



USAID Alumni Asso

January 2022 Newsletter

Note from the UAA Board

Happy New Year to all! We hope everyone spent the holiday season in the company of loved ones and enjoyed good food, drink, and happy occasions.

UAA ended 2021 with its final Executive Committee meeting in early December and with several collaborative events with USAID that are described in detail in this newsletter: a Development Issues meeting regarding the COP-29 meeting in Glasgow with Jay Knott from the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and Kathryn Stratos from USAID; and an Intergenerational discussion with USAID's Young Professionals Network and two distinguished USAID retirees, Susan Reichle and Tom Staal. A critical continuing UAA activity is the involvement of more than 50 UAA alumni volunteers in helping the 140 former Afghan FSNs, and their families, find their footing in their new lives in the United States. Additional information is included in the article below.

This year promises to be full and productive. The USAID/UAA Mentoring Program is finalizing matches for Cohort 11. We send a big Thank You to all UAA member mentors who will be supporting FSOs in 2022. We anticipate more collaborative activities with USAID under our MOU, social events with UAA membership, and presentations and discussions on key development issues. We are keeping a close watch on the latest news regarding the Covid pandemic and will tailor activities to protect the safety and health of all. We strongly urge everyone to get boosted and follow public health precautions. And please join us in the many and varied activities planned for 2022!

Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

- **New!** On **Friday, January 7, 2022**, from **12 noon to 1:00 p.m.**, there will be a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue featuring **Shannon Green, Senior Advisor to the USAID Administrator and Executive Director, Anti-Corruption Task**

Force in conversation with **UAA's Larry Garber** on "**Combating Corruption: Democracy Summit Follow-Up**". President Biden's Democracy Summit, on December 9 and 10, is intended to "galvanize commitments and initiatives across three principal themes: defending against authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights". Join us to learn more about what AID and State are doing to lead the anti-corruption effort. [Sign up for the event by clicking here.](#)

- **New!** On **Tuesday, February 1, 2022**, there will be a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue entitled "**The OECD/DAC and USAID: shaping international development cooperation over 60 years.**" This DDD will feature a conversation between three highly experienced leaders: **Richard Carey** (from Paris), former Director of the OECD Development Cooperation Directorate and co-editor of the recently published history of the Development Assistance Committee's first sixty years; **Brian Atwood**, former DAC Chairman (2010-13) and USAID Administrator (1993-99); and **Ambassador James (Jim) Michel**, former DAC Chairman (1994-99) and USAID Counselor (among many other senior AID and State positions). A link to sign up will be sent out soon.
- **New! Sunday, February 20, 2022**, the eighth **UAA Winterfest**, our first social event of the year, will be hosted by Frank and Antoinette Almaguer at their home in Vienna, Virginia. The in-person gathering will take place from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and the virtual gathering will take place from 5:00-6:00 p.m. UAA members who may bring a spouse or guest are invited to share refreshments with alumni friends and former colleagues. Please RSVP by January 24. See below for more details.

New! on USAIDAlumni.org

[In Memoriam:](#) Lu Rudel, Eugene Nathaniel "Tony" Babb, Dwight Ink, Alfred Waterlow Ford, Alan Donovan, Carol Joan Mills, and Edwin Thomas Chapman

[Articles:](#) Our January newsletter offers five new articles:

- **New! Review Essay of *The Enduring Struggle* with Historian Mary Jane Maxwell** (www.wbynamics.com)
- **New! USAID staffers disgruntled over back-to-office plans.** (*Devex by Teresa Welsh, December 10, 2021*)
- **New! Janet L. Yellen and Samantha Power: To uphold democracy, the U.S. must fight global corruption** (*Washington*)

Post by Secretary of the Treasury, Janet Yellen, and USAID Administrator, Samantha Power, December 6, 2021)

- **New! After six decades of US foreign aid, our future must be guided by the past** (*The Hill* by J. Brian Atwood, November 15, 2021)
- **New! MFAN Welcomes USAID Administrator Power's New Vision for Global Development – Placing Locals in the Lead** (*MFAN* by Lester Munson, Larry Nowels, and Tessie San Martin, November 12, 2021)

[Bulletin Board](#): Interesting news items since our last newsletter include:

- Journey from Kabul to the US by USAID/Afghanistan FSNs
- READOUT Administrator Samantha Power Holds Meetings on COVID-19
- [USAID steps up 'languishing' diversity, equity, and inclusion effort \(Devex, 12/15/21\)](#)
- [Update on USAID's Afghanistan Response: Note from Administrator Powell](#)
- [ADMINISTRATOR SAMANTHA POWER SPEECH AT THE UN OFFICE FOR COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS' 2022 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN OVERVIEW LAUNCH](#)
- [AFSA hosting a USAID Foreign Service Officer as part of Diplomats at Work](#)

[Bibliographies](#): Of the many fascinating bibliographies added since the last newsletter, included are:

- ***The Island in Winter*** by Alexi Panehal
- ***History of U.S. Foreign Policy in the George H.W. Bush Years*** by Andrew Natsios
- ***Modern Paraguay: Uncovering South America's Best Kept Secret*** by Tomas Mundi
- ***The Lighter Side of Living in Liberia*** by Michael Nicholson
- ***Africa Memoir: 50 Years, 54 Countries, One American Life*** (3 vols) by Mark Wentling
- ***International Education at the Crossroads*** by Deborah Cohn

Join us for the Annual Winterfest!!

