



# USAID Alumni Association

## January 2023 Newsletter

### Note from the UAA Board

Feliz Navidad, bonne annee, and best wishes for a happy, healthy, and safe New Year to all! Our successful AGM is behind us, our new Board members are in place (see photo below!), and we're ready for a busy year ahead. Our annual plan for October 2022 through September 2023 was previewed at the October AGM, so we have our direction and objectives set for 2023.

Some of our first actions include approving the 2023 budget and new Committee Co-Chairs in early January, meeting with Deputy Administrator Paloma Adams-Allen later in the month, UAA members (including our FL-based Board member, Miles Toder, our DMV-based Outreach Committee Co-Chair

Beth Hogan, and our strong FL-based retirement community) will gather at the Florida Foreign Service Retiree Association meeting, and Mentoring Program mentor training wraps up the month.

We expect to have one Co-Chair opportunity available for members wishing to work with colleagues and support UAA efforts: watch the February Newsletter for our newly approved Co-Chairs and volunteer opportunities!



*Board Members, from left: Margaret Neuse, Joy Riggs-Perla, Miles Toder, Chris Milligan, Carol Dabbs, Roberta Mahoney, and Denise Rollins.*

## Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

- **NEW!** Please join the conversation on **Wednesday, January 18, 2023**, at DACOR with Aaron Williams and Taylor Jack, authors of ***The Young Black Leader's Guide to a Successful Career in International Affairs: What the Giants Want You to Know***. Aaron and Taylor will discuss the origins of the book, the many voices included, and themes of particular relevance to mentoring others. The event is also an opportunity to recognize the many members of DACOR and USAID Alumni Association who contributed their wisdom and experience in the book. This is a hybrid event – you have the option to attend in person or virtually. Registrations are required for all attendees. For in-person attendees, the event will run from 6:30 – 8:30 pm and will include a reception. The live stream will begin at 7:15 pm (virtual attendees will be sent a link for the event via email). This event is co-hosted by DACOR and UAA. To register please click [here](#).

- **NEW!** At a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue lunch at DACOR on February 10, 2023, from 12 noon to 2:00 pm, **Dan Runde**, CSIS senior vice president and director of the Project on Prosperity and Development, will speak about his new book ***The American Imperative: Reclaiming Global Leadership through Soft Power*** which makes the case for building a new global consensus through vigorous internationalism and the judicious use of soft power. He maps out many of the steps that we need to take--primarily in the non-military sphere--to ensure an alliance of stable and secure, like-minded, self-reliant partner nations. Dan will be engaged in conversation by active UAA **member Ambassador Jim Michel**. Please note this will be a "hybrid" program. We urge all to attend in person if they can. Watch for a full announcement closer to the event.
- **NEW!** **Sunday, March 5, 2023, 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. UAA alumni are invited to bring their spouse or a guest to the ninth Annual Winterfest.** Frank and Antoinette Almaguer have graciously offered to again host at their residence in Vienna, Virginia. This is a free event for UAA members. We also encourage you to bring or invite those eligible to become members. RSVP: Please send acceptances no later than February 6 so that we can place orders and plan accordingly. See the article below for details and for the registration link.

## New! USAIDAlumni.org

**In Memoriam::** Lois Richards, William Lefes, Anton "Ton" Cistaro, Jim Cummiskey, Catherine (Tina) Cleland, Richmond Allen, Laura Lindskog

### Articles

- **MFAN Applauds Final Fiscal Year 2023 State-Foreign Operations Bill**, by Co-Chairs Lester Munson, Larry Nowels and Tessie San Martin, 22 December 2022.
- **What's in the US budget for foreign aid?** Devex, by Adva Saldinger, 21 December 2022.
- **Opinion: US staff in high-threat environments need mental health support.** Devex, by Beth Cole, Gregg Martin, 20 December 2022.
- **DevExplains: Why the outdated law that created USAID is so hard to fix.** By Michael Igoe, 9 December 2022.
- **Rethinking the Constraints to Localization of Foreign Aid**, by Patrick Fine, Brookings, Future Development, December 1, 2022.

