



# USAID Alumni Association

## July 2023 Newsletter

### Note from the UAA Board

After an unseasonably cool and dry few weeks, summer returned to DC with a hot and humid vengeance: perfect picnic weather and a reminder to prepare for the August exodus. Read Denise Rollin's great review, below, of USAID's first-ever Former FSNs Family Day Picnic, organized by USAID and held on June 25<sup>th</sup> at our favorite picnic site--Fort Hunt Park. In another first, the Social Committee has organized a small group visit to the National Portrait Gallery on July 11<sup>th</sup> to view their incredible photographic exhibit "I Dream a World: Selections from Brian Lanker's Portraits of Remarkable Black Women." See details below. While many of us will be vacationing over the next month or more, your UAA colleagues will be busy: the AGM Planning, Board Nominations, and Awards Committees are working hard to ensure a successful AGM on October 27.

This is our last Newsletter for the summer, so we want to remind you of two more summer picnics: on August 2, the annual 'development wallahs' picnic will take place in Rochester, Vermont, and UAA's Annual Summer Picnic will take place just after Labor Day on September 9 at Fort Hunt Park in Alexandria, Virginia. See below and the website for details. Stay cool and enjoy your summer!

### Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

#### JULY

- **Wednesday, July 11 at 11:45 am, Small Group Social Event.** The UAA Social Events Committee has planned a small group visit to the **National Portrait Gallery's "I Dream a World: Selections from Brian Lanker's Portraits of Remarkable Black Women (Part II)" exhibit.** This small, exquisite selection of portraits dates from 1988-1989 and appeared in Lanker's 1989 book of the same title. The photographer "discovered women whose images show us the high cost of living and the rich reward of thriving." The exhibit is free. We will meet in front of the Museum at 11:45 AM and then follow our tour with a self-pay lunch at a local restaurant. Please contact Denise Rollins, [denise.rollins52@gmail.com](mailto:denise.rollins52@gmail.com), by Friday, July 7, if you plan to join us.
- **Friday, July 21 at noon, there will be a hybrid lunch program at DACOR featuring Dr. Liesbet Steer, the newly appointed President & CEO of the Education Development Center,** a global nonprofit advancing lasting solutions to improve education, promote health, and expand economic opportunity. She will speak about **"The Vision of Universal Education: What Went Wrong and How to Fix It?"** For the past seven years she has been the Executive Director of the Education Commission, an international initiative driving progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal for inclusive and equitable quality education. To register, please [click here](#).

## AUGUST

- **NEW! SAVE THE DATE! Wednesday, August 2nd, 11-2:30 pm in Rochester, Vermont.** Anne Aarnes, David Sprague, and Ann and Mike Van Dusen will host **the annual "development wallah" picnic.** All are welcome, including alumni who may be visiting New England in early August. For more information, contact Ann Van Dusen ([avandusen4@gmail.com](mailto:avandusen4@gmail.com))

## SEPTEMBER

- **NEW! Saturday, September 9, 12-4 pm at Ft Hunt Park, Alexandria, Va. UAA Annual Picnic.** The event is open to all UAA alumni and their families. This is a covered dish event but UAA will provide ice, soft drinks, cups, flatware, and dinnerware. We also are looking for some light diversions--Corn Hole or boules/petanque/bocce. If you have equipment, please contact Karen Freeman (at [ugandakaren@hotmail.com](mailto:ugandakaren@hotmail.com)). Watch for emails in July and August with details.

## OCTOBER

- **NEW! Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>** – The Social Events Committee is also planning two events to bookend the AGM and provide members an opportunity to spend some additional social time together. [See further information in the AGM article below.](#)
- **NEW! Friday, October 27, 2023**, is the date for the UAA's **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. The Meeting will be held in-person at the Center for Global Development. Members who prefer to attend virtually, and those who live outside the Washington, DC area, will be able to join via Zoom. See further information in the AGM article below.

## **New! USAIDAlumni.org**

**[In Memoriam:](#)** Robert "Bob" Bruce Meighan

**AFSA death notices for USAID members not in UAA In Memoriam list** [Click here](#) to see a list from 25 pages of American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) members specifying USAID as their foreign affairs agency who have died since AFSA started keeping track in the **Memorial Tribute** section of its website, but who were not listed in the [In Memoriam](#) section of the UAA website (as of June 2023). Most of the entries do not include obituaries. Those that do have been added to **UAA In Memoriam Previous Tributes**. Missing obituaries would be welcome at [office@usaidalumni.org](mailto:office@usaidalumni.org) Attn: Memorials.

