



# USAID Alumni Association

## March 2022 Newsletter

### Note from the UAA Board

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is riveting our attention: the damage to Ukraine and its people is shocking and deeply saddening, especially for those who have worked with the USAID missions in Ukraine or Russia. UAA is exploring ways that USAID retirees might help Ukrainian foreign service nationals (FSNs). Check the UAA website [Bulletin Board](#) for items concerning USAID's response to the invasion and the assistance needs of Ukrainian FSNs, as we will post additional items on Ukraine as they appear.

On the brighter side, congratulations to Roberta Mahoney, who was elected unanimously by UAA's Board on March 3 as Board co-chair. Roberta takes the slot vacated by Anne Aarnes, who remains on the Board but has completed her term as co-chair.

On March 4, the Board had a productive meeting with USAID's Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources Paloma Adams-Allen. We discussed UAA's activities under our MOU with USAID and other areas of support as well as new opportunities for collaboration. She suggested that UAA meet with her and other Agency leaders quarterly.

In February, the Board met with Peter Malnak, Acting Director of HCTM, who gave us an overview of the initiatives underway to expand and diversify the foreign service and GS workforce, strengthen support to FSNs, improve workforce planning, and learn from Agency experiences. The Board plans follow up meetings this month with HCTM and agency leadership to explore further collaboration under the USAID/UAA MOU.

Finally, on February 20, UAA celebrated a very successful in-person and virtual Winterfest at the residence of Frank and Antoinette Almaguer. Among the participants were members who are working on setting up UAA regional chapters in New England, Florida and the Midwest, as well as participants from other regions interested in forming chapters.

Like the Winterfest, future UAA events will be tailored to follow public health guidance and to protect the safety and health of all. We strongly urge everyone to get boosted, and we hope to see you at upcoming activities!

### Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

**New!** Wednesday, March 9, 2022. "[Breakthrough: The Promise of Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development](#)" is the topic for a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue (virtual) from noon to 1:15 on March 9. The speaker will be **Homi Kharas, Senior Fellow-Global Economy and Development, Center for Sustainable Development, at the Brookings Institution**. Homi will engage us in a discussion based on a recently published Brookings book that highlights breakthrough technologies that have the potential to soon have a substantial impact on the human condition. Register for the event [here](#).

**New!** Wednesday, March 16, 2022. "**Public Private Partnerships – a Perspective on 20 years of Experience**" is the topic for a virtual discussion, via Zoom, sponsored by the **UAA Development Issues Committee** from 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. EDT on Wednesday, March 16, 2022. Please note that this meeting is open only to UAA members who have made a contribution for 2021 or for 2022 and who register no later than **March 14**, by clicking [here](#).

The guest discussion leaders whose bios are linked [here](#) will be:

- Michael Metzler, Executive Director of USAID's Private Sector Investment Hub.
- AnnaMaria Shaker, Chief of Staff, Deloitte Consulting U.S. International Development Practice.
- Heather Kulp, Manager for Strategy and Analytics at the Chevron Corporation and former Executive Director of the Chevron-led Niger Delta Partnership with USAID.

**New! Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 1:30-3:30 pm** — The **UAA Book Club** will hold a virtual meeting via Zoom in which Joe Ryan will lead a review of Manuel Hinds, *Playing Monopoly with the Devil: Dollarization and Domestic Currencies in Developing Countries*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006, 255 pages.) Please note that this meeting is open only to UAA contributing members and those who register no later than **March 28** by clicking [here](#). Those who register will receive information on how to join the virtual meeting.

**New! Wednesday, April 20, 12 noon to 2:00 pm**, there will be a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue on "**Authoritarian Kleptocracy - Western Complicity and Rising Threats to Our National Security**".

The speaker will be **Frank Vogl**, author of *The Enablers*, former World Bank official and foreign correspondent for Reuters and The Times of London and co-founder of Transparency International.

Join us to learn how Western governments over many years have repeatedly placed national commercial interests above curbing the kleptocratic ambitions of authoritarian regimes, while failing to curb the "enablers" from Wall Street to the City of London who aid and abet corrupt regimes to launder their stolen cash.

