for the first Board of Directors of the UAA. For UAA history buffs, you can click [here](#) to see who has been involved over the years since the UAA inception in 2009.

Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

VIRTUAL. Wednesday, October 14, 12 noon to 1:00 – At the UAA/Dacor Development Dialogue CGD's **Jeremy Konyndyk**, will address "Responding to Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises". Among his many important positions, Jeremy was Director of USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance during the Obama Administration where he led the US response to the Ebola crisis and many other disasters. He has been oft-quoted in recent months on how best to address the current coronavirus crisis. To register, [click here](#). All those who register will be sent an email with information on how to join the virtual event.

VIRTUAL. Wednesdays, October 21 and 28, 2020, 1:30-3:30 p.m. -- The **UAA Book Club** will hold two virtual meetings via Zoom on consecutive Wednesdays, in which **Bobbie van Haeften** will review and lead discussions of **Daniel Markovits's new book, *The Meritocracy Trap: How America's Foundational Myth Feeds Inequality, Dismantles the Middle Class, and Devours the Elite***. Van Haeften will provide a short review paper before each meeting. Please note that this meeting is open only to UAA contributing members and those who register no later than **October 19** for the October 21 session and **October 26** for the October 28 session by clicking [here](#). Those who have registered will receive information from Stu Callison on how to join the virtual meeting.

VIRTUAL. Fridays, October 30, 9:40 a.m – 12:30 p.m., and November 6, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon -- The **UAA Annual General Meeting** will be held on Zoom, in two parts, with two sessions on climate change and development on October 30 and updates on UAA's expanding engagement and activities on November 6. For more details, please see separate article below.

VIRTUAL. Thursday, November 12, 2020, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m -- **Alex Thier**, Co-Director of the Task Force on U.S. Strategy to Support Democracy and Counter-Authoritarianism and a Senior Democracy Fellow at Freedom House, will lead the **UAA Development Issues Committee** in a discussion of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on democratic freedoms around the world

and on the role of democracy and governance programming as a component of USAID's support to countries on the journey to self-reliance. Mr. Thier was formerly USAID Assistant to the Administrator for Policy, Planning, and Learning (2013-15) and for Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs (2010-2013). He also served previously as Executive Director of the Overseas Development Institute in London (2017-2019), and worked at the U.S. Institute for Peace, the United Nations, and Oxfam. Please note that this event is for contributing UAA members only. Those wishing to participate in the discussion should **register** for the event by clicking on this [link](#) no later than **COB Monday November 9, 2020**. All those who register will be sent an email with information on how to join this virtual meeting. Please click [here](#) to make your UAA membership contribution.

VIRTUAL. Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 12:00 -- 1:00 p.m.— At the **UAA/DACOR virtual Development Dialogue, former USAID Administrator Brian Atwood** will address "How does development fit in a future 3-D national security strategy?" Well-known to many UAA members, Atwood served as USAID Administrator for over six years during the Clinton Administration. He chaired the OECD Development Assistance Committee from 2010-2012 and has been a distinguished scholar at both the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs and Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies - where he is now a Visiting Scholar. He is a frequent contributor of opinion articles on foreign policy and development cooperation. Registration link will be sent in advance of the event.

New! on [USAIDAlumni.org](#)