UAA alumni are invited to bring their spouse or a guest to the eighth Annual Winterfest, our casual late afternoon gathering to get us through the remainder of the cold winter weeks. Join us and enjoy seeing and chatting with old friends and colleagues. This is a free event for UAA members and those eligible to become members.

Date: Sunday, February 20, 2022

Time: 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. (in-person gathering at the Almaguers)
5:00 to 6:00 p.m. (virtually join the event)

Location: Residence of Frank and Antoinette Almaguer in Vienna, Virginia.
Specifics will be provided along with confirmation of sign-up for this event.
Coordinates for Zoom access will also be provided to all who register prior to the February 20th event.

Covid Requirements: In-person attendees must be vaccinated/boosted and wear masks while indoors except when eating/drinking.

Dress: Totally Casual

RSVP: Please send acceptances, no later than Monday, January 24.

Click [here](#) to register for in-person participation.

Click [here](#) to register for virtual participation.

If the weather threatens, the snow date is Sunday, February 27. Also, if the pandemic worsens, the Winterfest will be held virtually **only** via Zoom. Those who have RSVP'd will be notified by email. You may also check the UAA website for any change in plans.

UAA 2022 Membership Contributions are due!

Making a Contribution for 2022 Membership

Membership in UAA is on a calendar year basis. All those whose contribution(s) are received between December 1, 2021, through November 30, 2022, will be considered members for 2022. For membership eligibility, suggested contribution levels, payment options, and how to join, see the listing on the left-side of the home page of the UAA website: <https://www.usaidalumni.org>.

One payment option to consider is making a Qualified Charitable Contribution from your IRA as your membership contribution for the year, which can be for part or all of your required minimum distribution. (Unfortunately, this option is not available from the Thrift Savings Plan.) Please consult <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p590b> for IRS information on this option.

[Eligibility for UAA Member-Only Events December 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022](#)

For UAA contributing member-only events between December 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022, both those who were members for 2021 and those who have become members for 2022 may attend. After March 31st, 2022, contributing membership for 2022 will be required for attendance at contributing member-only events.

For questions, please contact office@usaidalumni.org.

Formation of UAA Regional Chapters

The UAA Public Outreach Committee is pleased to report early progress in the formation of the first three UAA regional chapters which are poised to launch in 2022. Regional chapter leads have reached out to UAA members residing in their respective geographic areas to inform them about this effort and invite those interested to join them in a range of social/public outreach activities to be planned and executed in the coming year. If you are interested in learning more about UAA regional chapters, and/or if you know of other USAID retirees residing in your area who are not yet UAA members, please contact one of the regional chapter chairs:

New England chapter: Susan Fine, finesusanf@gmail.com

Florida chapter: Miles Toder, milestoder@hotmail.com

Midwest chapter: Alexi Panehal, alexipanehal53@yahoo.com

In addition to the launch of these three regional chapters in the coming months, we hope to support the formation of additional chapters in the year ahead. If you are interested in helping to support the formation of a regional chapter in your area, please contact our committee co-chairs: Beth Hogan at bethhogan123@gmail.com or David McCloud at davidmcloud@hotmail.com.

UAA Development Issues

On Tuesday, December 14th, the UAA Development Issues Committee hosted an informative virtual discussion on the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP-26, and its implication for U.S. foreign assistance programming on climate change.



Kathryn Stratos



Jay L. Knott

Kathryn Stratos, Deputy Director of USAID's Center for Environment, and former USAID Mission Director and current Senior Executive Vice-President of the EDF Jay L. Knott as discussion leaders provided an excellent summary of COP-26 key highlights, accomplishments, as well as some areas that needed more attention to combat climate change. A more complete summary of the discussion may be viewed on the UAA website by clicking [here](#). A link to the slides is [here](#).

UAA Book Club Reviews

On Wednesday, November 17, twelve participants discussed economic analysis in the "New Economics Curriculum" and "Instant Economics--The Real-Time Revolution" that appeared in *The New Yorker* and *The Economist*, respectively, in a virtual meeting via Zoom led by Tony Chan, with help from Jerre Manarolla. Tony's presentation notes and pdf copies of the articles discussed can be found on the UAA Book Club website. Click [here](#).

"The world is on the brink of a real-time revolution in economics, as the quality and timeliness of information is transformed" according to *The Economist*. What is commonly known as **Big Data** – real-time information on activity – is harvested and processed to provide real-time insights into in this case, economic activity and by extension, better public policy responses in terms of timeliness and accuracy.

On Wednesday, December 8, twenty-four participants joined Alex Shakow and author John Norris in a Zoom discussion of *The Enduring Struggle: The History of the Agency for International Development and America's Uneasy Transformation of the World, 2021*. A promotional discounted copy of the book may be ordered for \$28. See the flyer [here](#).

