



USAID Alumni Association

April 2024 Newsletter

Note from the UAA Board

As this newsletter goes to press, two events that the UAA is engaged in have just taken place:

First, on March 22, the Florida UAA group and the Florida chapter of the Foreign Service Retired Association (FSRA) jointly hosted a luncheon featuring three former USAID Mission Directors who served in the Middle East. They led a discussion on the current situation in the region, especially from a humanitarian and development perspective. Second, on March 26th, the UAA participated in the State/AID Job Search/Transition Program for retiring Officers. This event was an important opportunity to introduce the UAA and encourage retirees to join.

In addition to these two events, the UAA participated in the USAID world-wide Deputy Mission Directors (DMD) conference held in Washington in mid-March and attended an exceptional reception for the DMDs at the U.S. Capitol hosted by our colleagues at the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN). The UAA colleagues that attended the DMD conference were impressed by the breadth of responsibilities of the DMDs, their thoughtful engagement, and their deep understanding of development issues. It bodes well for the future of the Agency.

We also had our quarterly meeting with Deputy Administrator Paloma-Adams. She highlighted just *some* of the immediate challenges facing the Agency, including Ukraine, Gaza, a wide swath of central Africa, and Haiti. Not to mention the possibility of a government shutdown (averted for now) and planning for the 2025 budget. There is also much happening in modernizing the foreign service, including streamlining the annual employee review process and linking it more explicitly to assignment decisions. The Agency will be determining Senior Foreign Service assignments based on the Administrator's designated priorities.

We want to highlight the request for volunteers to co-chair the Committee for UAA's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Since Terry Brown is stepping down as a co-chair, we need to find a replacement to work with Stephen Wingert to lead planning and management for the AGM. We urge UAA members to express interest in assisting with this important responsibility by emailing Steve at stephenwingert@hotmail.com.

Lastly, a note of profound thanks to Terry Brown for his immense contributions to UAA and to USAID. Terry has been an inspiration and leader for UAA ever since its inception. Throughout his career he has mentored and coached generations of leaders up until today. Thank you, Terry!

Calendar of Upcoming UAA Events

- NEW! At a **UAA/DACOR (hybrid) lunch on Friday, April 5, from 11:45 to 2:00**, **Homi Kharas, Brookings Institution Senior Fellow**, will speak about his new book *The Rise of the Global Middle Class: How the Search for the Good Life Can Change the World*. [Click here](#) to register.
- NEW! On **Monday, May 13**, **USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman** will join us for a UAA/DACOR hybrid lunch session at DACOR to reflect on the first three years of the Administration's USAID programs and U.S. foreign policy objectives. She will be engaged in conversation by **former USAID Counselor Chris Milligan**. Watch for a full announcement closer to the event.
- NEW! Join other UAA members and friends at the **Tuesday, June 4th John Legend concert at Wolf Trap**. A group of us are purchasing lawn seats for the concert. While the concert will begin at 8 PM, plan to arrive around 6:30 PM to park and have a picnic dinner on the lawn. For those interested, please purchase the tickets on the wolfttrap.org website and let Margot Ellis (ellismargot@gmail.com) or Karen Freeman (ugandakaren@hotmail.com) know that you are coming. Closer to the date, we will share information on where we will be meeting and sitting.
- NEW! **UAA Spring Reception is Thursday, June 13th, 3:00pm – 5:00 pm at Dacor Bacon**. It will be a hybrid event with appetizers and drinks onsite and virtual for UAA members outside of the area.
- NEW! **Save the Date: Wednesday, July 31, midday, in Rochester, Vermont**. Anne Aarnes, David Sprague, Ann and Mike Van Dusen, Connie Carrino, Jeff Sharat, and Margaret Neuse will host the annual "development wallahs" picnic. All are welcome, including alumni who may be visiting New England in late July. Details to follow. For more information and to express interest in attending, contact Ann Van Dusen (avandusen4@gmail.com) and/or Anne Aarnes (ahaarnes@hotmail.com).
- New! On **Friday, September 6**, **Sir Masood Ahmed**, former President and CEO of the Center for Global Development (CGD) and longtime World Bank, IMF and DFID official, will speak at a UAA/DACOR Development Dialogue (hybrid) lunch. Watch for a full announcement closer to the event.
- NEW! **Save the Date: September 7 from 12 noon to 3 pm for the Annual Picnic**
- NEW! **Save the Date: October 11 from 9 am to 1:15 pm for the UAA Annual General Meeting**