Please Note: this DACOR Development Dialogue will be a "hybrid" event, so we encourage those who can to attend in person at DACOR-Bacon House, or if not to watch on-line as usual. Watch for a detailed announcement closer to the event.

## **Possible UAA Support Being Considered for FSN Emergency Relief**

The USAID Alumni Association shares with all Alumni our deep concern for the tragedy that has happened in Ukraine in the past couple of weeks. Our hearts go out to the people of Ukraine at this difficult time and to people from around the world seeking to assist their humanitarian needs. UAA's Board is exploring options for assisting USAID's FSNs who are experiencing such dire emergencies. We will keep you informed if we are able to find a way to contribute to such needs soon and more broadly in the future.

Click [here](#) to read the 'Standing with Ukraine' message from Administrator Power.

**New! on USAIDAlumni.org**

[In Memoriam](#): Hugh Sheridan (Sher) Plunkett, Lewis F. Smith, and James Rowland Lowe, Jr.

[Articles](#): Our March newsletter offers four new articles:

- **[New! Senior director for global health security leaving the NSC](#)** (*Devex by Erin Banco, February 8, 2022*)
- **[New! "Localisation only pays lip service to fixing aid's colonial legacy"](#)** (*The New Humanitarian by Maha Shuayb in Beirut, February 8, 2022*)
- **[New! World Development Report 2022](#)** (*World Bank, February 15, 2022*)
- **[New! UN allocates \\$20M from CERF to humanitarian response in Ukraine](#)** (*by UNOCHA, February 24, 2022*)

[Letter of appreciation from President Biden](#) to USG employees on the occasion of the March 1, 2022, State of the Union address

[Bulletin Board](#): The Bulletin Board section is resurrected! As of this newsletter, we have six new items.

- [USAID Executive Message: Supporting our FSN Colleagues in Ukraine](#)
- [Urgent Message from USAID Kyiv](#)
- [General Notice from the USAID Administrator: Standing with Ukraine](#)
- [USGLC Liz Schraye: military + business leaders speak out](#)
- [USAID Announcing a New Counselor to the Agency from Administrator Samantha Power \(January 4, 2022\)](#)
- [Terry Myers Letter in the January 1, 2022, NYTimes re GI Bill for Afghans \(January 1, 2022\)](#)

## UAA 2022 Annual Winterfest!!

One fun way to mark the once-in-a-lifetime "Two Twosday Two Two" date was with last month's Winterfest. The UAA successfully held its first hybrid event, offering both in-person and virtual meetings simultaneously. It was also the first in-person social event since Ambassador Frank Almaguer and his wife Antoinette hosted the 2020 Annual Winterfest.

On February 20, nearly forty UAA members and guests gathered at the Almaguers' home to enjoy camaraderie, reminiscing, and refreshments. Another estimated twenty-three alumni joined the festivities via Zoom to hear from the new Acting Counselor for USAID, Ken Yamashita, and Board Co-chairs Margaret Neuse and Anne Aarnes. Participants also heard about plans for this year's launch of UAA regional chapters that will provide support to more UAA members outside the D.C. metropolitan area. And the virtual attendees enjoyed participating in engaging conversations led by several Executive Committee members.



Tish Butler, Bambi Arellano, Gail Spence, Margaret Neuse, Lee Rousell, Frank Almaguer, and Joy Riggs-Perla enjoying the get-together.



Joy Riggs-Perla conversing with virtual participants.

## 2022 UAA Awards Program

In 2022, the UAA will continue to recognize significant contributions by UAA members through its signature Alumni of the Year Awards. Since the inception of the Awards Program in 2014, the UAA has recognized and celebrated new paths taken by USAID alumni to provide service to their communities and to make lasting contributions to others at home and abroad.

For the Alumni of the Year awards, your help is requested in identifying individuals whose post-USAID activities are truly exemplary and highlight the quality of our alumni community. We ask each of you to consider nominating (or self-nominating) someone you know who is deserving of this recognition.

The Awards Committee will accept nominations for Alumni of the Year, beginning now until July 31, 2022. Send nominations electronically to: [awards@usaidalumni.org](mailto:awards@usaidalumni.org). The award winners will be announced at the Annual General Meeting in October.

The 2022 UAA Awards Program guidance is provided on the UAA website. Please [click here](#).