### **Bulletin Board:**

- Upcoming USC breakfast forums on Africa are scheduled for July 31, Global Powers and Multilateralism; August 28, Climate Change; and September 25, Business and Trade, all at the USC Washington building, 1771 N Street, NW, Washington, DC. RSVP to Judy Kang at [junghwak@usc.edu](mailto:junghwak@usc.edu)
- [A Celebration of the Life and Work of Molly Hageboeck](#) will be held at 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington DC, 2009 on Thursday, July 13, 2023.
- **Supporting our FSN Colleagues in Sudan.** As of Sunday, April 23, 2023, the U.S. suspended Embassy Sudan operations after the successful evacuation of our U.S. direct-hire staff. Many of our Foreign Service National (FSN) colleagues remain in Sudan, facing both immediate risks to their safety and grave uncertainty about their country's future. There are two direct ways you can help our colleagues today. [Click here for more information.](#)

## Articles:

- "USAID's Policy Framework," by George Ingram and Susan Reichle, Brookings Center for Sustainable Development, 6/15/2023. On May 3, 2023, the Brookings Center for Sustainable Development hosted a public event on the recently released USAID Policy Framework. USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman presented the highlights, followed by a panel representing USAID and civil society discussing specific aspects of the framework.
- **The June 2023 newsletter from Global Peace Services USA contains two articles of interest:** 1) "Putin Attacks Ukraine's Culture," by Dr. Robert Muscat, GPS Board Member, explores the subject of cultural destruction, an instrument widely employed by aggressors. 2) "Indigenous Residential Schools in Canada and the United States: Uncovering the Truth and Pursuing Healing and Reconciliation," by John Eriksson, President of GPS USA.
- UAA requests your support for a U.S. commemorative coin recognizing the centennial of the U.S. Foreign Service, UAA Board, 20 May 2023

## Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities:

### • **Mentors Needed for UAA/USAID Mentoring Program** **Exciting Opportunity to Invest in the Next Generation of Agency Leaders**

The UAA/USAID Alumni Association Mentoring Program is a successful collaboration between UAA membership and USAID senior leaders who have championed the program. The program matches field-based foreign service officers (mentees) with alumni mentors to provide professional and career guidance. Mentors and mentees generally speak (usually via Zoom, Google Meet, or phone) every three weeks or monthly for an hour or so. We need more mentors to ramp up the program and address the Agency's leadership strategy for the future. We encourage alumni to join us by contacting Denise Rollins ([denise.rollins52@gmail.com](mailto:denise.rollins52@gmail.com)) and Sharon Pauling ([sharonpauling@hotmail.com](mailto:sharonpauling@hotmail.com)) to express interest in participating as a mentor for Cohort 13, which kicks off in the fall. For more information please [click here](#) and visit [Resources for UAA Mentors](#).

- For details of other opportunities, click [here](#).

## Additions to the Bibliography of USAID Authors

Another interesting book has recently been added to the [Bibliography](#): Aaron Williams recent book, *A Life Unimagined: The Rewards of Mission Driven Service in the Peace Corps and Beyond* has been added to the Bibliography of USAID Authors. Aaron's excellent memoir includes his 24 years with USAID and his



service as Peace Corps Director. Aaron is also a "founding parent" of UAA. Read more [HERE](#).

Please forward notice of any new books to [Jpielemeie@aol.com](mailto:Jpielemeie@aol.com)

## **A unique event: Picnic for former USAID FSNs**

On Sunday, June 25th, a memorable event took place at Fort Hunt Park in Virginia. Under the leadership of Counselor Clinton White, a group of USAID headquarter staff organized the inaugural Foreign Service Nationals Family Unity Picnic. It was an impressive turnout of nearly 500 former FSNs and family members, representing Cambodia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Haiti, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Guinea, South Africa, Honduras, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan and more.



Counselor White invited representatives of the UAA to attend. The UAA members enjoyed catching up and re-establishing connections with former FSNs. It was a joyous and nostalgic gathering, filled with laughter, stories, and the shared bond of their past experiences in international development.



The picnic was a delightful culinary experience, with attendees bringing and sharing many delectable dishes from around the world. Privately funded by USAID staff, this event will hopefully become an annual tradition. It provided an opportunity for many colleagues who hadn't seen each other in 20-30 years to reconnect. It was especially heartwarming to witness former FSNs who had settled in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area, raising families, sending their children to prestigious universities, purchasing homes, and relishing the benefits of living in the US.