### Bulletin Board

- **Summary of Omnibus Appropriations Bill provisions for State/Foreign Operations**, 23 Dec 2022
- **Why We Hosted 49 Delegations from Africa This Week**, Sec'y Antony J. Blinken, Dept. of State, 16 Dec 2022

- **USAID warns against striking as labor dispute roils health bureau**, DEVEX by Michael Igoe, 16 Dec 2022
- **United States to Provide \$2 Billion in Humanitarian Assistance for the People of Africa**, Press Release, 15 Dec 2022

## **Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities**

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST), a small nonprofit with a mission to capture, preserve, and share diplomatic oral histories, is hiring an office manager to join our team. (Check them out at [adst.org](http://adst.org).)

## **2023 Winterfest!**

UAA alumni are invited to bring their spouse or a guest to the ninth Annual Winterfest. We look forward to a casual afternoon gathering to catch up, share adventures and plans and fortify ourselves to get through the remainder of the cold winter weeks with an eye to welcoming spring. Join us and enjoy sitting by the fire with old friends and colleagues. Do bring your ideas for things that you'd like to see us do together in the future. This is a free event for UAA members. We also encourage you to bring or invite those eligible to become members.

Date: Sunday, March 5, 2023

Time: 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Location: Residence of Frank and Antoinette Almaguer in Vienna, Virginia. Specifics will be provided along with confirmation of sign-up for this event.

Covid Requirement: Masks are respected but no requirements unless we hear otherwise in the interim.

Dress: Smart Casual

RSVP: Please send acceptances, no later than February 6 so that we can place orders and plan accordingly.

Click [here](#) to register

If the weather threatens, the "snow" date is Sunday March 12. If needed, those who have RSVP'd will be notified by email. You may also check the UAA website for any change in plans.

## **2023 Membership Contributions Are Due!**

If you haven't already responded to the UAA's December message encouraging you to join or renew your 2023 membership, you can still do this by clicking on the **[MEMBER 2023](#)** icon now. You will be able to enjoy all UAA activities during the UAA membership year, January 1 to December 31, 2023. For membership eligibility, 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>.

You can submit your credit card data online by clicking the member icon above, or send a check made out to USAID Alumni Association to Treasurer, USAID Alumni Association, DACOR, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1801 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20006. The whole process, including answering a few opinion questions, should take less than 10 minutes.

If you are over 70 1/2, one payment option for dues as well as additional financial support to consider is making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA as your membership contribution for the year, which can be for part or all of your required minimum distribution (RMD). The QCD option is available for all traditional IRAs, but unfortunately, this option is not available from the Thrift Savings Plan. For IRS information on this option, please consult: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p590b>.

So, with the holiday season over, take a moment to become a 2023 contributing member as the year begins.

Tom Nicastro and Bette Cook  
Membership Co-Chairs

## Update on UAA-USAID Mentoring Program

On November 1st, UAA and DACOR co-hosted a celebration of the Agency's 61st anniversary at the historic DACOR Bacon House. More than 80 colleagues and friends came together for a lunch featuring a Q&A with 7 former Agency Counselors, who were joined by and welcomed USAID's newest Counselor, Clinton White. Together the former Counselors (left to right)--James Michel, Tom Staal, Chris Milligan, Clinton White, Ken Yamashita, Susan Reichle, Hilda "Bambi" Arellano, and Carol Peasley —brought decades of leadership experience to the Agency.

## Bibliography Of USAID Authors

13 new books have been added to the [Bibliography](#), many summarized in the November edition of the *Foreign Service Journal*.