## Development Resources

USAID retirees have been busy writing during COVID!! Two new books and one old one will be added shortly to the Bibliography of USAID Authors.

- Former USAID Health Officer, Carl Henn, has just self-published *My Two Centuries in Africa: How a Funny-Looking Kid from Indiana Wound Up on an Endless Africa Adventure* — a well-reviewed travel book and coming-of-age memoir.
- Also, former mission director, Frank Young, has a well-received new book, *17 Aerogrammes: A Passage through India, 1969-70*, published as a paperback using journals, letters, and photographs taken a half century ago.

Both books can be purchased inexpensively on Amazon. All authors would be grateful.

- The older book, *The Administration of Technical Assistance: Growth in the Americas (1957)* was written by Philip Glick, a legal counsel for two USAID predecessor agencies. This book, per Joe Ryan, is still a terrific guide to organizational issues of development assistance.

More info on each of these books will be placed in the Bibliography.

Please remember to send information of YOUR new book or others you have become aware of to [Jpielemeie@aol.com](mailto:Jpielemeie@aol.com). The Bibliography is a compendium of more than 250 titles written by USAID officers, spouses, children and FSNs and is available to retirees, students, researchers, and general readers at <https://usaidalumni.org/bibliography-usaid-authors>.

## Alumni Profile: Marilyn Zak



From an early age, Marilyn Zak's parents recognized and accepted that her dream was to see the world. After receiving bachelors and master's degrees in international business administration and economics from the University of Washington, she spent a year in the private sector before joining USAID to follow that dream. Her USAID career assignments provided excellent opportunities, and her accomplishments grew!

In her first assignment as international trade assistant in the Controller's Office, Marilyn soon discovered one person at a company was falsely signing two different names. Marilyn developed the legal case, which the Agency won and granted Marilyn the first of many awards.

After overseas assignments in Indonesia and Paraguay followed by assignment in the LAC Bureau's new Office of Social and Civil Development, she was intrigued by and accepted an offer from the State Department's Inspector General of Foreign Assistance to assume responsibility for Haiti. She soon discovered that the U.S. Government was not dealing with civil society, thus resulting in a disconnect between what the majority of Haitians thought and that of Haitian officials and their American counterparts. After the IG reported a multitude of serious problems, the IG's Office was abolished.

For Marilyn, it meant a new assignment as Senior Policy Adviser for Human Rights, a new USAID program. One of her proudest achievements there was

development of a standard constitution for use by developing countries moving toward democracy.

She then attended the War College, the first female to do so, and was asked to teach there the following year. This led to USAID using the War College to move up women from their traditional roles to higher management.

Following Deputy Director assignments to the Caribbean Affairs Office and the Jamaica Mission, Marilyn was selected as Mission Director to the Dominican Republic where she and her staff developed and implemented an election assistance program that resulted in the country's most honest election just two years after its most fraudulent.

As Mission Director to Nicaragua, she led the design and implementation of a major emergency program that helped over 800,000 people recover from Hurricane Mitch. A key Presidential election followed, and Marilyn used her election expertise and experience to develop and direct a program that ensured free and fair elections in 2001 with high voter turnout and unchallenged results.

Marilyn was active in establishing the Women's Action Organization (WAO) of State, USAID and USIA and served as USAID Board Member. WAO helped finance a class action suit against State, alleging discrimination against women's assignments. After years, they won. WAO-USAID analyzed USAID's data and widely publicized *WAO's Profile of Women in USAID*, after much research found a number of discriminatory policies. An Equal Employment Opportunity Board was reestablished.

With her dream of seeing the world accomplished and her work in human rights, democracy, elections and women empowerment bearing fruit, Marilyn retired from USAID. She continues to enjoy traveling and writing on many subjects. She enjoys hearing from many UAA members and USAID friends from her home.

## **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#en\\_US\\_2020\\_publink100041439](https://www.irs.gov/publications/p590b#en_US_2020_publink100041439) for IRS information on this option.

### Eligibility for UAA Member-Only Events 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 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, contributing membership for 2022 will be required for attendance at contributing member-only events.

For questions, please contact [office@usaidalumni.org](mailto:office@usaidalumni.org).

**Make Your 2022 UAA Membership Contribution**

**USAID Alumni Association**