## Highlights Of The Upcoming UAA Annual General Meeting And Associated Social Events

Friday, October 27, 2023, is the date for the UAA's **Annual General Meeting** (AGM). The Meeting will be held in-person at the Center for Global Development in downtown DC. Members who prefer to attend virtually, and those who live outside the Washington, DC area, will be able to join via Zoom. The schedule has been adjusted this year with Registration beginning at 8:30 am and the day ending with lunch at 1:15 pm to allow for extended socializing. Note that only [2023 UAA members](#) may attend the AGM. If you have not yet made your 2023 contribution, please do so now by [clicking here](#).

In brief, the agenda includes:

- Administrator Power has been invited to give the keynote address.
- USAID's new Policy Framework focus on "progress beyond programs" will be discussed in two panels:
  1. How the new initiative's objectives and rationale differ from current and past practice; and
  2. Workforce and budget implementation challenges.
- Alumni of the Year Awards will be presented.
- Highlights of the UAA Annual Report will be provided by the Board Co-Chairs.
- Newly elected and re-elected UAA Board Members will be announced.

In association with the AGM, this year our new Social Events Committee has planned two group social events for the day before and day after the AGM. Both are events in the planning stage with details to come later.

- On **Thursday, October 26**, we will take in the Rubell Museum and follow with a no host lunch in a restaurant in the area. The Museum has recently opened an exhibition of the Rubell Family's extensive contemporary art collection. The Museum is located near the Wharf in Southwest Washington, DC. The collection is distinguished by its unprecedented range

and depth, enabling the Museum to organize over 50 exhibitions during the last three decades drawn entirely from its holdings in painting, sculpture, photography, video, and installation.

- On **Saturday, October 28** we'll head for nearby Virginia wine country. We're still checking out the vineyards and are working on making transportation available. The winery visit on Saturday will include minority-owned wineries in the DMV, such as Delaplane Cellars at 2187 Winchester Rd, Delaplane, VA, and Vino 301 wine concierge. It'll be a beautiful autumn trip!

Plan to come for the AGM and spend some time with friends at these events.

## **UAA Board Elections 2023: Request for Self-Nominations**

There are two vacant positions on the UAA Board to be filled by vote of the Membership prior to the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM). In addition, there are two incumbents standing for re-election. The Board Nominations Committee is seeking to broaden the selection of candidates to fill these two vacancies by soliciting current UAA members to self-nominate. The only required criterion is that you must be a 2023 UAA member (having made the required contribution on or after December 1, 2022) as of the deadline for submission of expressions of interest as a candidate for the Board. Candidates may have worked under any USAID hiring authority eligible for membership in UAA.

Candidates may be located anywhere, including outside the CONUS, as long as they have access to high-speed internet. Attendance at both monthly Board and Executive Committee Zoom meetings on weekday mornings, Eastern time, is expected. The Board of UAA is a working Board and all members, through their participation, contribute significant time.

The Nominations Committee will take into consideration factors such as active participation in UAA Standing Committees, participation in the UAA Mentoring Program, or other activities that demonstrate the candidate has contributed to the work of the UAA and is willing to invest time and energy into the activities of the UAA. Activities have expanded under our MOU with USAID and we anticipate that they will continue to expand and diversify.

Consistent with UAA's Statement of Intent on Diversity and Inclusion, the Nominations Committee encourages UAA members who identify as coming from a diverse or under-represented community to self-nominate for Board membership. The Statement



of Intent can be found under UAA Policies in the About Us section of the UAA website.

If you wish to self-nominate, please send the following information to the Nominations Committee:

- Name
- Last position held at USAID, hiring authority, and date of retirement or most recent separation
- Examples of contributions to UAA or its operating framework/objectives as stated in the About Us section of the UAA website
- Brief statement of why you wish to join the Board

Send your self-nomination to the members of the Nominations Committee NLT July 14, 2023, to allow adequate time for consideration. The Nominations Committee members, Margaret Neuse, Carol Dabbs and Miles Toder can be reached at: <https://elections@usaidalumni.org>.

## **2023 UAA Awards Program - Nomination Deadline is July 31**

Less than a month remains to nominate, or self-nominate, a deserving UAA alum for the signature Alumni of the Year Award for international or domestic service. The UAA will continue this year to recognize significant contributions by UAA members through its annual awards program. Since the inception of the program in 2014, the UAA has celebrated new paths taken by USAID alumni in retirement to provide service to their communities and to make lasting contributions to others at home and abroad. To view the 2023 Awards Program guidance, please click [here](#).