- **History and Biography:** Ali Ezzatyar: *Iranian Immigration to Israel: History and Voices in the Shadow of Kings*.
- **Policy:** Constantine Michalopoulos: *Aid, Trade and Development: The Future of Globalization*.
- **Memoir:** Judy Goodman Ikels, wife of USAID officer, Larry Ikels. *Death in Wartime China: A Daughter's Discovery*.
- Rae Bourquein, wife of Bob Bourquein. *Our Foreign Service Adventure would be a Good Movie*.
- Michael Dillard: *Accidental Success: Accidental Millionaire Retirement*. Dillard is currently a USAID controller.
- **Fiction:** Mark Wentling: *Kansas Kaleidoscope*. A coming-of-age novel.
- **Young Adult and Children:** Paul Crawford. *Destiny's Cradle*. Set in a starship on a journey to a distant planet.
- Katherine Dow. "The Brooklyn Racing Club" is included in *Dragons of a Different Tales: 17 Unusual Dragon Tales*.
- Monica Jean Normil. *Riley Explores Being a Diplomat*.
- **How to and Self-Help:** Aaron Williams and others. *The Young Black Leader's Guide to a Successful Career in International Affairs: What the Giants Want you to Know*.



- Noelle Ojo. *The Blaxit Effect: The African-American's Guide to Relocating to Africa.*
- **Of Related Interest:** Jamie Bowman. *Bike Riding in Kabul: The Global Adventures of a Foreign Aid Practitioner.*
- Charles Ndibui. *Time and Chance: A Story of a Nairobi Bomb Blast Survivor.*

## UAA DACOR Development Dialogue

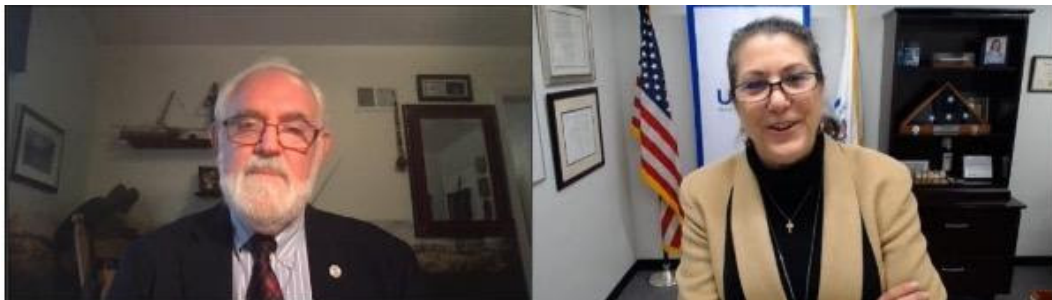
### China's Impact on Developing Countries



Dr. David Dollar, Brookings Senior Scholar and leading expert on China's economy, led over 60 attendees through a fascinating discussion on "China's Impact on Developing Countries – the Belt and Road Initiative, and more" at a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue (Virtual) on December 7. He reviewed important China-focused background considerations before covering this topic in detail. He then responded to more than twenty challenging audience

questions, a sign of the high level of interest his talk generated. To see this hour-long program please click [here](#).

### USAID Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia Ambassador Erin McKee and former USAID Counselor Tom Staal



On Tuesday, November 15, USAID Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia Ambassador Erin McKee was the featured speaker in a virtual UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue focused on "Ukraine – Providing Humanitarian and Economic Assistance in a War Zone". In conversation with former USAID Counselor Tom Staal and in her responses to questions from the audience, she spoke candidly of the many great challenges being confronted and largely overcome by USAID staff members and their partners as they help the Ukraine government meet today's and future investment needs. Follow the entire hour's program by clicking [here](#).

## Development Issues Committee Hosts Discussion: PEPFAR at 20

On November 29 the Development Issues Committee conducted a well-attended virtual discussion on "**PEPFAR at 20**" in conjunction with World AIDS Day on December 1 and the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of PEPFAR in early 2003. The discussion was led by

**Ambassador Dr. John Nkengasong**, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy, **Han Kang**, Director of USAID's Office of HIV/AIDS, and **J. Stephen Morrison**, Senior Vice President at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and Director of CSIS's Health Policy Center.