- **Home Page:** On the Home Page is the [About Us](#) tab with the list of current Board of Directors and Executive Committee members. We have now added to the bottom of this page the following statement: For UAA history buffs, you can click here to view the makeup of UAA Board participation since the UAA inception in 2009.
- **Obituaries:** We are pleased to note that we have only one recent obituary since the September newsletter—sadly, it is the great loss of a USAID leading light, Rei Ravenholt.
- **Articles:** In September, we featured twelve articles, including items on:
 - Update: USAID pauses all diversity and inclusion training (*Devex, 09/30/2020*);
 - There is hope for the future: Create USAID 2.0 (*The Hill, 09/30/2020*);
 - USAID dissent memo details frustrations with Trump appointee (*Politico, 09/22/2020*);
 - Opinion: Why development matters (*Devex, 09/21/2020*);
 - At USAID, Juggling political priorities and pandemic response (*NYTimes, 09/13/2020*);
 - Who owns what? (*The Economist, 09/2020*);
 - USAID's draft policy retrenches on gender equality (*Brookings, 09/10/2020*);
 - Trump Administration orders US diplomats to curtail contact with WHO (*Foreign Policy, 09/09/2020*);
 - USAID to shut down its coronavirus task force (*Politico, 09/08/20*);
 - Trump nominee to head InterAmerican Bank divides countries in hemisphere (*WashPost, 09/08/2020*);
 - USAID shutting down task force set up to tackle coronavirus pandemic (*The Hill, 09/08/2020*); and
 - New study shows benefits, limits of cash transfers (*Devex, 09/03/2020*).

- **Bulletin Board (formerly the Forum):** The Bulletin Board offers seven new items of interest, including: useful information on the UAA website upgrade and newsletter schedule for 2020; a note on our UAA colleague Bill Frej's recently published book on Mayan ruins; and a note on the 2020 PEN/Benenson Courage Award to Marie Yovanovitch.
- **Job & Volunteer Opportunities:** New opportunities are available: (1) The John Hopkins University, Osher Program, is looking for a leader for their 6 week Great Decisions 2020 program to be held this spring; and (2) the San Diego World Affairs Council is seeking a volunteer to assist in incorporating a focus on USAID in its ongoing public education programming. For more information, if interested, please click [here](#).

2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2020 UAA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Zoom, in two parts, with a webinar on climate change and development on **October 30, 2020**, from 9:40 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and updates on UAA's expanding engagement and activities on **November 6**, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

This year's meeting highlights include on **October 30**, Kerri-Ann Jones (formerly at Pew Charitable Trust) in conversation with Masood Ahmed (CGD) discussing key dimensions and challenges of climate change, and a panel on implications for development moderated by Bob Ichord (Atlantic Council), with Dennis Carroll (Global Virome Project), Manish Bapna (World Resources Institute), and Homi Kharas (Brookings Institution). The **November 6** session will include an update on UAA activities and possibilities for expanding UAA horizons, a discussion of the UAA mentoring program at 10 years, presentation of UAA awards, and more. See the full agenda [here](#).

For those of you who are 2020 contributing members of UAA, we encourage you to attend the Annual General Meeting this year, which will be entirely virtual, enabling participation from wherever you are. Please register for the UAA Annual General Meeting and cast your vote for board members by **October 26th**. See instructions for registration and voting below.

For those of you who are not yet 2020 contributing members of UAA, we have extended the deadline for receipt of contributions to Thursday, **October 15**, to allow you the option to vote and to participate in the virtual AGM.

[Please click here to contribute](#)

Please register **for the October 30 webinar by October 26**, and **for the November 6 business meeting by November 2**. You will receive email acknowledgement of your registration for each meeting, and the Zoom link will be sent after registration for each meeting closes.

[Please click here to register for AGM Part 1- October 30](#)

[Please click here to register for AGM Part II - November 6](#)

Please note that members will need to vote for Board members electronically by **October 26th**. No voting will take place at the AGM.

[Please click here for voting and information about the slate of candidates](#)

Please [click here](#) to read the UAA's 2020 Progress Report. Please [click here](#) to read the Draft Strategic Plan for 2021 for which we welcome your [comments](#).

Call for UAA Volunteer Mentors

The Strengthening USAID Committee of UAA needs more mentors! We face a high, and rapidly growing, demand for mentors. This reflects the value USAID Foreign Service Officers place on mentors and also the deep satisfaction our mentors derive from their conversations with newer USAID FSOs. A significant number of UAA members volunteer to serve as mentors, but durable matches require complementary skills, experiences, and even time zones to succeed. Thus, not all who volunteer to mentor, nor all FSOs who request a mentor, get matched in a given year — though we get close. If you've volunteered in the past two years, trust us — we still have your name! But with rapid program growth, we need a growing cadre of mentors. Join us! We provide professional training, camaraderie, and even, at least in the pre-covid-19 world, a free lunch during training!

