

# George A. Laudato



George A. Laudato, a career Senior Foreign Service Officer and international development advisor, died peacefully on Monday, October 3, 2022 at his home in Washington, DC. He was 81.

In his 40-year career, Mr. Laudato opened US Agency for International Development (USAID) missions in Yemen and Nicaragua, managed the United States' largest foreign aid mission in Egypt, and later served as Deputy Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Middle East under the Clinton Administration and then Acting Administrator for the Bureau for Asia and the Near East during the Bush and Obama administrations.

George Anthony Laudato was born in Bergen County, New Jersey to Anthony and Alice Laudato. The first of his family to attend college, George graduated from Seton Hall in 1963.

Inspired by the international focus of the Kennedy Administration, he joined the Peace Corps and served in Panama from 1963 to 1966, where he developed what would become a lifelong interest in the influence of culture, politics and economics on international development.

In 1966, he was recruited by USAID to serve in Vietnam in the Office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS). There he completed 4,000 interviews with Vietnamese villagers as part of the conflict's "pacification program." Mr. Laudato received USAID's Meritorious Honor Award for managing an evacuation and relief effort for 40,000 refugees under battlefield conditions. Mr. Laudato came to realize how short-term military objectives can undermine efforts to win hearts and minds, a lesson that he later saw the United States struggle with repeatedly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In 1973, Mr. Laudato participated in opening USAID missions in Yemen and in 1976, in Egypt. There he met Janna Magruder and married in Cairo in 1977. In 1980, he was posted to the Philippines as a Program Officer, where he co-led the negotiating team for the \$475 million economic compensation package associated with the Base Rights Agreement. In 1984, he returned to Cairo, eventually becoming Deputy Director.

In 1988, he returned to Washington, DC where he was Deputy Assistant Administrator for Program Policy and Coordination and then Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Asia and the Near East. From 1997 to 2007 as Managing Senior Vice President at Abt Associates, International Health, Mr. Laudato expanded work in health systems finance to health policy reform and restructuring worldwide, including Iraq. In 2008, he returned to USAID as Acting Administrator for the Near East, working on issues posed by Iraq and the Arab Spring.

After retiring in 2011, Mr. Laudato served on the Board of Seton Hall's School of Diplomacy, as an advisor to Arizona State University, and on the Board of the non-profit Aid to Artisans.

George loved to promote the careers of young colleagues, entertain and cook. He is survived by his wife Janna; brothers, Anthony and Paul; son Anthony Laudato (wife Lisa Marshall), son Stephen Laudato (wife Rozhin Penjweini), and two grandchildren, Luca and Reven.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the George Laudato National Security Fellowship Endowment, Seton Hall School of Diplomacy and International Relations, 457 Center Street, South Orange, NJ 07079.

A memorial mass and reception will be held at 10:30 a.m. on October 18 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 1315 36th Street NW, Washington, DC.