What's New

In Memoriam: Kurt Keith Kunze, Peter W. Shirk, Amy Ada Haratani, Achsah Nesmith, Wade F. Gregory

Bulletin Board

- **Thursday, April 4, at 10:30 am EDT, in person or online, for “Views of democracy around the world: A 24-country survey” with [Richard Wike, Pew Research Center’s director of global attitudes research](#).** The forum will take place at the USC Washington DC campus, 1771 N Street NW. Coffee and refreshments will be available starting at 10:00.
 - To join in person, please email Judy Kang at junghwak@usc.edu
 - To join online, please **RSVP here**.

Articles

- **[Congress can’t get anything done. Except on foreign aid](#), Vox, by Dylan Matthews, March 24, 2024**
- **[MFAN Applauds Congressional Action on Bipartisan Legislation to Advance Locally Led Development](#), MFAN, March 20, 2024**
- **[Constrained Funding for Growing Challenges Threatens America’s Ability to Protect National Interests: Analysis of the Administration’s FY25 International Affairs Budget Request](#), USGLC, March 13, 2024**

Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities

USAID/South Sudan Solicitation for U.S. Personal Service Contractor

USPSC/TCNPSC Supervisory Program Officer GS 15

CLOSING DATE AND TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS: April 06, 2024, at 1700 Juba time

POINT OF CONTACT: Leslie Petersen at lpetersen@usaid.gov and Suzan Lasu at slasu@usaid.gov

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The base period will be one year, estimated to start on June 01, 2024. Based on Agency need, the Contracting Officer may exercise an additional option period of one more year.

See full solicitation [here](#).

UAA Supports Deputy Mission Directors (DMD)



UAA members contributed to the success of the recent Global Deputy Mission Directors' Conference which took place during the week of March 11th. Some 51 DMDs from around the world participated in the workshop whose purpose was to strengthen DMD leadership and professional development, engage USAID leaders and share field approaches on strategic priority areas. On March 13, UAA members joined DMD panelists in nine breakout sessions to help explore the themes of Leadership in Staff and Professional Development and Leadership and Resilience in Crises, Threat and Disaster. The DMDs greatly appreciated the experience and insights UAA members provided on these topics. Many thanks to the panelists: Maureen Shauket, Bambi Arellano, Ken Yamashita, Sharon Pauling, Roberta Mahoney, Lit Tazewell, Tom Staal—and a special thanks to panelists Chris Milligan and Jim Bever for engaging with the Conference Planning Committee to make this happen.

Following the breakout sessions, 23 UAA members joined with the visiting DMDs for a Happy Hour at the US Capitol. This event was sponsored by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), joined by UAA.



Tom Preston, Clinton White, Erin Nicholson, and Ken Yamashita

USAID/Washington leaders also attended, as well as many NGO members of MFAN. Tod Preston, Executive Director of MFAN, provided brief remarks along with Clinton White, Counselor, USAID; Erin Nicholson, Deputy Mission Director, USAID Indonesia; and Ken Yamashita (Ret.), former interim counselor for the Agency and USAID Alumni Association representative. It was an excellent occasion for networking among all participants.

UAA Recruits New Members

On Tuesday, March 26th, the USAID Alumni Association enjoyed introducing new USAID retirees to the organization and encouraging them to join. UAA members Jim Bever, Denise Rollins, and Tom Nicastro met virtually with John Smith-Sreen, Andy Karas, Clay Epperson, Mary Hobbs, and Emily Gardiner,

participating in the Foreign Service Institute Job Search Training program. The new retirees were encouraged to join UAA and participate in the many programs and activities that foster greater collaboration with USAID, the American people, and former Foreign Service, and Civil Service employees of the Agency.