The Awards Committee **will accept nominations for Alumni of the Year until July 31, 2023**. Send nominations electronically to: [awards@usaidalumni.org](mailto:awards@usaidalumni.org). The award winners will be announced at the UAA Annual General Meeting on October 27.

## **Development Dialogues**

**DACOR: "Whatever Happened to the Population Explosion and Where We Are Today"**





Steve Sinding

On Monday, June 5 a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue audience at DACOR and online were treated to a brilliant tour d’horizon of the population issue by **Steve Sinding**. He is very well known in USAID and population communities for his leadership roles, both at USAID and the International Planned Parenthood Federation, as well as in many other important positions over his long career. As was very evident in Steve’s fascinating talk, no one is more qualified than Steve to review the remarkable history of the population issue and its current state.

This was also the first trial run of a Monday morning 10:00 to noon coffee session since the pandemic, which gave Steve a chance to speak at length on ***“Whatever Happened to the Population Explosion and Where Are We Today”***. To see the entire program, click [here](#).

### **Development Issues Committee**

The Development Issues Committee, on June 28, hosted **Andrew Herscowitz**, Chief Development Officer at the United States Development Finance Corporation. The session was well attended, with insightful opening remarks and rich discussion. Mr. Herscowitz presented a critical, yet optimistic assessment of the USDFC. He noted that the USDFC is making very positive contributions, yet its instruments are not very widely understood, even within the international development community. He discussed the ways in which the USDFC is becoming more deliberate in setting development goals by sector and the need for efforts to be strengthened to support upstream development of potential transactions. Part of the discussion focused on the role of equity investment in the USDFC toolkit, its limits and how its use is constrained by its underlying financing rules. USDFC supports training across international affairs agencies and meeting participants supported the idea of directing training resources to Foreign Service Nationals. The recording of the session will be posted on the UAA website when it becomes available.

### **Alumni Profile: Emmy Simmons**



Emmy Simmons at Windsor Castle

In telling her story to UAA, Emmy Simmons began at the end of her USAID career during her retirement party in 2005. There she was approached by an acquaintance from the university community to recruit her for membership on the Board of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

Emmy reflected back to having first seen the IITA agricultural research center buildings under construction in Ibadan, Nigeria, around 1970, when she and her husband Roger Simmons were working at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria.

Emmy digressed from her story to note that both she and Roger became long-time USAID staffers by 1980 and tandem-coupled to several overseas postings between 1982 and 1997. These included regional posts in Africa for Emmy with the Sahel Development Planning Team and REDSO/ESA and national mission positions for Roger in Mali and Kenya. They were both assigned to Russia in late 1994 to close out the overseas postings. Final assignments were in Washington. Roger retired in 2000 while Emmy went on to become a Senate-confirmed, Presidential appointee as the Assistant Administrator for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade in 2002. Emmy reconnected to visit the fully operational IITA in 2006 and, at the same time, joining the Board of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) headquartered in Nairobi. She also worked with the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa as a consultant. These Board appointments and the Partnership work set the pace for Emmy's retirement from USAID. She has joined other boards, advisory committees, and panels over the years, staying immersed in issues of economic growth, agriculture, trade and nutrition.

Emmy shifted her focus from "food security" to the broader and more operational challenge of global food systems transformation in response to changes in the global context. She grew to believe that it is essential to look beyond the issues of hunger to the considerably broader issues of malnutrition in all its forms and the impact that nutritionally inadequate diets have on health. While acknowledging a diminishing engagement on boards, advisory committees, and panels as she ages, Emmy ruefully admitted that social media and the advent of professional Zoom calls and webinars have enabled her to stay involved with the issues to which she has devoted her career.

Moreover, she found that she can inspire her Vinson Hall Retirement Community neighbors in McLean, Virginia, where she relocated during the covid pandemic, to care about crop biodiversity!

In February, 2023, Emmy reveled in an in-person meeting of the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition held at Windsor Castle (see picture). She stated, "It was terrific to discuss, argue, and laugh with experts in the field and to think about the food system challenges that will be addressed at the upcoming COP28." Emmy stressed that food systems will need to adapt to climate change and changes in their operations – and food demand – will also be essential to mitigating emissions of the greenhouse gases that are driving it. She added that she has many nieces, nephews, and young cousins who will be holding our generation responsible!

Emmy welcomes hearing from her USAID friends and colleagues. She may be contacted at [emmysimmons@aol.com](mailto:emmysimmons@aol.com).

## **Make Your 2023 UAA Membership Contribution** **USAID Alumni Association**

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