US foreign aid is one of the most misunderstood functions of our federal government. Consuming less than 1% of the federal government budget, it has nonetheless played an outsized role in political debate. At the center of this controversy and misunderstanding has been the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, the government agency created during the Kennedy administration to administer America's foreign assistance programs, an often conflicted behemoth with a presence spanning the globe. In this book, journalist and foreign policy expert John Norris provides a compelling and rich story of USAID.

Alumni Profiles: UAA Volunteers Assisting USAID's Afghan FSNs

Instead of highlighting one of our fellow UAA alumni as our first profile of the year, we chose to share with you the volunteer work of many UAA members with USAID/Afghanistan Foreign Service Nationals (FSN) and the challenge of resettlement.

USAID in Afghanistan had 149 FSNs, and 140 have come to the United States, often with families of four or more children. To help with their job hunt, USAID asked UAA volunteers to advise 50 FSNs on their resumes and work applications. As FSNs began to arrive in their new communities, they, and we, began to understand the real work of resettlement, and the role of UAA's volunteers expanded. UAA members could, and did, help fine-tune curriculum vitae and suggest contacts, drive to appointments and provide advice and introductions, interpret bureaucratic requirements and ferret out administrators, register students, give driving lessons and find legal counsel. Now, even more, UAA volunteers are needed to assist other FSNs.



Some examples follow of the challenges faced by FSNs being assisted by UAA volunteers. Names of the FSNs are not revealed to protect their privacy and that of their families remaining in Afghanistan.

Terry Myers shares this story: The FSN experienced 24 hours fighting crowds in the Kabul airport, ten days in a warehouse in Qatar in temperatures of 114 degrees, almost three months on a base in the middle of Wisconsin before arriving with a wife and seven children to an apartment isolated in suburban Maryland. And that was just the beginning: Dozens of documents were required for visas and work permits, school registration, bank accounts, driver's license, social security numbers, WIC and SNAP (food stamps), and all of that before applying for the job that relief agencies and the U.S. Government expect arrivals to have within 90 days of resettlement. It is a constant challenge being met daily by USAID's FSNs with remarkable resilience and courage. Now we in the United States are the beneficiaries of these new arrivals – a tribute to USAID/Kabul for having assembled an impressive crew of talented, thoughtful, and capable professionals -- as they adjust to a strange environment and work toward U.S. citizenship. Read "The Journey"[here](#).

Jim Bever shares this story: Please meet recently arrived USAID/Afghanistan FSN Zarif! Over five years ago, it was 7:00 p.m. on a late August day in Kabul, Afghanistan as Zarif was taking an evening class for his undergraduate Business Degree on the second floor of the USAID-funded American University of Afghanistan (AUAF). Suddenly, a huge car bomb exploded, followed by machine-gun fire and grenades as the school came under lethal attack by the Taliban. When his classroom was attacked and the bullets and explosives were flying, Zarif hurled himself through the glass window and onto the ground far below. Sustaining serious injuries, he and over 35 other injured students and faculty, and staff survived the attack. Fourteen did not; expatriate faculty members were kidnapped and held for years. Flash forward four and a half years later to winter/spring of 2021: Zarif got married, received his Master's Degree in Business Administration from AUAF, and joined USAID/Afghanistan as an Administrative Assistant. Flash forward only eight months later to the end of August as the Taliban took over Kabul: Zarif and his wife suddenly found themselves evacuated, eventually landing in U.S. Army Fort McCoy in Monroe County, Wisconsin, along with a thousand other Afghans. The newlyweds were separated for weeks into men's barracks and women's/children's barracks. But eventually, they were together again, living in their newly-found apartment in Woodbridge, Virginia



Mary Alice Kleinjan also shares a story: **Deeba** has been receiving UAA assistance to polish her resume and cover letters and to start her job search. She has a Bachelor's degree and had ten years' professional HR experience with USG implementers, including USAID grantees, before joining USAID/Kabul's Executive Office. In her two years in the USAID Mission, she won the Mission's Hardest Working Employee award and was a pillar of the Mission's wind-down effort. She is currently living with relatives in Sacramento but is hoping to find separate housing despite the tight housing market as well as a challenging job. UAA member Mary Alice, who is currently living in DC but grew up in the San Francisco Bay area near Sacramento, is connecting remotely with Deeba to help in her search.

Terry, Jim, and Mary Alice summarize best the work of the FSNs and the rewards of the UAA volunteers in assisting them: "Ultimately, the real work can only be done by the FSNs; the burden of resettlement is being borne by them and their families. Watching them encounter (and surmount) one set of challenges after another is intensely rewarding. We are fortunate they are here and we're grateful for the opportunity to welcome them."

With most of the Afghan FSNs now in the United States and more of them being allowed to leave their U.S. Army bases to start their lives in America, USAID is urgently asking yet more help for over 50 additional FSNs with their resume polishing, interview practicing and job searching. If any alumni are interested, please let USAID and UAA know via AFGProfessionalServices@usaid.gov.

Make Your 2022 UAA Membership Contribution
USAID Alumni Association

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