Ambassador Dr. John  
Nkengasong



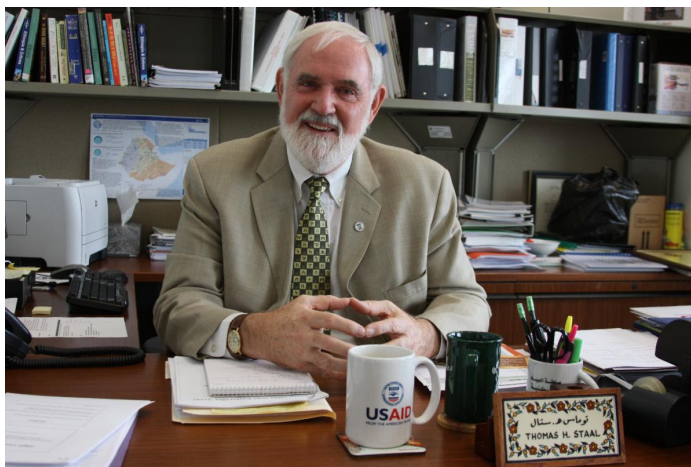
J. Stephen Morrison



Han Kang

Ambassador Nkengasong highlighted the key messages of a recently released policy paper "Reimagining PEPFAR's Strategic Direction" designed to accelerate the path to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a public health threat by 2030 and the challenges in reaching the "last mile." Han Kang stressed the challenges in achieving health equity to address the needs of those at most risk and ways to improve the delivery of prevention and treatment, stressing the importance of locally led efforts. Steve Morrison highlighted the bi-partisan support for PEPFAR in Congress, the need to improve the interagency process and the need to replenish a "worn out" workforce of those implementing PEPFAR. The recording of the session is posted on the UAA website and is linked [here](#).

## Alumni Profile: Thomas H. Staal



In 1985, Tom Staal was between jobs when he heard about the devastation of the famine in East Africa, highlighted by the song, "We Are The World." Tom had grown up overseas with missionary parents, studied International Affairs and worked for over six years in Saudi Arabia, but had no humanitarian or development experience. World Vision

was opening an office in Sudan and looking for someone who had worked in an Arab, Muslim country. So, Tom was off to Khartoum working with World Vision, a non-governmental organization with funding from some U.S. Government agency which he had never heard of – USAID – to provide humanitarian assistance and, as conditions improved, village level development work.

After almost three years, World Vision was leaving Sudan, and Tom applied to replace his USAID counterpart, Kate Farnsworth, who was moving on to

Addis. Thus, he became a USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Personal Service Contractor (OFDA PSC) and began his USAID journey, from OFDA to Food for Peace Foreign Service Officer to Project Development Officer to General Development Officer and into management.

Having done both humanitarian assistance and “regular” development work, Tom was seized early with the need to better integrate rather than treat the two distinct interventions separately. As Mission Director for Ethiopia with large humanitarian and development portfolios, he led the development of a strategy – the first Mission to use the term “resilience” in its strategy -- which integrated the efforts, building on the work done by his predecessor, Bill Hammink. Though Tom had higher-level positions in Washington, he said that he considered the Ethiopia position as the pinnacle of his career as a development professional. He was gratified to have had the opportunity to continue that integration effort as Deputy and Acting Assistant Administrator of the Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau.

Tom retired from USAID in 2019 and summed up his USAID experience: “One of the wonderful things about a USAID career is the chance to do a variety of activities in multiple countries. I had 17 different assignments, serving 20 years overseas and 11 years in Washington. Even going to a war zone in Iraq provided me learning opportunities, and the chance to visit my boyhood home in Basrah. But the best part of my USAID career was the wonderful people I interacted and worked with, all toward a cause of making the world a better place.”

Tom is an active UAA and DACOR member. He resides with his wife Ann in the Washington Metropolitan area and welcomes hearing from his friends and former colleagues at [tomstaal75@yahoo.com](mailto:tomstaal75@yahoo.com).

## USAID Alumni Association

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