Please complete the mentor profile by clicking [here](#) to summarize your experience to help us match you to a promising FSO, or just let us know you are interested in being a mentor. Please send your expressions of interest to Roberta Mahoney (robertacairo@hotmail.com) or Rose Rakas (rosetrakas@gmail.com).

UAA Development Dialogues



Alex Shakow and Henrietta Holsman Fore

On September 16, the UAA and DACOR were delighted to have former USAID Administrator Henrietta Holsman Fore join us for an hour to discuss "From USAID Administrator to UNICEF Executive Director — Challenges and Opportunities." In conversation with Alex Shakow and in a half hour of Qs&As with some of the more than 125 members in the virtual audience, Fore spelled out clearly the vast array of issues UNICEF faces every day around the world. It was inspiring to hear her high level of knowledge, passion, commitment, vision and insight on UNICEF's current focus and its priorities for the future. View the [video](#) to hear her comments and responses to many questions.

Alumni Profile: Margaret Neuse



Margaret Neuse joined USAID in 1984 as a Population and Health Officer. She was recruited by several USAID colleagues with whom she had worked in Nepal among other countries where she was on short-term assignments for several organizations or as a free-lance consultant. Her first postings were Somalia, Niger, and then head of the Health Office at the Regional Office (REDSO) in Nairobi.

Margaret Neuse in Bhutan on the way to Eagles Nest

They were instrumental in getting USAID-supported family planning and other health programs started in Madagascar, Malawi, Zambia, and Ethiopia among others. In 1993, she joined the Office of Population in USAID/W as Deputy Director. From 1997-1999, she led the Health team in charge of the large health and family planning program in Bangladesh. She was then recruited to be the Director of the Population and Reproductive Health Office in USAID/W where she served from 2000-2006 when she retired.

After retirement, Margaret continued an active consulting career in the Population Health and Nutrition (PHN) field working with a wide variety of organizations including USAID health teams and Missions, the Gates Foundation, and several nongovernmental organizations in a variety of countries, from Mali to South Sudan, Ethiopia and India. She led teams hired to develop designs, procurement documents, evaluations and staffing plans. She enjoyed all of the assignments and working and learning with the teams and counterpart staff in the Missions and countries. Consulting post-retirement was very satisfying and was facilitated by knowing the systems and field much better than had been the case before joining USAID. Margaret also served on several Boards and was Board Chair for several years for a USAID partner organization. She currently serves on the UAA Board of Directors.

In addition to her home in DC, she has maintained her ties to Vermont where she grew up. She spends the summers into the Fall at her "camp" on a small lake not far from other family in Middlebury and Brandon, Vermont. Since deciding that she had had enough of work-related travel and document-writing, she has spent more time in Vermont and traveled on her own to places in her bucket list: Bhutan, New Zealand, Australia and Ireland. Before COVID-19 suspended in-person activity, she also took regular exercise classes and participated in courses through Politics and Prose and Encore Learning. She remains active in her USAID alumni-based reading group and stays in touch with her successors at USAID. She maintains that she is not sure when she had "time to work."

Newsletter Schedule

During the remainder of the year, only one more UAA newsletter is planned. The November-December edition will be sent on November 23 and will provide a report on the Annual General Meeting. January 4, 2021, begins a new year of monthly newsletter publications on the first Monday of each month. If you

have information you would like to share with your fellow alumni, your contributions are welcomed. Please send the information and, if possible, include a captioned picture of the event, date, and people shown to office@usaidalumni.org.

Make Your 2020 UAA Membership Contribution
USAID Alumni Association

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