Progress Report on UAA Project with American University Library Archives

Early last year the UAA entered into an agreement with the American University Library Archives to provide a grant of \$5,000 a year (from the Book Project funds) for 2023 and 2024 to finance an intern to help the Archives manage and catalog the donated files of USAID retirees. This program is expected to continue for another three years, subject to review at the end of 2024.

Currently thirteen collections have been donated, of which three have been processed and two more are partially processed; they will soon be posted online. The Archivist has created a "rack card" describing the Archives for USAID Alumni; this card is prominently displayed on the UAA website homepage. The Archivist hired a student assistant/intern in August 2023, and UAA member Cindy Clapp-Wincek has recently volunteered to help the Archivist identify research themes to guide students and scholars to topics found in the donated files.

The Archivist and we are exploring possible links with faculty members and relevant departments at American University and to be sure they are aware of this resource. A key objective of the project is to encourage students and scholars to draw on these resources for research papers and other studies of development issues. Of course, as more alumni collections are included in the Archives, the more interesting this archive will be for AU faculty, departments, and schools. We are eager to find other alumni with appropriate collections who are ready to donate them to this unique program. Carol Peasley and Alex Shakow, UAA History Committee Co-Chairs.

Additions to the UAA Bibliography of USAID Authors

Two very interesting memoirs have been added to the **Bibliography of USAID Authors** – both from very talented Senior Foreign Service retirees. **Susan Brems and her husband, Fred Brems**, have gone back through pre-USAID letters they wrote from rural Northeast Brazil to publish *Another Brazil Heard From: Voices and Insights from the Brazilian Countryside*. Susan was a researcher on fertility and health and Fred was a high-school teacher and mentor.

Twenty-seven-year USAID veteran **Clifford Brown** has published *Dilettante: Tales from how a Small Town Boy Became a Diplomat Managing U.S. Foreign Assistance*. He chose the title "Dilettante" because, after he moved into management, USAID allowed him to think about whatever topic he wanted to think about. He felt like a dabbler in 100's of different fields, like taxation, primary education, health, water systems, cacao growing, legislative processes, criminal law systems, disaster preparedness, and corruption.

Please send info on any books written by USAID foreign service and GS officers, their family members, and FSNs to JPielemeie@aol.com

Development Dialogues

Development Issues Committee Discussion:

USAID Office of Innovation, Technology and Research (ITR) Hub



*Mohamed Abdel-Kader
(Photo courtesy of USAID)*



*Christopher Burns
Chief Digital Development Officer &
Director, Technology Division
Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub*

On Wednesday, March 6, a lively and highly informative Development Issues Committee session (via Zoom) was held with USAID's Chief Innovation Officer Mohamed Abdel-Kader and Digital Director Chris Burns to discuss the work of the **USAID Office of Innovation, Technology and Research (ITR) Hub**. Some 15-17 members participated. The discussion focused on the work of the ITR Hub, formerly the Global Development Lab, which is the locus of USAID's current science and technology research and innovation work. Briefers described how they partner with USAID Missions, and with entrepreneurs, small business, researchers, universities, technology companies, and other development professionals to incorporate breakthrough innovations to USAID's development Work. Additional information can be found at these links:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/2023%20Digital%20Download.pdf>

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/USAID_Digital_Strategy.pdf.pdf

<https://www.digitaldevelopment.org>

<https://www.youthmappers.org>

<https://www.usaid.gov/digital-strategy/implementation-tracks/track1-adopt-ecosystem/digital-ecosystem-country-assessments>

Payne Fellows 2024 Entry Class

The USAID Alumni Association welcomes the Payne International Development Fellowship class of 2024. Fellows will earn two-year graduate degrees from outstanding U.S. educational institutions under the aegis of USAID. Upon graduation, Fellows will become U.S. Foreign Service Officers. Over the last few years, UAA has provided volunteer mentors when Fellows are assigned to post. Each of these exceptional individuals brings a unique set of experiences, skills, and passions, embodying the core values of the Fellowship Program and USAID. These are the future leaders of USAID and the U.S. Foreign Service.



Make Your 2024 UAA Membership Contribution
USAID Alumni Association

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